



**QUEEN'S  
UNIVERSITY  
BELFAST**

# Queen's University Belfast Social Charter Newsletter

**JUNE 2020. VOL 3**

Welcome to the second edition of the Queen's University Belfast Social Charter Newsletter. In this volume: Queen's University's first digital TEDx event; the University's academics to the fore in COVID-19 related research; new doctoral training programme launched; LGBT+ Allies network at Queen's; Sustainability and Climate Change Series announced and Queen's academics admitted to the Royal Irish Academy.

## [TEDx Queen's University Belfast Goes Digital](#)

Queen's University Belfast has announced its line-up for the University's first TEDx Digital event, set to air on **10 June 2020 at 3.00pm**, and supported by corporate partner PWC.

Entitled 'Adapt and Change', the digital event offers informed opinion pieces and reflections on the changes taking place all around us a result of the global COVID-19 pandemic. The varied line-up includes 15 short talks by academics from across the University.

The programme of speakers includes some of Queen's University's healthcare team who are working at the frontline of the pandemic, helping to find ways to support the fight against COVID-19. There will also be talks by researchers and academics from the Faculties of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences, as well as Engineering and Physical Sciences.



**[Register here for Queen's  
University's Digital TEDx](#)**

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## Research with Impact:

### Queen's academics part of development team for global COVID-19 risk assessment tool

An online tool for people to calculate their risk of contracting and spreading COVID-19, 'Your COVID-19 Risk', has been launched by a group of Queen's academic alongside colleagues from 35 countries.

Focusing on three important behaviours – hand hygiene, keeping sufficient distance in public and staying home - users can use the tool to get an estimate of their risk. Based on their answers, the tool will then offer users tailored advice on how to change behaviour to minimise risk to themselves and loved ones.

***"As we start to relax restrictions in the coming months these key behaviours will continue to be important for reducing transmission of COVID-19 in the community. The more people that use the tool, the better the advice. This will enable governments and health agencies to keep improving their messages to the general public."***

Dr Jenny Groarke, School of Psychology, Queen's University

### Queen's survey reveals high rates of mental ill health in NI amidst current COVID-19 pandemic

The research survey from Queen's explored the psychological impact of lockdown and the COVID-19 pandemic on people in Northern Ireland.

The team collected data from over 2,500 people across the UK of which 470 people were living in Northern Ireland. This is the largest data collection exercise on COVID-19 related mental health in Northern Ireland to date.

The survey found that within 470 people, one third of people in Northern Ireland meet the criteria for anxiety (30 per cent) and depression (33 per cent), and one in five (20 per cent) meet the criteria for COVID-19 related PTSD due to the current pandemic.

***"The rates of self-reported anxiety, depression and COVID-19 related symptoms during the first month of lockdown are quite striking within our Northern Ireland specific data. They are comparable yet slightly higher than the rates reported in UK studies; mostly collecting data from England. This is understandable since Northern Ireland has previously reported a 25 per cent higher prevalence of mental ill health compared to England and our results have shown those with pre-existing mental health conditions are most at risk"***

Professor Chérie Armour, Stress, Trauma And Research Conditions (STARC), Queen's University

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## Education with Social Purpose:

### Queen's launches CITI-GENS doctoral training programme

Queen's University Belfast has launched recruitment for the Collaboration in Training and Innovation for Growing, Evolving and Networked Societies (CITI-GENS) COFUND Doctoral Training Programme.

The CITI-GENS programme at Queen's is a MSCA COFUND Doctoral Training Programme. It will recruit and train 20 outstanding international early stage researchers (ESRs) who will be transformed into a professional and skilled cohort addressing global challenges aligned to the themes of the Belfast Region City Deal innovation ecosystem: Information Technology, Advanced Manufacturing, Life Sciences and the Creative Industries.

*"The Belfast Regional City Deal provided a unique framework for us to develop the proposal. Our success in the competition to win funding was largely based on the potential we saw for synergies between CITI-GENS research and the ambitions of the City Deal for innovation in respect of information technology, advanced manufacturing, life sciences and the creative industries."*

Dr Muiris MacCarthaigh, Programme Co-Director, Queen's University

## Breaking Boundaries to Produce New Knowledge:

### Queen's launch global survey on children's views and experiences of 'Life under Coronavirus'

The Centre for Children's Rights at Queen's have launched a global survey for children and young people (aged 8-17 years) to get their views and experiences of 'Life under Coronavirus'.

The survey is the first global survey of children's views and experiences of COVID-19 (coronavirus), and will be available in English, French and Spanish with other translations to follow. The aim of the survey is to find out how children feel, whether they are able to learn and play, see their parents, stay in touch with their friends, if they can access reliable information and support, and if they are healthy and safe in these challenging times.

The survey will run until 27 June 2020,  
and is available [HERE](#).



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## **Equality and Excellence: LGBT+ Allies Network at Queen's University Belfast**

As part of Queen's University's continued commitment to building an inclusive culture and supporting our LGBT+ staff, the first steps have been made in developing an informal network of LGBT+ Allies staff at the University.

An Ally is a (typically) straight and/or cis person who supports members of the LGBT community. In a workplace, good allies recognise that LGBT people can perform better if they can be themselves, and that everyone benefits from inclusion, and so allies use their role within an organisation to create a culture where this can happen.



## **Civic Culture and Intercultural Dialogue: Queen's research finds an increase in faith online during the coronavirus pandemic**

A research study from Queen's has revealed how faith leaders and communities on the island of Ireland adapted and responded to the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic.

The survey reveals how people of faith are grieving, coping, moving religion online, and serving the wider community; and allows us to see how faith leaders are coping with the stresses of ministry.

During the pandemic, many faith leaders who responded to the survey described an increase in religious practice, linked to moving worship and services online. They observed surprising numbers of people tuning in for worship services and other events, noting that people who would not have entered their church building were accessing online services.

***"Moving faith online has created new opportunities for religious practice. In some cases, lay volunteers have assisted faith leaders in moving faith online. This is an opportunity to increase and enhance lay involvement in many aspects of ministry and should be encouraged,"***

Dr Gladys Ganiel, School of Social Sciences, Education and Social Work Queen's University

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## **Sustainability:** **Sustainability and Climate Change Series**

Queen's University Belfast's School of Biological Sciences has announced the first events in its online 'Sustainability and Climate Change Series', which will address issues relating to sustainability and climate change in Northern Ireland.

The events provides an opportunity for staff and students across the university, as well as stakeholders from industry, government and NGOs the opportunity to hear about some of the work being undertaken to tackle climate change and sustainability both in Northern Ireland and across the globe.

Professor John Barry, School of History, Anthropology, Philosophy and Politics at Queen's and Co-chair of the Belfast Climate Commission will begin the series on Monday 15 June at 3.00pm.



## **Recognising and Rewarding Contributions from Staff and Students:** **Queen's academics admitted to the Royal Irish Academy**

Professor Christopher Marsh, Professor Steven Bell, and Professor Christopher Elliott from Queen's University were admitted alongside 29 new members for 2020 through a remote Admittance Ceremony on Friday 22 May.

The members were admitted in recognition of their outstanding academic achievements.

*"I am delighted that these highly esteemed academics from Queen's have been recognised by the Royal Irish Academy for their outstanding academic research and achievements. I warmly congratulate each of them on this honour."*

Professor Ian Greer, President and Vice-Chancellor, Queen's University