



Queen's University Belfast Social Charter Newsletter

NOVEMBER 2020. VOL 15

Welcome to this edition of the Queen's University Belfast Social Charter Newsletter. In this volume: iPads donated to support home learning; UK-wide clinical trial for ICU patients; free COVID-19 upskilling courses; impact of COVID-19 on cancer; care-leaving in Africa; global climate change project at World Heritage sites; research on the impact of social circumstances; US Election event; Ireland and the US symposium; Entrepreneurial Impact Report and Queen's Academics elected to the Academy of Social Sciences

Queen's partners with Children and Young People Zone to provide iPads to families in Shankill area

Over 40 families in the Greater Shankill have been given iPads as part of a scheme designed to bridge the technology gap among primary school children in the area and support home learning.

An audit carried out earlier in the year by the Shankill Principals' Forum found a deficit of more than 100 devices in homes across the Greater Shankill area. Staff at the Greater Shankill Children and Young People's Action Zone undertook to source devices to address this shortfall, supported by the donation from Queen's University.

Funded by a generous gift from Santander to the Queen's University Belfast Foundation, and the Public Engagement Department at Queen's, iPads have been distributed to 42 families in the Greater Shankill area.



Research with Impact:

Queen's leading UK-wide clinical trial to examine drug effectiveness for critically ill ICU patients

A new clinical trial led by Queen's University Belfast will investigate different drugs for helping airway clearance in critically ill patients who are on mechanical ventilators.

Researchers funded by the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) will deliver a clinical trial aiming to recruit approximately 2,000 patients across the UK in order to determine the effectiveness of different treatments for supporting the management of patients with acute respiratory failure receiving mechanical ventilation.

The trial is important for optimising the way in which patients in the ICU receiving mechanical ventilation are managed, and for reducing the delivery of potentially ineffective medications.

"Investigating treatments through clinical trials is the safest and most appropriate method for determining their effect. At present we do not know whether these drugs are helpful for critically ill patients receiving mechanical ventilation. This trial offers us the opportunity to carefully test these drugs and use the knowledge we gain to improve patient care."

Dr Bronwen Connolly, The Wellcome-Wolfson Institute for Experimental Medicine, Queen's University Belfast

Education with Social Purpose:

Free postgraduate places to NI residents whose jobs have been impacted by COVID-19.

Queen's University is offering a suite of free Postgraduate Certificates, funded by the Department for the Economy.

These programmes are to upskill individuals in a range of subjects including Software Development, Data Analytics, Applied Cyber Security, Advanced Chemical Analysis, Biostatistics and Bioinformatics and many more.

These PGCert funded programmes are open to applicants resident in Northern Ireland only. Apply **HERE** by Sunday 29 November at 6pm. The course will start in January 2021, with the bulk of teaching completed by the end of March 2021.



Breaking Boundaries to Produce New Knowledge:

Queen's Professor launches plan to address devastating impact of COVID-19 on cancer across Europe

Professor Mark Lawler, Professor of Digital Health at Queen's University Belfast and Scientific Director for DATA-CAN, the UK's Health Data Research Hub for Cancer, has launched a European-focused '7-Point Plan'. The Plan will urgently address the devastating impact of COVID-19 on people with cancer.

The plan has been unveiled at the 2020 European Cancer Summit where European and global leaders highlighted the profound impact that the COVID-19 pandemic is having on cancer across Europe.

Professor Lawler has urged crucial attention is needed, not only to restore cancer services, but to build back better, and smarter, for the benefit of European citizens and cancer patients.

"We now have concrete data that shows the life-threatening impact of COVID-19 on our European citizens, patients and services, with hundreds of thousands of cancer diagnoses being missed and cancer treatments being delayed or postponed. This could potentially result in many thousands of lives being lost across Europe as a result of this pandemic."

Professor Mark Lawler, Queen's University Belfast

Building Positive Futures: Youth Transitions From Out-Of-Home Care In Africa

Professor Berni Kelly, Professor John Pinkerton and Dr Olinda Santin at QUB have recently launched new reports on a four-country comparative feasibility study of care-leaving in Africa.

The study provided useful insights into the experiences of 45 young people who were leaving care. Young people valued family-like approaches to care based in local communities, including support to maintain networks with biological family and same-culture communities. Given the stigma of coming from care and the challenges young people experienced, a more flexible and stepped reduction in support was recommended for those moving on from care including emotional, financial and practical support. These supports also need to be responsive to the varying experiences and needs of care leavers across the domains of gender, disability and culture.



Sustainability:

Queen's researcher leads global climate change project at World Heritage sites

A researcher at Queen's is leading a new global project focusing on helping two African communities to manage the impact of climate change on their cultural heritage.

Dr Will Megarry, senior lecturer in Geographical Information Science and Archaeology at the School of Natural and Built Environment, is lead investigator on the CVI-Africa project – the Climate Vulnerability Index for World Heritage properties in Africa.

CVI is a tool developed by academics to analyse climate risk for World Heritage properties by considering both current and projected climate impacts on cultural heritage, and its associated impact on local communities. Africa is projected to warm more rapidly than most other regions in the world, meaning that communities and their heritage continue to be especially hard-hit by the impacts of climate change.

"The CVI-Africa project will support communities in their efforts to safeguard cultural heritage, respond to climate change and seek sustainable development options."

Dr Will Megarry, School of Natural and Built Environment, Queen's University Belfast

Equality and Excellence:

Queen's investigating how social circumstances and adversity impact health outcomes in later life

Researchers from the Centre for Public Health, in collaboration with international partners, have secured a competitive grant to investigate how social circumstances and life adversity impact the epigenome and our health outcomes as we age.

The grant has been awarded by the US-Ireland R&D Partnership Programme Award and worth ~£.3.6 million.

This unique collaboration will examine social, economic, health and epigenetic data from three national studies of ageing in the family of Health and Retirement studies - the Northern Ireland Cohort for the Longitudinal study of Ageing (NICOLA), the US Health and Retirement Study (HRS), and the Irish Longitudinal Study of Ageing (TILDA).

The award will strengthen international research to examine how social circumstances and life challenges impact the epigenome and health in later years and is locally supported by the Northern Ireland Health and Social Care (HSC) Research & Development Office, Public Health Agency and the Medical Research Council.

"This research will help us to better understand today for a healthier tomorrow. It will robustly identify new links between people's experiences throughout their lives and subsequent health outcomes in adults aged over 50 years. This is important as the biological markers that we identify may then be used to promote and maximise healthy ageing."

Professor Amy Jayne McKnight, Centre for Public Health, Queen's University Belfast

Civic Culture and Intercultural Dialogue: The US Election and Foreign Policy

'The US Election and Foreign Policy: Implications for Northern Ireland, the UK, Ireland, and the EU' will take place online on **2 December 2020, 5pm - 6pm**.

This Panel Discussion hosted by Queen's University Belfast and the UCL Centre on US Politics, with support from the US Department of State, is part of the series DECISION 2020: Interpreting the US Elections.

Facilitated by Professor Richard English, PVC Queen's University Belfast, the event will feature panellists Elizabeth Kennedy Trudeau (US Consul General in Belfast), Rory Montgomery (Honorary Professor, Queen's University Belfast) and Jonathan Powell (Honorary Professor, Queen's University Belfast).

To register click on the image below.



**THE US ELECTION
AND FOREIGN POLICY**

2 DEC 2020 5.00-6.00PM GMT

DR JULIE NORMAN INTRODUCES (LEFT TO RIGHT):
PROFESSOR RICHARD ENGLISH (QUEEN'S); ELIZABETH KENNEDY TRUDEAU (US CONSUL GENERAL);
JONATHAN POWELL (HON. PROF, QUEEN'S); RORY MONTGOMERY (HON. PROF, QUEEN'S)

REGISTRATION ESSENTIAL: <http://go.qub.ac.uk/us-election-2020>

'Bridging the Atlantic: Ireland and the US' symposium

Earlier this week, Queen's University Belfast participated in the 'Bridging the Atlantic: Ireland and the US' symposium, the second annual symposium on Ireland-US relations which discussed transatlantic relations, Ireland, the US and the EU.

Academics, analysts, policymakers, and journalists engaged in a number of panel discussions on leadership, Irish-America, Brexit and the US Presidential Election.

President Bill Clinton delivered an address on 'Atlantic Relations in a New Era' and shared his reflections on the legacies of John Lewis and John Hume.

Recognising and Rewarding Contributions from Staff and Students: Queen's comes top in Entrepreneurial Impact Report

Queen's University Belfast has claimed the top position in an Entrepreneurial Impact report recently published by Octopus Ventures.

The ranking measures UK universities' effectiveness in terms of their production of intellectual property, creation of spinout companies, and successful exits from such spinout companies, relative to their total funding.

Queen's maintained its top spot for the second year running, being noted for its highly effective approach to developing spinouts, with a key focus on 'customer discovery'. This is achieved through enterprise programmes such as Innovate UK's Innovation to Commercialisation of University Research (ICURe) programme, that help surface early stage promising research projects and set them on a path towards commercialisation.

Queen's Academics elected to the Academy of Social Sciences

Professor Katy Hayward and Professor David Phinnemore were elected Fellows alongside 71 other leading UK social scientists for their outstanding contributions to research, and for their application of social science to policy, education, society and the economy.

The Academy's Fellowship is made up of distinguished individuals from academic, public and private sectors, across the full breadth of the social sciences. Through leadership, applied research, policymaking and practice, they have helped to address and deepen understanding of some of the toughest challenges facing our society and the world.

Katy Hayward is Professor of Political Sociology in the School of Social Science, Education and Social Work, and a Senior Fellow at the UK in a Changing Europe. She is a leading political sociologist on the island of Ireland and a sought-after expert on Brexit, the Irish border and the peace process.

David Phinnemore is Professor of European Politics in the School of History, Anthropology, Philosophy and Politics. He is widely regarded as one of Europe's leading academic experts on the European Union and Brexit, particularly in relation to Northern Ireland.

