



# Queen's University Belfast Social Charter Newsletter

JULY 2020. VOL 5

Welcome to this edition of the Queen's University Belfast Social Charter Newsletter. In this volume: Support for business with Adapt4Growth programme; It's Graduation Season; COVID-19 Research and Analysis; Pathway Opportunity Programme and annual Blues Awards go online; and Queen's academic part of funding boost to develop zero emission ferries

---

## Queen's University Belfast launches free SME business support programme: Adapt4Growth

Queen's University Belfast has launched Adapt4Growth, a business support programme designed for SMEs across Northern Ireland to help them maintain a competitive position in global markets, secure jobs and increase productivity during and following the COVID-19 crisis.

The programme, which is part funded by the Department for the Economy (DfE) through the Connected programme, is intended to stretch ideas, test market possibilities, and create dynamic and insightful business plans in the current uncertain economic climate.

The programme, which is open to furloughed and non-furloughed workers as a training exercise is directed by an experienced team of experts from Queen's University and supported by European specialists in innovation.

***"This free-to-attend 12-week programme allows NI companies to be better placed to explore new market opportunities, maintain a competitive position and increase productivity during and following the COVID-19 pandemic."***

*Paul Donachy, Head of Innovation Programmes, Queen's University Belfast*



---

## Research with Impact:

### Queen's University leading UK-wide trial to measure COVID-19 antibodies in children

Queen's University Belfast is leading a UK-wide trial called 'Seroprevalence of SARS-Cov-2 infection in healthy children' to measure antibodies to SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19) in healthy children.

Over 1,000 children (known as 'Covid Warriors') from Northern Ireland, Scotland, England and Wales will have their antibodies measured at baseline, 2 months and 6 months.

The aim of the study is to assess the numbers of children who may have had COVID-19, and if those children have antibodies that may be able to fight off the infection. The findings from this study will be important for estimating the proportion of children that have been exposed to SARS-CoV-2 and have antibodies that may be consistent with immunity. This data can then be considered as part of planning measures, such as opening schools and opening routine paediatric services, such as health visiting and paediatric clinics.

*"I very much welcome the fact that Queen's University is leading this hugely important UK-wide trial. Expert research has a central role in the world's battle against Covid-19. Our understanding of this virus has already been greatly enhanced at pace but there is still much more to learn. My thanks go to everyone involved in this study."*

Robin Swann MLA, Minister of Health

## Education with Social Purpose: Graduation season has arrived!

Graduation month has arrived and this year, owing to COVID-19 restrictions, graduations will be streamed live on a number of Social Media platforms to enable the biggest audience.

Each ceremony will be streamed on Facebook Live, so be sure not to miss out by following Queen's University Belfast to get a notification to tune in when it begins. Alternatively, viewers can watch via YouTube.



VIRTUAL GRADUATION  
CELEBRATION  
SCHEDULE  
JULY 2020



---

## **Breaking Boundaries to Produce New Knowledge: Covid-19 & Food podcast**

As well as being a global health crisis, the Covid-19 pandemic is intricately linked with food – from the origins of the virus through to the impact on international food systems, the food industry and the wider food economy.

In this podcast series, leading figures from the Institute for Global Food Security at Queen's University Belfast focus on the areas where the pandemic has caused the biggest shockwaves, from international disruption to supply and demand to the fierce debate around the future of agriculture and environmental sustainability.

In episode 1, Dr Simon Doherty, Vice-President of the British Veterinary Association and a Senior Lecturer at IGFS talks to IGFS Communications Officer Una Bradley about the impact of Covid 19 on farm animals and farming systems - and even our pets.

## **Civic Culture and Intercultural Dialogue: Queen's University launches COVID-19 Research Roundtable video series**

In the context of a global pandemic, is sharing our personal data now a societal duty – or is it an intrusion too far? Does COVID-19 put our food supplies at risk? Are we all in this together, or has the virus exacerbated already existing inequalities? What of those with unrelated health conditions, and what will be the long-term effect on our health service? How will the crisis affect other aspects of society, such as our arts and culture?

To explore these issues, Professor Emma Flynn, Pro Vice-Chancellor for Research and Enterprise at Queen's, has invited a range of experts, both academics and practitioners, from within and beyond the University, to share their expertise in a series of panel discussions.

In the first programme, 'Looking out for Big Brother', Professor Flynn and her guests – Professor Frank Kee and Professor Máire O'Neill of Queen's; Jayne Brady, the Belfast Digital and Innovation Commissioner; and Dr Stephen Farrell of Trinity College Dublin – discuss whether sharing our personal data is now a societal duty, or an intrusion too far.



---

## Equality and Excellence: Pathway Opportunity Programme Goes Online

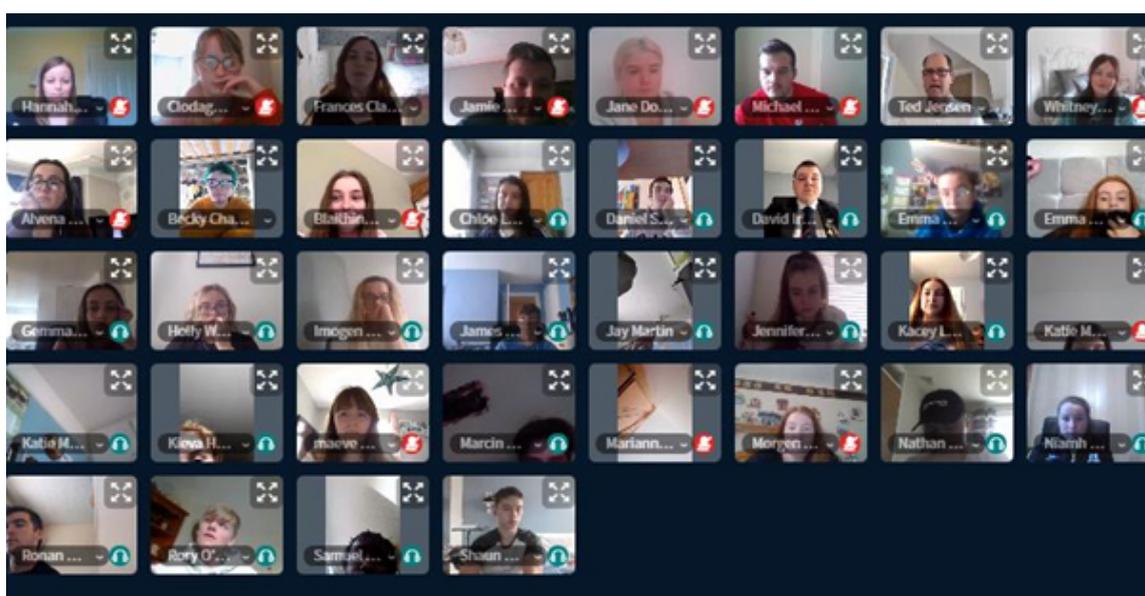
The Queen's Pathway Opportunity Programme, organised by the University's Widening Participation Unit, continued its work with 235 Year-13 students in supporting and encouraging them to come to Queen's University in September 2021.

The Pathway Opportunity Programme provides a route for talented young people who live in Northern Ireland who have the desire and ambition to study at Queen's but may require additional support and encouragement to reach their full potential.

The 'University Information Session', which is usually an on-campus event in the Larmour Lecture Theatre, was run online this year as 8 individual conferences, one with each of the 8 subject specific Pathways (Law, Business, Engineering, BioSci, AHSS, Medicine Dentistry & Biomedical Science, Natural and Built Environment and Computer Science).

Using the Canvas VLE Conferencing technology we covered Student Finance and Budgeting, a Virtual Tour of Queen's Quiz, A Day in the Life of a Queen's student and Well-Being, along with touching on Admissions and Accommodation questions along the way.

Next up is the online week-long summer schools with each of the Pathways, allowing the students to learn much more about their specific Pathway subject and engage with the Queen's academics, PhD demonstrators and Academic Guides (Queen's undergrads).



---

## **Sustainability:**

### **Queen's academic part of £33m funding boost to develop zero emission ferries**

Researchers from Queen's University Belfast are part of a £33 million UK Government innovation grant to develop zero emissions ferries in Belfast over the next four years.

Professor Brian Falzon, Head of the School of Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering at Queen's, and Director of the Advanced Composites Research Group, will lead the work alongside Dr Iain Percy OBE, CEO Artemis Technologies and double Olympic sailing champion; and Jonathan Nicols, Systems Chief Engineer at Artemis Technologies.

Professor Falzon will use some of this funding to lead on the development of state-of-the-art computational modelling tools and advanced manufacturing technologies to help design the lightweight structure of these zero emissions carbon-fibre composite ferries.



## **Recognising and Rewarding Contributions from Staff and Students: Queen's Blues Awards Go Online**

Usually staged in the Sir William Whitla Hall on the University campus, the 2020 Queen's Deep RiverRock Blues Awards were hosted virtually by sports psychologist Hugh Campbell, with keynote addresses from High Performance expert Gary Keegan, Vice-Chancellor Professor Ian Greer and Head of Sport Liz McLaughlin.

The Blues Awards is the annual celebration of student sport at Queen's University.

The 2020 Queen's Deep RiverRock Blues Award winners were:

- Team of the Year – Ladies Hockey
- Coach of the Year – Rugby's Derek Suffern
- Individual Achievement – Ronan Young
- Special Contribution to Sport – Simon Bell