

What is The Science Shop?

The Science Shop at Ulster University and Queen's University Belfast serves as a broker between community organisations and university students. We support community organisations to develop their research ideas into small-scale projects which we promote to academic colleagues and students. We act as facilitators during the research setup process and make sure that projects meet the learning needs of students and research needs of community partners. Projects are always carried out as part of a student's coursework and have academic supervision.

Through this work, students gain insight into the value and impact of the community and voluntary sector in Northern Ireland. They develop key interpersonal and research skills while growing in confidence, empathy, and awareness. These experiences also help students understand their role as active citizens, better equipping them to contribute meaningfully to society.

In return, organisations receive evidence-based reports. These can be used to inform and help shape the development of policy and practice or assess future development opportunities.

Welcoming New Staff

Dr Johanne Brolly is a Community Outreach Officer and lead for the Science Shop at Ulster University. After completing a PhD in chemistry, she taught chemistry for over 16 years. Johanne was also a Chemistry Education Coordinator, providing continuous professional development workshops to teachers across Ireland.

Chougher Maria Doughramajian is the Community Engaged Research and Learning Officer at the Science Shop at Queen's University Belfast, working alongside Dr Emma McKenna and Lynsey Davis. She is also a PhD candidate at Trinity College Dublin, School of Religion, Theology and Peace studies.

Farewell from Eileen Martin

“As I step back from my work in Queen's University Science Shop I want to thank all the community organisations across Northern Ireland who have inspired me and supported our students. It has also been deeply rewarding to collaborate with dedicated colleagues, both locally and internationally, to build community-engaged research in to the curriculum of our universities. And finally to my colleagues in the Science Shops at Queen's and Ulster, it has been a privilege to develop this work with you and I wish you all success in your future endeavours.”

- Eileen



Here's what we have been up to...

@ Ulster University

Compass Advocacy Network and Public Relations

26 post-graduate Public Relations students worked in partnership with the Compass Advocacy Network Ltd (CAN), a Ballymoney-based charity who work with children and adults with learning disabilities, autism and mental health issues. The students used their knowledge and expertise to develop a PR fundraising campaign for a new Respite Holiday Village at Lislagan farm. The students gained valuable insights and practical experience, while CAN benefited from fresh perspectives, innovative ideas and impactful solutions.



@ Queen's University

Fermanagh Community Transport and Maths

Earlier this year, 24 Maths students presented projects developed in collaboration with Fermanagh Community Transport, an Enniskillen-based charity supporting people with limited access to transport. Students tackled real-world challenges, applying mathematical models to issues such as congestion, route optimisation, and reducing car dependency. The partnership gave students valuable experience, while FCT benefited from fresh thinking and practical, data-informed solutions to enhance their vital services.



SPORTED and Advanced Sports Studies

23 Sports Science undergraduate students collaborated with SPORTED to continue to deliver expertise, resources and vital support to local community-based sports clubs, who use sport and physical activity to make a positive impact on young people and on their communities. The final year students worked with the 8 local clubs to develop individual Club Development plans, creating a vision and goals for each club, to grow their membership, develop volunteers, support club staff and ensure efficient use of resources.



Mourne Heritage Trust & Leadership for Sustainable Development

LSD students collaborated with the Mourne Heritage Trust to assess the impact of the 2021 wildfire on soil health in the Eastern Mournes. The students explored how post-fire conditions affect biodiversity and vegetation recovery. Their findings prompted practical recommendations for habitat restoration. The project offered hands-on experience whilst supporting MHT's mission to enhance environmental resilience and inform future land management in this protected landscape. It is also inspiring international Science Shops as part of the **LOESS Education for Soil Health** EU project.



Do you have a project idea?

We are now setting up projects for the next academic year. If you are a community organisation interested in collaborating with the Science Shops at Ulster University or Queen's University Belfast, scan or click the QR code to access the Expression of Interest form.



Scan/Click me!

We are particularly looking for projects in the following areas: environmental sciences, engineering, business, health sciences, social policy, public relations, psychology, communication and marketing, law, and history. Contact science.shop@qub.ac.uk or scienceshop@ulster.ac.uk to find out more.