



## **Athena SWAN at MIC**

**Welcome to the Spring edition of the Athena SWAN e-zine. During these strange times, we have lots to share with you including the news of our successful Athena SWAN Bronze Institution Application on our first attempt, the support measures in place for Athena SWAN practitioners, and upcoming online events. We also take a look at a case study of the Aurora mentoring programme at UCC. Finally, following on from our review of the college's Paternity Leave Policy in our previous edition, we give a summary of the Maternity Leave Policy at MIC.**

**We also want to acknowledge the work of Dr. Elaine Murtagh who led and supported our Athena SWAN efforts and was instrumental in our success. We wish Elaine the best in her new role.**

**If you want to read more information on the background to Athena SWAN you can see our previous e-zines at this [link](#). Further information is available on our webpage [here](#).**

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## ***Athena SWAN Update in MIC***

### ***Athena SWAN Success***

We were delighted to share the [news](#) that our first Athena SWAN Bronze Institution submission was successful in March and that we had been awarded the Bronze level institution award. A sincere thanks to our hardworking Self-Assessment Team and all staff who engaged with the process.

Feedback from the panel that assessed our submission indicates that "*the panel unanimously agree that this application meets the criteria for a Bronze award and offers a self-assessment that is thorough overall and articulates a sustained commitment to progressing gender equality*". Work has now commenced on implementing the four year action plan.

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

Pictured below are a number of SAT members including Frank White, Dr Julianne Stack, Ciara Ní Shúilleabháin, Dr Marc Scully, Dr Susan Liddy, Prof. Eugene Wall (Chair), Edel Foster and Santhi Corcoran.



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### ***November 2019 Award Round***

There were 13 applications in the November 2019 award round, including MIC. Of these, 8 applications were successful; a success rate of 62%. There are now 44 Athena SWAN Ireland award holders; 13 institutions awards and 31 department awards.



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### *Advance HE Support*

During the current COVID-19 pandemic, Advance HE have made some changes to the support services and timescales for Athena SWAN Ireland. This includes providing online opportunities for guidance and training as well as extending the forthcoming April 2020 submission deadline. Monthly webinars are being provided on the application process, open to any staff member from a participating HEI. Read more [here](#).



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### *International Women's Day 2020*

International Women's Day 2020 was celebrated in both MIC Thurles and Limerick. A panel discussion was held on both campuses on 6 and 9 March. The panels comprised of staff, students and those with strong links to the College. The events aimed to highlight the fantastic female role models we have within MIC, inspiring us with their work. The panelists spoke about a diverse range of topics, some personal and some current work and research interests. A sincere thank you to both our panelists and attendees.



IWD Thurles panel members including Marguerite Gooney (BA Ed, Business & RE), Elisha Dore (BA Ed, Gaeilge & Business), Karen Steenson (Principal, CBS High School, Clonmel) and Molly Daly (Lecturer, MIC Thurles)



IWD Limerick panel members including Pamela Downes (B. Ed), Kim Maguire (Author and Online Facilitator, MIC Limerick), Dr Eva Devaney (Healthy Campus, MIC Limerick) and Helen O'Donnell (Chair Limerick Tidy Towns and Chair Equality Committee, MIC).

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## *Roma Day 2020*

International Roma Day was observed on 8 April. COVID 19 is making life more challenging, especially for Traveller and Roma communities. Watch the video below on 20 facts about Traveller and Roma experiences in Ireland.

International Traveller and Roma Day 2020

20 facts about Traveller and Roma experiences in Ireland in black and white.

From our Report Ireland and the Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, 2019



Coimisiún na hÉireann um Chearta an Duine agus Comhionannas  
Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission

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## *Online Training & Webinars*

During this time, you may be interested in some training and webinars which look at EDI and transgender topics.

### **Athena SWAN:**

Advance HE monthly webinars:

To date topics covered include **SMART action planning** and the **recruitment section** of the action plan.

Contact [edel.foster@mic.ul.ie](mailto:edel.foster@mic.ul.ie) if you would like information on the past webinars and future webinars when available.

### **LGBTQ+**

#### **BeLongTo:**

Click [here](#) to register for free LGBTQ+ Skills online training.

### **Gender Equality Webinars:**

[Introduction to Gender Equality Plans](#)

[Mobilising and engaging. Creating long lasting commitment for gender equality in research](#)

### **NISE Research Series:**

Wednesday 3rd June - *Exploring the Experiences of Transgender and Gender Diverse Children and Young People in Primary and Post-Primary Schools*, Dr Aoife Neary and Dr Ruari Santiago.

Details will be circulated to all staff from Communications.

### **Equality, Diversity & Inclusion:**

[How to prioritize diversity, equity and inclusion during a crisis.](#)

### **Gender Equality Training:**

[United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Gender Equality](#)

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## *Race Equality during COVID-19*

Ongoing coronavirus outbreak in Ireland and across the World has shaken us all.

COVID-19 crisis is worsening structural racism and inequalities in society, with vulnerable and disadvantaged minorities bearing the brunt of its impact. Coronavirus is not an excuse for racism. Watch the short video below from Amnesty Ireland on 5 ways to call out racism related to the Coronavirus.



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## *Leveraging the institutional impact of Aurora at University College Cork*

[Aurora](#) is a women-only leadership development programme provided by [Advance HE](#). It is a unique partnership initiative bringing together leadership experts and higher education institutions to take positive action to address the under-representation of women in leadership positions in the sector. [Action 5.3.9](#) of our [Athena SWAN Action Plan](#) is to support female staff to undertake the Aurora programme.

UCC have been involved with the programme since the first Irish cohort was offered in 14/15. As a result of the committed and sustained engagement with the programme, there are now over 100 past and current Aurorans within the institution. Whilst the individual impact of Aurora has been very positive at UCC, the university sought to support the Aurora alumni community to consider organisational impact.

Having brought the group together, collectively they can be more effective in bringing

about change. This is probably the most important ‘take away’ for those involved. Instead of small cohorts of Aurora alumni throughout the university knowing each other, networking & working together, the entire group together can now create a strong voice for change.

Read more about UCC’s Aurora alumni workshop [here](#).

The programme has been paused due to COVID-19. Details will be circulated for the 2020/21 programme once finalised.



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## ***HR CORNER***



## MATERNITY LEAVE

<b>Who can apply?</b>	Open to both academic and professional service staff, including employees on fixed term contracts.	
<b>How long is it for?</b>	26 weeks.	Commences at least two weeks before the baby is due.
	An additional period of up to 16 weeks unpaid Maternity Leave can also be availed of.	These weeks must be taken immediately following the last day of the maternity leave period.
<b>How do I apply?</b>	Discuss the dates/duration with your Head of Dept/Line Manager.	For births/placement before or after the expected dates, contact HR as soon as possible.
	Submit a letter of application to HR as soon as is reasonably possible, but no less than 4 weeks notice.	Employees must contact HR at least 4 weeks before the end of their maternity leave.  At this time, they should inform HR if they are returning to work or availing of the additional unpaid leave.
<b>Is my annual leave affected?</b>	Your annual leave is not affected; you maintain your full annual leave entitlement.	
<b>How are bank holidays accounted for?</b>	You are still entitled to public holidays during maternity leave and these should be added at the end of the leave period.	
<b>What happens if I am sick during the leave?</b>	If the new baby is hospitalised, maternity/additional maternity leave may be postponed. At least 14 weeks of maternity leave needs to have been taken in this case.	
<b>Can I apply for promotions while on leave?</b>	Yes.	
<b>What breastfeeding supports are available?</b>	Breastfeeding mothers are entitled to up to one hour each day for breastfeeding breaks.	Breastfeeding facilities are available in the College.
	This does not affect your salary.	Notification of availing of these breaks should be given to HR and line manager at least 4 weeks before the return to work date

Click [here](#) to read the College's Maternity Leave Policy.



## **EVENTS AT MIC**

### **Aleppo to Ireland Exhibition**

Aleppo to Ireland is a showing of work created by Maeve Clancy during her time as Visual Artist in Contemporary Drawing at Mary Immaculate College. Originally planned to be an onsite exhibition, due to the campus closure it is now taking place online. A larger show will take place in the College in the autumn. More information [here](#).



### **Students receive National Psychology Awards**

Cora Howe



Laura Phelan




Congratulations to the two undergraduate students who received awards for their research at the Annual Congress of Psychology Students in Ireland. Laura Phelan and


Cora Howe, both final year students on the Bachelor of Education and Psychology programme, were awarded for their work with Laura being crowned one of two overall winners in the undergraduate category, while Cora was Highly Commended for her research. Due to the current COVID-19 restrictions, the conference, which was due to be held in UCC, was moved online. More information [here](#).

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### **Twitter Highlights:**

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

 UK study finds that Athena SWAN is the single most comprehensive gender equality scheme in Europe

 Gender Action Plans (GEPs) to be a compulsory requirement for research organisations and universities to access Horizon Europe funding

 TENI video to mark Trans Day of Visibility

### ***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](mailto:edel.foster@mic.ul.ie) or 061 204338.

Follow us on Twitter for updates [@MICAthenaSWAN](#)

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