



Athena SWAN at MIC

Welcome to the Autumn edition of the Athena SWAN e-zine. The new academic year feels well and truly underway and we are enjoying catching up with friends and colleagues as more of us are back on campus again. As always, there is a lot to share with you including upcoming events, and training opportunities; and a new submission in our EDI blog. Check out our World Menopause Month section where we look at the origins of World Menopause Month, some facts about it and links to useful resources.

If you want to read more on the background to Athena SWAN you can see our previous e-zines at [this link](#).

Further information is available on our webpage [here](#).

Read the Athena SWAN Action Plan [here](#).

Athena SWAN in MIC Update

Gender Action Plan Updates

Work is well underway at MIC implementing our four-year [Athena SWAN Action Plan to 2023](#) with over 50% of actions now in progress.

This action plan which has now become the College's Gender Action Plan approved by our Governing Authority (*an t-Údarás Rialaithe*). Progress updates on the Gender Action Plan 2020 to 2023 are reported to the Equality Committee as a standing item on the agenda.

The Gender Action Plan has been incorporated with our Annual Operating Plan to ensure that it is embedded in the organisational structures in MIC.

Gender Equality Enhancement Fund

MIC was involved in three separate applications to the [HEA's Gender Equality Enhancement Fund 2021](#). Last year, more than €286,000 was awarded to higher education institution partners to fund gender equality initiatives. The three projects submitted for the 2021 fund were:

- *Embedding Gender Identity, Expression & Diversity Training and Best Practice into Irish HEIs* – Led by Carlow IT in collaboration with Waterford IT, Carlow College, Limerick IT, Athlone IT and MIC. This proposal is a continuation of a 2020 project
- *GENEM (Gender Equality in Male Under-Representation): Challenging Gender Stereotypes through Developing Data and an Irish HE Sectoral Approach* – Led by NUI Galway in collaboration with Waterford IT, Limerick IT, Athlone IT, TCD and MIC
- *Integrating the gender dimension into teaching, learning and educational outreach in initial teacher education* – Led by MIC (Dr Maeve Liston) in collaboration with Maynooth University and IT Sligo. Application announcement on successful proposals is due in Q4 2021 and we will keep you updated on the outcomes

Read about the projects awarded funding in the 2020 round [here](#).



Arts Faculty SAT

A big thanks to Dr Joan O'Sullivan who has been interim Chair of the Arts Faculty Self-Assessment Team since Michael Breen's retirement. Joan will remain as vice-chair and we

welcome Prof William Leahy, Dean of Arts to the team as Chair. The SAT are busy analysing the workplace survey responses.

The next step in the consultation process is to host focus groups with staff and students. We will be emailing all Faculty of Arts staff and students looking for volunteers so please keep an eye on your emails and volunteer if you have the time.

Athena SWAN Awards Ceremony

While it had been planned and hoped to have an in-person ceremony in October, Advance HE have advised that the award ceremony will be a one-hour virtual showcase event on 20 October (12:30-13:30), at which we'll be joined by the Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science, Simon Harris T.D. All staff were emailed registration details however if you would still like to attend please contact edel.foster@mic.ul.ie and we will see what we can do.



First Athena SWAN Silver

Twenty-one awards have been conferred in the latest assessment round for Athena SWAN Ireland with one institutional Bronze renewal and the first ever Silver awarded to a department. This takes the total number of [Athena SWAN awards in Ireland to 87](#) (19 institutions, 68 departments).

Ireland's first Silver award goes to the Department of Physics at the University of Limerick. The department highlighted a range of impactful activities, including extensive outreach activity to encourage female students to take physics as a Leaving Cert. subject and to consider studying physics at undergraduate level. The department has seen an associated increase in female undergraduates from 37% to 54%, due to higher numbers of women taking up education courses, supporting their aim to increase the number of female physics teachers in Ireland. Read the full list of awardees [here](#).

Congratulations to all involved



Staff Workshops

In response to our EDI: Impact of COVID 19 on MIC Staff Survey (report [here](#)), a staff workshop was organised for MIC staff. The workshop was open to all staff, externally facilitated by [Dr. Maeve Lankford](#) and supported by Edel Foster (MIC). A second workshop was delivered to the International Office by Edel Foster at the request of the team following one members attendance at the June session.

The aim of the workshop was to:

- Reflect on work experiences for the past year
- Review on what has worked well and sharing of good practice
- Explore areas and recommendations for improvement with a focus at local, unit level

Recommended outputs from workshop and next steps are being explored with the EDI Manager, Vice President Governance and Strategy, Director of Executive Operations and the Director of HR.

Pride 2021

Pride 2021 was marked on both Limerick and Tipperary campus by raising the Pride Flag to mark Limerick Pride 2021. All staff and students were invited to attend a Pride 101 workshop with ShoutOut on July 5. The workshop looked at the history and meaning of Pride in Ireland and across the globe. Thanks to all who attended.



Pictured above are Róisín Burke (MISU President), Aoife Gleeson (MISU Vice-President), Prof Niamh Hourigan (Vice-President Academic Affairs) and Edel Foster (EDI Manager).



Pictured above are Shóna Behan (MISU Welfare & Equality Officer), Dr Kate Stapleton (Lecturer in Education), Róisín Burke (MISU President) and Aoife Gleeson (MISU Vice-President).

Black Lives Matter: How Language Contributes to Inclusion in Ireland

The next session in our EqualityTalks series was held online on 17 June with Lylian Fotabong on Black Lives Matter: How Language Contributes to Inclusion in Ireland. Click [here](#) to view a recording of the session. Thanks to Lylian for the very interesting talk which was well attended and followed by some great discussions.

Upcoming Events – Dates for your Diary



Menopause Awareness Month

October is Menopause Awareness Month and we will be marking it this year with the next instalment of our EqualityTalks series through an online virtual *Menopause Coffee Morning*.

We will have a special guest join us along with MIC Nurse Helen O’Dea who will be on hand to answer any questions. Ann-Marie Ryan, Deputy Director HR, MIC, will join us to

give an overview of the Employee Assistance Programme which all staff can avail of.

Full details will be circulated soon. Questions can be submitted in advance (and confidentially) [here](#).



International Men's Day

International Men's Day is celebrated annually on 19 November and the wheels are in motion to plan events this November to mark IMD. Keep an eye on your email and MIC social media for all details.



International Human Rights Day

Human Rights Day is observed every year on 10 December — the day the United Nations General Assembly adopted, in 1948, the [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#) (UDHR). The UDHR is a milestone document that proclaims the inalienable rights which everyone is entitled to as a human being - regardless of race, colour, religion, sex, language, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status. Available in more than [500 languages](#), it is the most translated document in the world.

Keep an eye on your email and MIC social media for details of MIC events to mark International Human Rights Day.



MISU EDI Events

MISU have a jam-packed semester planned with a range of EDI events taking place.

Week of 4 October (Week 5): *Period Poverty Awareness Week*

- Week of 11 October (Week 6): *Positive Mental Health Week*
- Week of 18 October (Week 7): *Sexual Health Awareness Week*
 - Week of 1 November (Week 9): *Pride Week*



Keep an eye on emails and follow MISU on social media for updates, linked below:



Training Opportunities

Gender Equality Academy

[GE Academy](#) is a Horizon 2020 project developing and implementing a high-quality capacity-building programme on gender equality in research, innovation and higher education. There is a range of training, roundtables and webinar opportunities available. See below for details of events in October and see their calendar of events for 2021 [here](#).

					
5 October at 09:30 cest	7 October at 09:30 cest	8 October at 10:00 cest	13 October at 10:30 cest	14 October at 09:00 cest	20 October at 10:00 cest
Online Training	Online Training	Online Training	Virtual Roundtable	Online Training	Webinar
Gender bias in academic recruitment and promotion	Acting against sexual harassment	An introduction to the Gender Equality Audit and Monitoring (GEAM) tool	Addressing gender-based violence and sexual harassment in academia and research organisations	Gender dimension in research	Re-humanising work and life in academia and research






LinkedIn Training

A reminder that all staff have access to LinkedIn Learning. The service can be accessed using an MIC domain account and password at the following URL: <https://lnkd.in/ebqJZFw>.

There is a range of courses available covering different topics and of varying duration. You can sync to your own LinkedIn account if you have one and suggestions will also be given to you based on your profile.






Top picks for Edel

< Previous Next >

				
POPULAR	POPULAR	FEATURED UPDATED	POPULAR	POPULAR
47m	8m 26s	36m	30m	
▷ COURSE	▷ COURSE	▷ COURSE	▷ COURSE	▷ COURSE
Diversity, Inclusion, and Belonging	15 Secrets Successful People Know about Time Management...	Strategic Thinking	Getting Things Done	Learn Emotional Key Determinants
By: Pat Wadors	By: getAbstract	6 Recruiters like this	By: David Allen	By: Big Think

Popular on LinkedIn Learning

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POPULAR	POPULAR	POPULAR	POPULAR	POPULAR
41m	2h 53m	34m	24m	
▷ COURSE	▷ COURSE	▷ COURSE	▷ COURSE	▷ COURSE
Influencing Others	Time Management Fundamentals	Coaching Skills for Leaders and Managers	Overcoming Procrastination	Balancing Multiple Leaders
By: John Ullmen	By: Dave Crenshaw	By: Sara Canaday	By: Brenda Bailey-Hughes	By: Sara Canaday

Advance HE Membership

A reminder that all MIC staff have access to a range of services and benefits as part of our Advance HE Membership package. All staff can create an account with Advance HE Connect [here](#). This community platform is open to all those who work in HE and provides a space where the sector can share, connect and collaborate in one place. MIC staff can access a range of programmes, events and conferences for 2021-2022.

If you would like to know more, or have any queries about our Advance HE membership, please contact edel.foster@mic.ul.ie



MIC Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Blog

We hope you enjoyed the third entry in our EDI Blog from Cepta Kennedy, International Office. Many thanks to Cepta and her daughter Orlaigh (@deburacdesign) for their contribution. The aim of our EDI Blog is to keep us connected with so many of us working off campus and apart even while on campus. Topics can include tips on mental wellbeing, our colleagues' perspectives on working on the frontline and on working from home with children, and much more.

Our fourth entry comes from Denia Claudino. Denia, who recently finished working in the RGSO at MIC wished to submit an entry about her experience in MIC as an International employee. Also to take this opportunity to thank all of Denia's colleagues in the RGSO.

Many thanks to Denia for the entry and we wish her all the best for the future.

From Lisbon to Limerick

In this brief note, I would like to write a few words about my working experience in MIC as

an international employee.

I must start saying that my foreign cultural background could not be more saluted in the RGSO team. The following week of my start, MIC was organizing the Christmas door competition. The first idea that Gerardine had was that we should do a Portuguese theme for our RGSO door. And we did it. In one afternoon, we pulled off a very simple but yet incredible meaningful Christmas door. A few days later, the team of “judges” arrived to our door to evaluate our work. Father Wall and Fiona intriguingly listened to me explaining why a bunch of colorful sardines were flying off the Santa’s bag.

At the Christmas dinner, when Father Wall announced that the RGSO had won the prize for the “Most Inclusive Door”, I couldn’t contain how joyful I was because I really felt accepted and well-integrated.

Now almost two years away from that episode, it is with a heavy heart that I am expressing my farewell to my working experience in MIC, as I will embark in a new professional opportunity. Nevertheless, the people in the RGSO will remain in my happy thoughts forever.

Very special thanks to Gerardine, Mary, Mick, Kayleigh, and Bríd that really embrace and put in practice the values of inclusion, respect, diversity, sharing, and generosity in the workplace.

Dénia Claudino

How to submit an entry:

If you would like to submit an entry to our EDI blog, please get in touch. Some entries may relate to Covid-19 and our current situation - for instance staff may describe the "new normal", post pandemic life and the activities people are engaging in to mind their mental health and wellbeing. Alternatively, some may wish to celebrate a diversity day in the EDI calendar with a thought, observation or poem. Ideas include:

- Your experience as an international MIC employee
- A new recipe from a cuisine common in a different continent that you've tried out
- Tips to overcome the challenge of working from home while balancing caring responsibilities

- A favourite book or poem you'd like to recommend that reminds you of inclusiveness or belonging
- Tips on minding your mental health and wellbeing during Covid-19 and while we adjust to new easing of restrictions
- What is the "new normal" for you? What is a day in the life at work during Covid-19?

Entries to be submitted to edel.foster@mic.ul.ie

Menopause Awareness Month 2021

There are over 400,000 women in Ireland in the natural menopause age range of 45-55 – this does not include women who experience early menopause so the actual figure will be higher – this accounts for 12% of the population and this figure is most definitely higher for women who are in actual perimenopause. In June 2021, the Health Minister Stephen Donnelly told the Dáil that work was underway to develop a menopause workplace policy which would include measures that allow work adjustments for women going through menopause, such as flexible working, guidance around sickness leave, and time off for appointments that might be needed, [read more here](#).

October is World Menopause Month, an annual campaign to raise awareness around the natural stage of a woman's life when her hormone levels decline and periods cease.

World Menopause Month is an opportunity for everyone to work together to raise awareness around the realities of female health and the management options available, while combating global stigma and misinformation.

[World Perimenopause Day](#) is an annual awareness day that takes place on 11th October – one week before World Menopause Day. World Perimenopause Day 2021 aims to raise awareness around the lesser known stage prior to menopause, where hormone levels fluctuate and as a result, women experience an array of menopause symptoms while still having periods.

[World Menopause Day](#) is held every year on the 18th October. For many women, Perimenopause and Menopause can be a life changing and isolating experience.



5 Facts about World Menopause Month:

5 FACTS ABOUT WORLD MENOPAUSE MONTH

1. Only whales, gorillas, and humans go through it

Other animals continue reproducing throughout their lifespan.

2. One in three women has problems associated with menopause

Of those, only one in 12 suffer from depression.

3. Asian women have fewer hot flashes

The theory is that larger amounts of soy in their diet account for the difference.

4. No one knows why menopause happens, but there's an interesting theory

The "grandmother" hypothesis assumes females stop having children so they can help existing ones to ensure the gene pool continues.

5. Your brain might be the cause of hot flashes, not hormone fluctuations

This theory postulates that the reason for hot flashes rests in the hypothalamus gland, which regulates body temperature.

Useful Resources

Click on the links below for some further information

- [The Menopause Hub.ie](#) is a useful source of news items and links for women going through the menopause with links to podcasts, news and health and lifestyle articles.
- The website "[Menopause in the Workplace](#)" has some useful statistics demonstrating why menopause is an important issue
- In Northern Ireland, high-profile women, prompted by an initial Tweet by the BBC's Marie-Louise Connolly, shared their personal experiences of the menopause on social media. More [here](#).
- Joe Duffy's Liveline blew the lid off menopause in Ireland and continued for 5 days, with a special dedicated phone line for listeners to share their stories. Joe commented that no topic has received such in engagement for over 2 years, and that includes Covid-19. And it was the first time that the show created a dedicated phone line. Here are the links to the Joe Duffy podcasts:
 - [Wednesday, 5th May 2021](#)
 - [Thursday, 6th May 2021](#)
 - [Friday, 7th May 2021](#)
 - [Monday, 10th May 2021](#)

Menopause Awareness at MIC

Join us on Monday 18 October to mark World Menopause Day at our online virtual *Menopause Coffee Morning*.

We will have a special guest join us along with MIC Nurse Helen O'Dea who will be on hand to answer any questions. Ann-Marie Ryan, Deputy Director HR, MIC, will join us to give an overview of the Employee Assistance Programme which all staff can avail of.

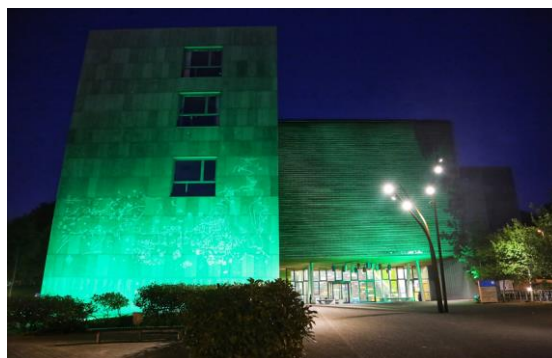
Full details will be circulated soon. Questions can be submitted in advance (and confidentially) [here](#).

EVENTS AT MIC

Green Ribbon Campaign at MIC

The [Green Ribbon campaign](#), held every year since 2013, aims to emphasise the importance of ending mental health stigma by encouraging discussions about and deepening an understanding of mental health. By encouraging people to wear the Green Ribbon or placing the Green Ribbon in an email or other communication platform, individuals can show their support for the campaign and their commitment to influencing positive change in society through creating safe spaces for talking about mental health. Commencing on Friday 10 September, World Suicide Prevention Day, the Tara Building on MIC's Limerick campus and the main building of the Thurles campus have been illuminated in green light as part of the campaign which will be supported by a range of activities during the month of September.

Read more [here](#).



Books for Malawi

MIC staff came together to support the Midwest Migrant Community Networks initiative, Books for Malawi. As part of the Books for Malawi project, nearly 240 boxes of much needed, donated books and educational resources from libraries, local universities, private and school donations have been shipped to Malawi. Well done to all involved and MIC staff who supported and assisted the packing several thousand books to send to schools and higher education institutions in the southern African country. Read more [here](#).



Twitter Highlights:

Follow @MICAthenaSWAN on Twitter to keep up to date. Here are some of the recent twitter stories that may be of interest to you:



Research conducted by Migrant Teacher Projects' on the lack of ethnic diversity reflected in the teaching profession.



A new report highlights Irish teenagers' attitudes towards sexual consent



Government supports Bill making Traveller history, culture part of school curriculum

TALK TO US



We would love to hear from you, if you would like to know more about Athena SWAN or would like something included in the Ezine.

Contact Edel on edel.foster@mic.ul.ie or 061 204338.

Follow us on Twitter for updates [@MICAthenaSWAN](https://twitter.com/MICAthenaSWAN)

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