

UCD Humanities Institute

Achievements & Challenges 2016 – 2021



UCD Humanities Institute
Institiúid don Léann Daonna UCD





Introduction

Now in its twentieth year, the UCD Humanities Institute (HI) has established itself as a pivotal centre for inter/disciplinary humanities research in Ireland. Successes of the last five years include: the expansion of our membership to in excess of **100** members; the deepening collaborations with other research institutes in UCD; the progress of the **4** flagship HI-funded research projects; the award of competitive external grants to our PIs; the expansion of our international networks and partnerships; and the ongoing provision of a dynamic, diverse and inclusive research environment for members, PhDs, postdocs and visiting fellows. Furthermore, we host an average of **54** academic events every year.

However, in spring 2020 the Covid-19 pandemic brought the established rhythm of the Humanities Institute to an abrupt halt. Our seminar series, PhD meetings, collaborations, events and gatherings were all disrupted. Our resident scholars had to postpone essential archival research; their plans for conferences and workshops were overturned, and the informal chats in our newly created social space on the first floor of the building ceased.

We collectively navigated the transition to online seminars and workshop formats, and we also found ways to continue informal conversations online. A community spirit prevailed, tapping into a rich reservoir of solidarity and fellowship. However, despite the successful rollout of online seminars and experimentation with webinar formats, we also realised more than ever before that humanities research is deeply social, dialogic and interpersonal. It needs a space where researchers from all disciplines and at all stages of their career can meet and engage. What we do and how we do it is often inspired by unforeseen encounters and informal exchanges that exceed the frames of Zoom and Teams. Now that a return to face-to-face interactions seems within reach, we are looking forward to welcoming our members, resident scholars and visitors back.

Professor Anne Fuchs
Director, UCD Humanities Institute
June 2021

The Humanities Institute

20 Years On

THE UCD HUMANITIES INSTITUTE (HI) was established in 2001 under the Higher Education Authority (HEA) Programme for Research in Third Level Institutions (PRTLII) and moved into its bespoke building in 2003. It forms a key component of UCD's strategic mission to develop as a globally recognised and research-intensive university. Within UCD the Institute acts as principal hub for interdisciplinary enquiry and discussion in the humanities, and between the humanities and other areas of social and scientific research.

Now in its twentieth year, the Institute has established itself as a dynamic research platform by providing strategic, financial and administrative support and by fostering research excellence in the humanities. It provides bespoke research facilities, research funding, tailored training, and administrative support to stimulate innovative research in emerging fields, develop capacity in interdisciplinary research collaboration and promote the university's impact agenda. The HI also showcases the university's excellence in the arts and humanities through public engagement activities. It will continue to sustain and promote the primary functions of humanities research: to generate understanding based on historical, philosophical, linguistic and cultural knowledge, and to promote critical thinking and nurture creative capacity. The following report takes stock of the period from 2016–2021.

The institute provides **36** research spaces for postgraduate and postdoctoral fellows, an office for **2** visiting fellows, an office and a store room for UCD Press, a bespoke seminar room which seats **60** people, and offices for the Director and Institute staff members. In the period from 2016 to 2021 the HI has housed **40** PhD students, **24** postdoctoral fellows, and **11** visiting fellows from **7** countries. In the same period the membership increased from **71** academic staff from **14** schools in 2016 to **109** academic staff from **16** schools and **2** non-academic units in 2021.



OBJECTIVE 1

ADVANCE INTERDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH IN THE HUMANITIES

The first objective of the HI strategic plan 2017–2020 was to specifically stimulate interdisciplinary or transdisciplinary research projects in response to key societal challenges. In 2016 **4** research projects were selected through a competitive round of funding and received the following supports: €10,000 funding; website presence on the HI website; access to the HI SoundCloud; administrative and organisational support for all project related activities; research space for PhDs and postdoctoral fellows; and research space for visiting fellows and guests. All **4** research projects resulted in high-level publications, international networks, public engagement, national and international recognition of the PIs and successful grant applications.

Highlights:

Professor James-Chakraborty's award of the RIA Gold Medal in 2018; her award of an Advanced ERC Grant in 2021. Professor O'Kane Crimmins' election to the RIA in 2017; her appointment to the Advisory Committee for *Trinity's Colonial Legacies* initiative that includes former President of Ireland Mary McAleese. In 2019 Professor Mark-FitzGerald was commissioned by the Polish Embassy in Ireland to co-produce a public exhibition on the life and impact of Paweł Strzelecki, a central figure of poor relief during the 1840s Irish Famine. The exhibition, opened in the Royal Irish Academy by President Michael D. Higgins in May 2019, has continued to tour nationally.

HI-Funded Research Projects 2016–2021

Ireland and the Caribbean: Comparative Perspectives

Modern Architecture and Culture in the Mid-Twentieth
Century: From Exporting to Importing the New

Media, Encounter, Witness: Troubled Past

Architecture and Narrative: The Built Environment
in Modern Culture

Humanities Institute-led Interdisciplinary Projects

Wellcome Trust funded Project: Framing Ageing:
A Clinical, Cultural and Social Dialogue

HI/UCD Research Seed Funding: for the College
of Arts and Humanities Research Strands

Transnationalising the Humanities: Research
Strand with the College of Arts and Humanities



Finola O'Kane Crimmins

"The HI allowed me to explore slavery's many landscapes on both sides of the Atlantic, to advance a comparative history of European plantations and to push humanities research into a more transnational and interdisciplinary space, not least through the discovery of Bellfield plantation, Jamaica's sibling bond to UCD's Belfield campus in Dublin 4."

Ireland and the Caribbean: Comparative Perspectives

PI: Professor Finola O'Kane Crimmins

(UCD School of Architecture, Planning and Environmental Policy)

Project Summary

The Caribbean was the crucible of Atlantic slavery and the plantation system that sustained it. Europe's responsibility for its success began in the Caribbean and was then translated into the American South. Ireland, like most European countries, was complicit in this process yet Ireland's role in the transatlantic triangular trade of provisions, slaves and sugar has not been broadly researched. The impact of Irish people on the evolution of the Caribbean archipelago is not well understood, nor is the reverse impact of the Caribbean on Irish mentalities, networks, towns and landscapes. The project explored the Irish contribution to the history of slavery as evidenced in the designed landscapes that Irish people created, managed and operated across all the empires of the Caribbean, with a particular emphasis on those of Jamaica, Saint-Domingue (Haiti) and the American South.



Project Report

The HI-funded project has allowed Professor O’Kane Crimmins to build a reputation in the transatlantic and transnational field of designed plantation history with specific expertise in comparative spatial analysis of the French and British imperial design strategies and the detailed interdisciplinary analysis of specific plantation landscapes in Jamaica, Saint-Domingue (Haiti) and Georgia (US) drawn from maps, paintings and personal letters. She is now one of the foremost historians of Atlantic slavery’s spatial history and legacy in Europe and the Americas, as evidenced by her forthcoming co-edited book, **4** forthcoming book chapters, **2** peer-reviewed journal articles, invited book reviews and many guest lectures, invited papers and presentations in the world’s most distinguished universities. Two monographs are also in preparation (one in peer-review, one in advanced draft form).

The principal event funded by the project was a two-day symposium *Ireland, the British Empire and the Caribbean; Comparative Perspectives* held in November 2017. Papers from this symposium and invited chapters (O’Kane Crimmins has authored two chapters and the introduction), have been accepted by Manchester University Press as a co-edited book (with Associate Professor Ciaran O’Neill of TCD) *Ireland, Slavery and the Caribbean; Interdisciplinary Perspectives* in their distinguished hard-copy and e-book ‘Imperial History’ series.

Local outreach and impact events have led to **2** public presentations/round tables for the TCD Long Room Hub, an RIA podcast on ‘Detachment: Bellfield Plantation’ as part of their invited ‘History of the Emotions’ series and an RTÉ Nationwide programme on ‘Ireland and Slavery’ due to be filmed in 2021. The growing recognition of this work, which has been substantially supported by the HI, is demonstrated through the invitation from the Provost and Board of TCD to serve on the Advisory committee of six for *Trinity’s Colonial Legacies* initiative that includes former President of Ireland Mary McAleese, Professor Vincent Brown (Harvard) and Professor Clive Lee (RCSI).

Instigated by Professor O’Kane Crimmins and her colleague Professor Itohan Osayimwese (Brown University, USA), the European Architectural History Network (for which she is a councillor) held an internal forum of its council and executive, entitled ‘Provincialising Europe in Architectural History, Research and Teaching’, to explore how their research into colonial practices can redirect and inform Europe’s architectural research strategy, the European Architectural History Network (for which she is a councillor) held an internal forum of its council and executive entitled ‘Provincialising Europe in Architectural History, Research and Teaching’. Professor O’Kane Crimmins intends to apply for an IRC Laureate (Advanced) grant and for an ERC Advanced grant.

Modern Architecture and Culture in the Mid-Twentieth Century: From Exporting to Importing the New



Kathleen James-Chakraborty
and Douglas Smith

"The HI has consistently provided invaluable material and organisational support for the Modern Architecture and Culture research project. It has funded and hosted a series of research events involving a range of distinguished visiting scholars, while offering an accessible and stimulating intellectual space for the exchange of ideas across disciplines within the humanities and beyond at postgraduate, postdoctoral, early and later career research level. These visits and exchanges have informed and enhanced ongoing writing projects (conference papers, articles, book chapters) and have played an essential role in the consolidation of existing collaborations and the cultivation of new international and interdisciplinary research links, adding decisive momentum to the development of future networks and projects. In particular, the grant provided invaluable seed funding for my successful European Research Council Advanced Grant."

PIs: Professor Kathleen James-Chakraborty (UCD School of Art History and Cultural Policy)

Dr Douglas Smith (UCD School of Languages, Cultures and Linguistics)

Project Summary

This project questioned how relations between Western and 'peripheral' cultures have been dominated by a one-way model of innovation and exportation, flowing irreversibly outwards from Europe and North America. It proposed an alternative reading of the history of modern architecture in its relationship not to the 'core' Western nations in which it initially developed but rather to 'outlying' regions such as Scandinavia, South Asia and South America. In this context, modern architecture emerges not as a passively consumed Western import but rather as a vehicle for new local meanings and functions, the product not just of male émigré architects but of active individual and government patronage, often led by women. The architectural focus was complemented by an investigation of a broader context where ideas and representations are understood to circulate via two-way processes of translation and re-appropriation that complicate simplistic hierarchical models of national identity and cultural progressiveness.



OBJECTIVE 1

HI-FUNDED RESEARCH PROJECTS 2016–2021

Project Report

The project funding was used to organise a series of interdisciplinary talks on architecture and its global contexts involving guest speakers from Ireland and abroad. The 6 live talks involved a range of international guest speakers, including a practising architect as well as academics from disciplines such as architecture, history and theory of architecture, cultural history and postcolonial studies (one invitee is a holder of a prestigious MacArthur Fellowship). These talks foregrounded a number of past and present architectural projects located in Africa, India, China, South-East Asia, Polynesia and the Caribbean and drew a wide audience from staff and students across colleges (Arts and Humanities and Engineering and Architecture).

The project has provided the platform for ongoing international conference presentations and publications in international peer-reviewed journals. Professor James-Chakraborty has given 4 keynote addresses to international conferences in Ireland (2020), Greece (2019), Germany (2018) and China (2017) and been awarded the prize for best article in the journal *Plan* in 2019. She also received the Gold Medal in the Humanities from the Royal Irish Academy (2018) and has been awarded an Ailsa Mellon Bruce Senior Fellowship at the Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts, National Gallery of Art, Washington (2020–21). Funding applications arising from the project include: a UK-Ireland Collaboration in the Digital Humanities Research Grant; an Irish Research Council COALESCE Grant; a John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Fellowship. Professor James-Chakraborty successfully applied for an Advanced European Research Council Grant in 2021 (award of €2 million).

Covid-Disruption

Due to the pandemic, it has not been possible to fund travel in line with the initial project plan to support research trips to Scandinavia, central Europe and North America. The pandemic also affected the organisation of the event that was intended to carry forward the initial series of talks. A face-to-face international networking workshop was first postponed and then moved online, taking place in December 2020 with an initial participation of 7 colleagues from Europe and the United States. A follow-up meeting is envisaged and the plan is to publish an edited book while also exploring possible further funding possibilities.



Emily Mark-Fitzgerald
and Emilie Pine

"The HI gave a home for workshoping and platforming new research; it provides space without which we could not rise to meet our research goals. HI support is at once intellectual and practical — too rarely do we talk about how essential it is to have a physical space for workshops, guest lectures and symposia. But without this infrastructure the research would simply not have happened. It is in these spaces that we meet with other researchers, from visiting international speakers to UCD postgraduates. These meetings spark new ideas and sharpen our thinking. The HI thus fosters growth through exchange, helping us to coalesce as researchers and as members of this vibrant research community."

Media, Encounter, Witness: Troubled Pasts

PIs: Associate Professor Emilie Pine (UCD School of English, Drama and Film),
Associate Professor Emily Mark-Fitzgerald (UCD School of Art History and Cultural Policy)

Project Summary

The *Media, Encounter, Witness* Research Strand considered the aesthetic, political and ethical issues of 'seeing' and mediality. The PIs began from the proposition that cultural meaning cannot be understood as separate from forms of production. The technological, aesthetic and social dimensions of such productions were at the centre of our investigation of how 'witnessing' is mediated and enacted. Ranging from the mid-nineteenth century to the present moment, the PIs took a longer historical view than many current considerations of witnessing, which tend to focus on witnessing traumas of the second half of the twentieth century. The strand posed the overarching question of how the formal and epistemological bases of different media (textual, visual, material, performative) affect the creation and positioning of the witness.

Project Report

The *Media, Encounter, Witness* research strand organised a lecture series (2017–20) foregrounding understudied aspects of witnessing. This series began with a focus on photographic and contemporary art as forms of representing cultural and social trauma, before moving to the fraught issues of perpetrator witnessing and testimony, and material culture as a witness to troubled pasts. Lectures were held on post-conflict Northern Irish art; photography, race and prostitution; culture as testimony; and the process of removing statues of colonial and slave pasts. All lectures were recorded and broadcast on the HI SoundCloud. Additionally, the project facilitated **2** graduate masterclasses with leading international theorists of memory from the US and UK, focusing on perpetrator testimony and analysing mediation in cultural memory. The project also included and supported the *Dublin and the Great Famine: Interdisciplinary Workshop* in 2019 at UCD.



'Making fine texture hosiery, an old and important industry in Balbriggan, Ireland.'
Underwood & Underwood stereo view, c. 1903.

OBJECTIVE 1

HI-FUNDED RESEARCH PROJECTS 2016–2021

The grant and HI support have provided a valuable framework for individual and collaborative activities. The research strand has established international networks and supported additional funding bids, and in 2018 Associate Professor Pine and Professor Jones (U Birmingham) were successful as co-PIs in securing £80k from the AHRC network funding scheme, and in 2019 the project concluded with the performance of a new play in Birmingham. In 2019 Associate Professor Mark-FitzGerald was successful in securing a fully funded UCD Advance PhD fellowship (€118k) for the project *Poverty, Welfare, and Visual Culture in the Long 19th Century*. In 2019 Associate Professor Mark-FitzGerald was commissioned by the Polish Embassy in Ireland to co-produce a public exhibition on the life and impact of Paweł Strzelecki, a central figure of poor relief during the 1840s Irish Famine and key witness of Famine conditions in the west of Ireland. The exhibition, opened in the Royal Irish Academy by President Michael D. Higgins in May 2019, has continued to tour nationally (including to the National Museum of Ireland – Country Life and the Strokestown National Famine Museum), and has included a lecture tour in Poland, sponsored by the Embassy of Ireland in Poland.

In 2021–22, as a follow-on from *Media, Encounter, Witness*, UCD will host Dr Katherine Bussard, Curator of Photography at Princeton University Art Museum, who is an international expert in photojournalism and social documentary photography. Dr Bussard's visit will include collaborations with the National Gallery of Ireland and the Irish Museum of Modern Art, informing the growth of their national collections of photography. In 2020, Associate Professor Pine published a monograph, *The Memory Marketplace: Witnessing Painful Pasts* which draws on the groundwork on media and witnessing that emerged through collaborating with Associate Professor Mark-FitzGerald. A co-edited volume on *Dublin and the Famine* (Emily Mark-FitzGerald, Ciaran McCabe, and Ciaran Reilly) — including multiple essays on famine, poverty, representation and legacy — is in the editorial process stage with UCD Press in 2021. Both PIs have undertaken extensive numbers of public lectures and outreach projects related to the theme of the research strand, ensuring a high level of public visibility and impact as well as academic output.

Covid-Disruption

In 2019, the project leads along with NCAD partner Dr Lisa Godson established a collaboration with the National Museum (Collins Barracks) to host a symposium in late spring 2020 on the subject of curating institutional pasts, with a particular focus on Magdalene history. This symposium was to be the major output of the project. Covid-19 meant the suspension of this event. It is still a shared ambition to hold this event (which requires being onsite, given the event's focus on material media) in 2022, and to complete the project's aim of a special journal issue on cultural heritage and the role and responsibility of cultural institutions towards Ireland's 'dark history' of institutional incarceration and abuse.



Katherine Fama
and Anne Fogarty

"The HI has become the academic home for our work in the Architectural Humanities. HI support over the past five years has enabled us to run conferences, workshops and international seminars abroad and helped to create a true community of architecture and narrative researchers. In recent months, the HI community has banded together, becoming a rare online space for continuing research, writing support, and explorations of the narrative implications and lessons of the global pandemic. We've found the academic community at the HI to be rigorous, challenging, and unfailingly supportive. For our projects, the HI has spurred new transdisciplinary connections and field intersections, catalysed emerging research interests, and become a true centre around which the very best forms of research collaboration organise."

Architecture and Narrative: The Built Environment in Modern Culture

PIs: Dr Katherine Fama (UCD School of English, Drama and Film),

Professor Anne Fogarty (UCD School of English, Drama and Film)

Project Summary

The *Architecture and Narrative* research strand considered the shaping power of the architectures in which we act out our lives — the house, the apartment, the institution, the office, the shop, the street, the concert hall and the museum. The theme arises from recent cultural explorations of the domestic, vernacular, and public architectures that shape the experience of modern life. The PIs considered purpose-built architecture, as well as renovations, occupancy patterns and everyday cityscapes. Importantly, a broadened cultural approach counts occupants, writers, artists and community groups as architectural actors.

Project Report

The research activities and events have established a rich critical conversation between architecture and the humanities, built an international, transdisciplinary network of scholars and grounded a range of collaborative research efforts. The PIs collaborated with scholars from a number of associated fields, including art history, literary studies, film and media studies, music, geography and architecture to undertake an analysis of modern architectural



OBJECTIVE 1

HI-FUNDED RESEARCH PROJECTS 2016–2021

spaces and narratives, from the late nineteenth century to the present day. The research project has provided a central resource for supporting early career colleagues, and developing connections with the history of emotion, age studies, feminist and queer theory, and literary theory.

From the *Modern Studies Association* event to lecture series and conferences, the team has provided popular, provocative seminars over the past years. Speakers have included Guggenheim winner Benjamin Kahan and acclaimed feminist columnist Rebecca Traister. As a material and a digital host, the Humanities Institute has made possible a series of high-quality podcasts and recordings. The research theme gave us the opportunity for the robust constellation of local schools, relevant fields and international partners. This is the strongest possible foundation for future European and transatlantic work in the architectural humanities.

Both PIs have published numerous essays on architecture and narrative, providing new spatial and material perspectives on American and Irish writers, including Maeve Brennan, Deirdre Madden, Edith Wharton, Mary Wilkins Freeman, Charlotte Gilman, Helen Stuart Campbell, Pauline Hopkins, Anzia Yezierska and Jane Addams. Numerous essays, an essay collection and a journal special issue are already in production. Looking forward, planned publications include several essays, a monograph and a special journal issue focused on the Architectural Humanities: Reading Race, Class, and Gender. Future research group plans include a local writing group, an international workshop and a larger EU grant application.

Covid-Disruption

The research project has been affected by serious illness and the limitations of researching, networking, and event planning during a global pandemic. Publication outputs were limited by maternity leave and serious illness that took place just before the pandemic. The pandemic in the second half of our grant period had a specific effect on our ability to apply for larger grants as planned. We experienced limited available work hours due to increasing administrative and teaching workloads and the serious burdens imposed on caregivers. Event scope and form was likewise limited by the global pandemic.

Wellcome Trust funded Project: Framing Ageing: A Clinical, Cultural and Social Dialogue



In 2019, Professor Anne Fuchs, successfully applied for Wellcome Trust funding (€27,000) for *Framing Ageing: A Clinical, Cultural, and Social Dialogue* (in collaboration with Professor Des O'Neill, Mary Cosgrove, Dr Julia Langbein, TCD). The project arose from the public engagement series *Debating Ageing*, held in 2018–2019. *Framing Ageing* aims to facilitate methodological exchange between gerontologists, humanities researchers, social scientists, and practitioners from Ireland, Northern Ireland, Great Britain, Austria, Germany, Portugal, Switzerland, The Netherlands and the USA.

Covid Disruption:

In March 2020 the disruption by Covid-19 led to a major reconfiguration of the project: instead of **2** face-to face international workshops that were due to be held at the HI and TCD we ran **6** public webinars between June 2020 and May 2021: the first webinar responded to the Covid crisis by addressing representations of older age groups in the media and public discourse during Covid-19; the following **5** webinars focused on the knowledge transfer potential between social sciences, humanities and health sciences. All webinars are available as podcasts on a dedicated *Framing Ageing* website <https://framingageing.ucd.ie>. Over **600** webinar registrations from all over the world underline both the importance of the topic and the reach of the webinar format.

Future plans: Dr Julia Langbein will submit an application (with Professor Anne Fuchs as mentor) for a Wellcome Trust Career Development Award in September 2021.



HI/UCD Research Seed Funding: for the College of Arts and Humanities Research Strands

In 2020 the HI took the strategic decision to closely align its research investment with the College of Arts and Humanities flagship research strands and the UCD Strategy 2020–2024 '*Rising to the Future*'. The HI successfully applied to UCD Research for an additional budget of €40,000 to be matched by the HI. A budget totalling €80,000 has been ringfenced for competitive funding applications by the **8** CAH thematic research strands for the period from 2020–2024.

- Digital Cultures
- Engaged Creativity
- Environmental Humanities
- Health, Medicine and Wellbeing
- Transnationalising the Humanities
- Ireland in the World
- Thresholds of Knowledge
- Violence and Society

A first round of seed funding in 2020 resulted in **8** successful applications (one per strand). Due to Covid-19 restrictions most funded projects had to delay their research activities by at least one year. Completion deadlines have been extended accordingly.

Applicants for the 2021 funding round are required to demonstrate a strategic vision by articulating a coherent research rationale for the strand as a whole in line with the ambitions of the UCD Research Strategy *Shaping the Future* and the UCD Strategy *Rising to the Future*. Applicants are required to map out a pathway to impact and for building inter/national collaborations and external partnerships; articulate plans for further external funding applications; and demonstrate awareness of and engagement with EDI and the UN sustainability goals.



Transnationalising the Humanities: Research Strand with the College of Arts and Humanities

PI: Professor Anne Fuchs (Director, UCD Humanities Institute)

Launched in 2019 as part of the College of Arts and Humanities Research Strategy, the UCD Humanities Institute research strand *Transnationalising the Humanities* (TNH) aims to stimulate transnational research across the humanities. The analysis of the multidirectional movement of people, languages, ideas, knowledge and things requires innovative methodological perspectives that are capable of capturing all kinds of spatial and temporal practices. Responding to recent calls for the decolonisation of the curriculum, participants in the TNH strands explore methodological issues alongside specific case studies of transnational and transcultural practices, both from historical and contemporary perspectives.

Highlights:

Exploring the Transnational Neighbourhood: Integration, Community, and Co-Habitation was a major international and interdisciplinary conference held at the HI in collaboration with the Institute of Modern Languages Research, School of Advanced Study, University of London in 2019. Straddling a broad spectrum of humanities and social sciences disciplines, the conference produced a lively transnational network of early career researchers and will result in a peer-reviewed collection of essays to be published with Leuven UP in 2022. The research strand has also led to the establishment of a self-directed *Transnationalising the Humanities* PhD-group which meets once a month and organises workshops and conferences and TNHs blogs on the HI website.

Future Plans:

A collaboration with the Centre of Excellence in Intercultural Studies at Tallinn University, Estonia and other overseas partners in the global south on *Mining, Migration and Postindustrial Landscapes* (with Dr Sarah Comyn; Dr Megan Kuster) is underway. We will submit a funding application for a CHCI-Mellon Global Humanities Institute Grant in September 2021.



OBJECTIVE 2

ADVANCE INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATIONS

International Partnerships



As an outward facing institute, the HI builds partnerships to enable international research collaborations and mobility for members, PhDs and postdocs. In 2018 the HI signed a MoU and an Erasmus+ agreement with the Institute of Modern Languages Research (IMLR) at the University of London. The IMLR is an excellent partner for the TNH network: to date we have co-organised a joint workshop on urbanism at the IMLR in 2018; an international conference on *Exploring the Transnational Neighbourhood* in 2019; and a webinar on *Crisis Narratives* in 2020.



TALLINN UNIVERSITY

In 2018 the Director visited the Tallinn University, Estonia by invitation of Professor Marek Tamm, their Head of the Centre of Excellence in Intercultural Studies. This visit resulted in a joint publication and the participation of 5 HI resident PhDs and postdocs in the Winter School on Posthumanism in 2019. Professor Tamm will visit the HI in October 2021 to advance the collaboration on the *Mining, Migration and Postindustrial Landscapes* CHCI-Mellon Global Humanities Institute application.



In 2019 the Director was invited to deliver a lecture at the Institute for Research in Humanities, Kyoto University, Japan. Exploratory talks resulted in the design of two interconnected workshops on *Investigating the Postwar from Interdisciplinary Perspectives*, to be held at Kyoto University in 2021 and the HI in 2022 respectively. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic these workshops have been rescheduled for 2022 and 2023 respectively.

Visiting Fellowships

HI Visiting Fellowships are aimed at tenured humanities academics from universities outside Ireland interested in spending research leave at UCD. Fellowships are hosted by the HI in conjunction with a host school relevant to the visiting fellow's disciplinary affiliation and interests. The visiting fellow actively contributes to the research community at the institute by participating in the HI seminar series, chairing sessions and delivering a research paper. Fellows staying longer than one month are expected to deliver a seminar or workshop with PhDs.

The HI visiting fellowship programme makes a vital contribution to the internationalisation of humanities research at UCD; it facilitates close on-site collaborations between institute members and their international partners. Fellows who have stayed at the HI have appreciated the provision of office space

and administrative support, the embedding in a vibrant interdisciplinary research community, and the participation in workshops, our guest lectures and the seminar series.

In the period from 2016 to 2021 we hosted **11** fellows from Brazil, the United States, Canada, Switzerland, Iceland, Australia and South Africa.



"I was fortunate to spend five weeks as a Visiting Fellow at UCD's Humanities Institute in late spring and early summer 2019. My time there was invaluable. It provided me with an official academic affiliation with UCD that, for example, eased my access to a Library card with borrowing privileges (my Library card was waiting for me the day I arrived in the HI!), with an office to work in and a base from which I could launch research forays into the James Joyce Library, Specials Collections and UCD Archives. The HI Lunchtime Seminar series, in which I participated, gave me an opportunity to share my research with academics and students across a range of disciplines and to receive useful critical feedback. Being on campus daily permitted me to meet regularly with colleagues, especially with fellow Irish-language scholars in the School of Irish, Celtic Studies and Folklore. Simply put, my fellowship in the HI was a collegial and enjoyable experience for me. And it is not just a case of looking back fondly on a time pre-COVID when I could stroll from my office in the HI into the Library (or for a coffee). Over the last year, during the pandemic, I have been working on my book manuscript on the Irish language and South Africa, a manuscript which draws extensively on the research material that I amassed during my visiting fellowship in the Humanities Institute."

Pádraig Ó Siadhail, D'Arcy McGee Chair of Irish Studies & Professor,
Irish Studies, Saint Mary's University, Halifax, Nova Scotia



"During my time at the Humanities Institute and with the support of the Institute's print, space, and technical resources, I have published three major works in Irish and Italian Studies (two book chapters and one journal article). These publications, along with my monograph in progress, address currently relevant issues of precarity, migration, and identity studies. These citations are available upon request. My research would not have been disseminated and ready for publication so efficiently without the resources of HI space and technological/library access, which was and continues to be crucial as the challenges of Covid-19 persist. Despite the full closure of Irish research institutions during the pandemic, the HI provided these necessary resources and spaces to discuss and work through major research concerns. These crucial resources were not available to me outside of the HI, and simply put, the work would not have been completed without them."

Dr Kristina Varade, Modern Languages, The City University
of New York (CUNY)

OBJECTIVE 3

TRAIN HUMANITIES RESEARCHERS

The HI draws on the expertise of its research community to offer research training programmes tailored to the needs of PhD students, postdoctoral fellows and early career researchers. Training in transferable skills and writing funding applications or book proposals is complemented by discipline-specific and interdisciplinary research activities that involve researchers at all stages of their career.

Between 2016–2021 **20** resident PhD students passed their viva voce and **15** postdoctoral researchers successfully completed their projects, applying for further funding or for jobs in academia, research and industry.

Humanities Institute Seminar Series

In the period from 2016–2021 we have organised and run fortnightly HI seminars throughout the academic year with **64** research papers by humanities researchers at all stages of their career, including PhDs, ECRs, HI members and visitors. During the pandemic we ran the series as an online event, attracting higher inter-institutional and international attendance with growing participation.



Catherine Cox



Porscha Fermanis

Humanities Institute Training Workshops

Early career training is an important element of the HI training programme. We regularly offer training workshops to PhD students and postdoctoral fellows on funding applications to the IRC, the Wellcome Trust and the ERC, amongst others, and on submitting research to scholarly journals in the humanities. For example, in 2016 Professor Catherine Cox (School of History) gave a training session for humanities scholars on how to prepare a grant application to the Wellcome Trust. Professor Cox holds a Wellcome Trust Senior Investigator Award for her project on *Prisoners, Medical Care and Entitlement to Health in England and Ireland, 1850–2000* (with Professor Hilary Marland at Warwick University). In 2017 Professor Porscha Fermanis (School of English, Drama and Film), PI of the ERC-funded project on literary modernity in the southern hemisphere (SouthHem) gave a training session on applying for an ERC to humanities scholars. We also run regular postgraduate and postdoctoral-led Research Writing Groups and Critical Theory Reading Groups. Resident PhDs and postdoctoral fellows can also avail of numerous opportunities with our Erasmus+ partners at the IMLR (University of London) and Tallinn University, Estonia. In 2019 Dr Britta Jung (IRC-funded postdoc) spent an Erasmus+ period at the IMLR, collaborating on a joint workshop and receiving training in PhD supervision. In 2017 **5** HI PhD and Postdocs attended the winter school on Posthumanism at the Centre of Excellence in Intercultural Studies, Tallinn University, Estonia.

Humanities Institute Annual PhD Conference

Every year our resident PhD scholars organise a conference, funded and supported by the HI, on a topic of their choice. The PhD conference committee is fully responsible for organising the conference from choosing the theme, inviting the keynote speakers, administering the call for papers and creating the conference programme.

Covid-Zoom-Seminars and Meetings for Postdocs and PhDs

In March 2020 we transitioned to online delivery of all our training and research activities: an informal fortnightly zoom meeting for postdocs allowed this cohort to discuss their research projects and the disruption caused by Covid. This proved to be a vital platform for the postdocs who were struggling with lack of access to libraries and archives or external partners. Similarly, the regular zoom meetings, organised by resident PhD students, became so popular that we opened them to any interested PhD student from the Arts and Humanities and the Social Sciences.



"My time at the HI was an incredibly productive time both in terms of forming important intellectual connections, and in building a supportive and dynamic community of researchers from a variety of humanities disciplines. Not only was I provided with exciting opportunities to attend international conferences, learn from experts in the field through HI-sponsored keynotes and seminars, but my time at the HI was spent as part of an intellectually inspiring and challenging community of scholars."

Dr Sarah Comyn (former HI resident postdoc, now UCD)



"I had a fantastic year at the HI where I held an IRC post-doc. It was a lively and supportive environment, both in terms of intellectual discussion and collegiality. I am especially grateful to Anne for her continued support of my book project when my 12 months ended. Having a 'home' at the HI while I juggled finishing the project, with occasional lecturer work and childcare, was without doubt key to completing my monograph."

Dr Shonagh Hill (former HI resident postdoc, now Queen's University Belfast)



"The UCD Humanities Institute offered an incredibly supportive environment from which to navigate the ECR academic landscape. Anne Fuchs was an engaged and encouraging director, who made time to consult with me about my project and career, and made funding available for events that I planned. Being based at the HI was a great experience."

Dr Jo Robinson (former HI resident postdoc, now University College Cork)



"The HI was a great networking opportunity whilst I was there as a postdoc. For someone who was new to Ireland, and to the research community at UCD, it became an important hub to not only to share research ideas but also to connect with a wider community. I've made friends and research collaborations for life which I wouldn't have had without the HI. In particular, having funds available to run my one-day, one-panel international symposium was particularly useful in terms of developing my network. I also valued having a consistent desk and quiet place to work while writing up my book proposal and applying for jobs."

Dr Barry Sheils (former HI resident postdoc, now Durham University)



"The HI provided me with the kind of transitional space the current pandemic has threatened to obliterate: the casual cup of tea with a colleague; the half-idea shared; an eventual research collaboration. It worked well across disciplines, as well as across the PhD- Postdoc divide. I used the space to facilitate a podcast series with international scholars on the First World War. I also used its training programmes to help me better understand my profession. I found the HI a supportive and encouraging environment, saved the cynicism of 'professional academia' by its investment in conviviality and the idiosyncratic. It was also full of lovely people - and I can't think of a better recommendation than that."

Dr Fariha Shaikh (former HI resident postdoc, now University of Birmingham)



As a PhD student, the HI represented a vital support which went far beyond the provision of physical desk space. Working alongside researchers from different disciplines across the humanities not only enriched my own intellectual journey but also formed the backbone a strong community created through shared experience. I benefited greatly from this support system during the PhD, which, due to the solitary nature of the work, often could feel isolating. This would not have been possible without the HI's infrastructure.

Dr Jenny Knell (former resident PhD student, now UCD Research)



"I found the Humanities Institute an ideal place for early career researchers like me to work in. Located in a quiet corner, the general atmosphere of the HI is friendly and peaceful; the resident scholars have full access to use the wonderful office facilities and common areas. The Institute hosts a wide range of research activities and supports scholars from different backgrounds and across disciplines. The Institute hosts regular research activities, such as the HI Seminars, Distinguished Guest Lectures, etc, which provide forums for scholars to exchange ideas and facilitate researchers to establish and expand their networks. The diversity of the Institute and its generous support has benefited me substantially."

Mengzhen Yue (resident PhD student 2017-2021)

OBJECTIVE 4

CONNECT WITH THE UCD RESEARCH COMMUNITY AND THE BROADER PUBLIC

Our fourth objective is to a) advance internal and local collaborations; b) enhance public engagement through public facing lecture series; c) develop closer ties with the College of Arts and Humanities by actively supporting College research.

Since 2016 the Humanities Institute has partnered with other research institutes and centres to create public lecture series on topics of major social, economic and cultural relevance. See: <https://soundcloud.com/ucd-humanities>.

Collaborative Public Engagement

Plotting the Future: Scenes and Scenarios of Speculation 2017–2018

Led by the HI, the Institute for Discovery and the Geary Institute for Public Policy *Plotting the Future* explored the urgent question of what it means to be human in the age of Artificial Intelligence and Robotics. AI, robotics, autonomous vehicles, drones, 3-D printing, nanotechnology and biotechnology are revolutionising society. *Plotting the Future* was the first jointly organised lecture series by these research institutes. See: <https://www.ucd.ie/humanities/events/plottingthefuture/>.

Debating Ageing 2018–2019

Jointly organised by the HI, the Centre for the History of Medicine in Ireland, the Conway Institute, the Institute for Discovery, the Geary Institute and the HRB Ignite Connect Programme, *Debating Ageing* analysed the biological, medical, psychological, social and cultural factors that can facilitate positive experiences of old age (<https://www.ucd.ie/humanities/events/debatingageing/>) This project led to the Wellcome Trust funded project *Framing Ageing.pandemic* these workshops have been rescheduled for 2022 and 2023 respectively.

Visiting Fellowships

Truth to be Told: Understanding Truth in the Age of Post-Truth Politics

Truth to be Told was a Humanities Institute public lecture series held in response to the crisis of truth and democracy in the age of social media. The series aimed to debate the socio-political, ethical, discursive and cultural implications of truth as a common good. Public lectures by internationally renowned speakers examined truth in stories, truth and religion, truth and science, truth and the law, truth and memory, truth in history, and truth and politics. Podcasts for this series show over **1,000** downloads. See: <https://soundcloud.com/ucd-humanities/sets/truth-to-be-told>

The Humanities Institute Annual Distinguished Guest Lecture

Our *Distinguished Guest Lecture Series* is flagship annual event designed both to attract world-class academic speakers to Ireland and to raise the profile of the Institute's mission and programme. Recent speakers include Professor Arjun Appadurai (Goddard Professor in Media, Culture and Communication, New York University): *The Future of Sovereignty* (8 March 2018); Professor Ute Frevert (Director, Max Planck Institute for Human Development, Berlin): *The History of Emotions: Promises, Projects and Achievements* (9 May 2019); Professor Gillian Rose (Professor of Human Geography, Head of School of Geography and the Environment, University of Oxford): *Feeling the Future City: Digital Devices, Big Data and Being Human* (19 November 2020); Professor Eva Horn (Professor of Modern German Literature and Cultural History, University of Vienna): *Being in the air: An intellectual and aesthetic history of climate* (20 October 2021)). There are currently well over **500** podcast downloads for these lectures.

Public Engagement through Podcasts

HI Podcast Series

HI-produced podcasts are hosted on the Humanities Institute website, the HI Soundcloud, iTunes, Spotify and YouTube channels; they facilitate global impact for the research hosted and supported by the Humanities Institute. In 2020 the HI rolled out **2** new thematic podcast series, *In My Experience* offers interviews with leading public figures exploring a wide range of political, social and cultural issues. *Our Authors* allows HI members and postdocs to feature their publications in an accessible format and discuss a research problem.

The total number of plays/downloads on Soundcloud and iTunes is at **145,758** (28 May 2021). The number of plays/downloads on Soundcloud and iTunes in the last 30 days is **1,893**. The HI series was ranked **#3** most popular podcast in the Higher Education category in Ireland on iTunes.



Professor Judy Wajcman (LSE) launches the 'Plotting the Future' series with her talk *Automation, Robotics and the Temporality of Everyday Life*, 30 May 2017 at the UCD HI. Pictured with Prof Anne Fuchs, UCD HI Director.

