

# RISING TO THE FUTURE

UCD Strategy 2020-2024



University College Dublin  
Ireland's Global University

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# INTRODUCTION

**We are facing an age of unprecedented opportunity and challenge. Society is being transformed by digital and communications technology and is itself transforming the very environment which supports all life on earth. From a communications and transport perspective, society is more connected than ever before, but requires new ways of working together and resolving differences.**



**Through our research, our education and the many ways in which we interact with the world around us, universities have a vital role to play in these disruptive times. At UCD, we have both the opportunity and the obligation to ensure that, in everything we do and say, we are contributing to the flourishing of Ireland and the world.**

Building on the traditions of the past, we are a university of the future, connected and connecting, engaged and engaging, committed to a sustainable future built on a healthy biosphere.

We will contribute to this sustainable future through our graduates, through our research and through the way we conduct our business. As transactional activities will be increasingly handled electronically, human activity will revolve more and more around creativity, strategic and critical thinking, problem solving and communication.

To respond to these key trends innovatively and proactively, we will adopt four UCD strategic themes which will permeate everything that we do as an institution, guiding the development

of our students, our research and our University community.

We will ensure that every member of our community is enabled to achieve their full potential, and we will embrace the principles of equality, diversity and inclusion so that no one is excluded.

Over the last five years UCD has made remarkable progress towards the objectives of the UCD Strategy 2015-2020. We have achieved improvements in student satisfaction; research quality, quantity and impact; student-faculty ratio and gender equality. Notable achievements have been made in the area of engagement, a central theme of that strategy. We have seen extraordinary increases in alumni engagement, industry engagement and global engagement, and a significant increase in philanthropic support. These achievements, made against a backdrop of reduced government funding for Irish universities, were enabled by our building of non-exchequer income.

During the period of the last strategy we moved to a five-year planning horizon, with our projections of student and faculty numbers extended to ten

years, informing a strategic campus development plan. We adopted a financial strategy which will see our student-faculty ratio reduced and our infrastructure needs addressed over the period of this strategy. Hence several enablers of this strategy are already well developed. A number of objectives of the last strategy have been substantially achieved, while others, with significant progress already made, remain current and have been retained in this updated strategy.

The progress of UCD over the last five years is a credit to all the members of our University community and to our partners and supporters. We look forward to your continued support of UCD as we embark on this next chapter in the history of a truly extraordinary University.

**Professor Andrew J. Deeks**  
President of University College Dublin

# CORE STATEMENTS

**Our mission is to contribute to the flourishing of Dublin, Ireland, Europe and the world through the excellence and impact of our research and scholarship, the quality of our graduates and our national and global engagement; providing a supportive community in which every member of the University is enabled to achieve their full potential.**

## Our mottos are

- ▶ **Ad astra** *'to the stars'* reflecting our pursuit of achievement and success.
- ▶ **Cothrom na féinne** *'fair play'* reflecting our commitment to justice and equality.

## Our values are

- ▶ excellence
- ▶ creativity
- ▶ integrity
- ▶ collegiality
- ▶ engagement
- ▶ diversity

## Our vision for 2024 is that:

As Ireland's Global University, UCD will rise to the global challenges of the future by pursuing four strategic themes: Creating a Sustainable Global Society; Transforming through Digital Technology; Building a Healthy World; and Empowering Humanity. These strategic themes will shape our research, our teaching and learning and the way we behave and function as a community and as an institution.

We will be truly global in our comprehensive range of disciplines, in the reach and impact of our research and innovation, in our holistic educational experience, in the diversity of our University community, and in our engagement with all sectors of society and with all regions of the world. We will be distinctive in our welcoming and inclusive community, our commitment to innovation and justice, and our agility. We will bring the best of the world to Ireland, and the best of Ireland, including its distinct cultures, to the world.

UCD will continue to be an excellent research-intensive university with global standing and impact where a preeminent, diverse and inclusive scholarly community of students, faculty and staff work in partnership to contribute to the development of Ireland and the world.

Our graduates will be imbued with a knowledge of the past, be capable of critically interrogating the present and of imagining and realising the future. Through a holistic student-focused and research-led educational experience which has both breadth and depth, they will be equipped with the knowledge, skills, experience and attitudes they need to flourish in present and future Irish and global societies.



# RISING TO THE FUTURE

UCD Strategy 2020-2024

STRATEGIC THEMES

**CREATING  
A SUSTAINABLE  
GLOBAL SOCIETY**

**TRANSFORMING  
THROUGH DIGITAL  
TECHNOLOGY**

**BUILDING  
A HEALTHY  
WORLD**

**EMPOWERING  
HUMANITY**

CORE OBJECTIVES

Recruit additional excellent faculty members.

Increase our student population.

Increase the quality, quantity and impact of our research, scholarship and innovation.

Build world-class facilities and amenities.

Provide an inclusive educational experience that defines international best practice.

Implement advanced systems and services.

Continue to build our engagement locally, nationally and internationally.

Develop our faculty and staff.

Attract, retain and develop an excellent and diverse cohort of students, faculty and staff.

Generate additional non-exchequer income.

KEY ENABLERS



University College Dublin  
Ireland's Global University

# OUR STRATEGIC THEMES

Building a Healthy World



Empowering Humanity



Transforming through Digital Technology



Creating a Sustainable Global Society



**To shape UCD's response to the global challenges created by our rapidly changing and transforming society, we have selected four strategic themes on which to focus our efforts. We will respond holistically to each of these themes. The themes will shape our research, influence the teaching of our faculty and our students' learning, and impact on the way we behave and function as a community and as an institution.**

We will create a governance structure to provide leadership to each theme, which will include relevant faculty, staff and student leaders to ensure that our response to the themes is truly holistic.

We will build awareness, knowledge and relevant skills in each theme area through training and development programmes for our faculty, staff and students, and for the wider community. In this way the themes will contribute to research, teaching and learning across our discipline areas, and will inform the way we conduct our

business as an organisation. At the same time, we will continue to pursue excellent disciplinary research which enhances human knowledge.

We will provide a dedicated fund for each strategic theme to fund innovation and transformation projects, with priority being given to projects that will have maximum impact on our University community and wider society.

# THEME 01



*UCD Estate Services team member surveying solar panels on campus residences*

# Creating a Sustainable Global Society

**As a matter of urgency, humanity must learn to live sustainably without degrading its shared planet.**

Food must be produced sustainably to feed a stable human population. Energy must be provided from renewable sources, and the processes of generating and storing that energy must not impact negatively on the environment. Material goods of all types must be made from recycled and/or renewable materials. There must be reduced levels of inequality within and between communities. These goals require significant development of technologies and infrastructure, and changes in human behaviours and institutions.

UCD has a long-standing commitment to sustainability. Members of the UCD community have been to the fore in shaping the UN Sustainable Development Goals. We have led in research areas such as the bioeconomy, agri-food and renewable energy and have developed education programmes in sustainable development and humanitarian assistance. We will now build on this expertise to deliver a holistic response to the challenges of sustainability that spans and unifies our activities in this area.

We will embed the principles of a sustainable society in our University community. Undertaking research which advances the 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals through generating, sharing and applying knowledge for maximum impact, we will deliver interdisciplinary educational programmes which support our students and graduates to contribute most effectively to the development of a sustainable society.

New governance arrangements for sustainability will enable the University to develop, communicate, implement and adapt its ambitions to the challenges faced by the world. This will ensure that our campus demonstrates the principles of sustainability across policies and operations in respect of estates, energy, technology, procurement, HR, governance and partnership with our neighbours and wider community. The University will set ambitious targets and will report annually against these targets, becoming a 'living lab' for a sustainable community.

# THEME 02



Students using virtual reality headsets in the UCD Moore Centre for Business

## Transforming through Digital Technology

The continuing advance of computing and mobile technology, with networks of increasing speed and capacity, the development of cloud computing and storage, the increasing number of network-connected sensors and devices, together with significant advances in AI and machine learning is transforming entire industries and changing the way we work and the way companies and institutions are organised. Further developments in data analysis and artificial intelligence will bring new tools to many environments, allowing us to pursue opportunities and challenges we can imagine now, as well as changes we cannot anticipate but for which we must be prepared.

Transactional activities are increasingly mediated by computer systems, and the cashless society is rapidly becoming a reality. Devices and apps allow consumers to interact directly with data systems with little human intervention. Developments in machine learning will further accelerate this trend, and data analysis and artificial intelligence will bring new tools to many work environments. The nature of work is undergoing a revolution.

UCD is already at the forefront of significant contributions in AI, data science and cybersecurity. We are widely recognised for our innovative

and impactful work at the forefront of the field of digital culture, and we are pioneering new interdisciplinary approaches to digitally record and analyse our past, to better understand our present and to shape and develop our future using digital technologies.

We will continue to contribute to the transformations made possible by digital technology, and will realise these possibilities in our own community; in our research, teaching and learning; and in our operations and decision-making. We will integrate our digital campus with our physical campus to provide a welcome, modern, and intellectually stimulating environment. We will embed digital technology to ask new questions, to discover new knowledge, and to analyse what we know afresh. We will also embed digital technology in our teaching and learning, to work together, to deliver services, and to monitor and understand our activities and impact as an institution. We will search for, discover, and introduce new ways to advance the digital literacy of our students and will provide opportunities for all members of our University community to understand and make use of the digital technologies relevant to their areas.



# Building a Healthy World

**The health of all living things on Earth is intimately connected through the biosphere.**

From microbes living in soil through to human beings, the food chain and the environment connects all living things. Nevertheless, many advances in human, animal and plant health occur on the microorganism or cellular level, and personalised healthcare based on bioinformatics is developing quickly. While great strides have been made in treating communicable diseases, the incidence of non-communicable diseases is increasing dramatically, particularly in the developed world. Health must therefore be considered at multiple levels.

UCD is the only Irish university which brings together human and animal health sciences, agriculture and food sciences, and environmental and social sciences. We have extensive research and teaching in food production and nutrition and health, together with expertise in personalised medicine, life course and human ageing. We are therefore uniquely positioned to address the education and research synergies between the sciences of human, animal and environmental health.

We will advance the understanding of human, animal and environmental health and wellbeing for the benefit of society, from the cellular level to the population level, and from the individual level to the biosphere as a whole, recognising the interconnectivity between all living things and utilising the One Health concept. We will seek sustainable and ethical interventions of all types which will contribute to the health and wellbeing of individuals, populations and the environment. Novel interdisciplinary teaching and research collaborations will be promoted to address important aspects of health and wellbeing for humans, animals and the global ecosystem. We will develop and support programmes to promote good health, to prevent disease and ill health, and to treat medical conditions.

We will make health and wellbeing programmes available to all members of the UCD community, building on the Healthy UCD initiative. We will position UCD as a model for a healthy society, seeking to educate all members of our community in the fundamentals of healthy living and in the benefits of having a healthy lifestyle.

## THEME 03

Apple trees from the Lamb Clarke Historical  
Irish Apple Collection UCD Rosemount  
Environmental Research Station

Representing harmony with the elements:  
 'Wind and Water' by Paddy Campbell



# THEME 04

## Empowering Humanity

Understanding what shapes human thinking and motivates behavioural change holds the key to successfully addressing the societal challenges represented in our first three strategic themes, and to empower all members of our University community to attain their full potential in our present and future societies. This understanding will also contribute to overcoming emerging societal issues such as mental health challenges, tribalism and isolationism, and rejection of scientific and expert knowledge.

Such societal challenges can only be overcome by changing behaviour. Changing behaviour is challenging, and long-lasting change will only come about by achieving behavioural change at population level. We will rise to this challenge by leveraging the breadth and depth of expertise across the university to enhance our understanding of the social, cultural and economic factors influencing healthy, sustainable human behaviour. We will also continue building a holistic understanding of the behaviour and interaction of individuals in societies, organisations and cultures, and an understanding of humanity in a broader sense.

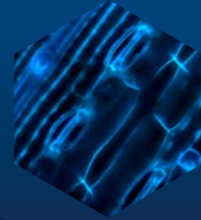
Digital technology is increasing the number of people working in areas of creativity, strategic and critical thinking, problem solving, teamworking and

communication, and these interpersonal skills are therefore increasingly important in employment and leadership contexts. With the reduction of repetitive routine work and the increased availability of every kind of distraction, intrapersonal skills of self-management and self-control are also becoming more and more important.

Globalisation of society is bringing people from different countries and regions together on a scale never experienced before, while recognition of the value of diversity and inclusivity at a national level is bringing together people from different social groups. Industry is increasingly multi-national and supply chains crisscross the world. Skills of working across cultures, including language skills, are therefore increasingly important to success, understanding and problem-solving. As Ireland's Global University, with an unrivalled diversity in our student population, we are uniquely positioned in the country to advance this agenda.

We will increase our research into understanding human behaviour in this evolving context, and we will provide every member of our University community with opportunities to develop an understanding of human behaviour and thinking, and to develop the interpersonal and intrapersonal skills needed to live and work successfully in a world which is transforming and increasingly global.

# OUR CORE OBJECTIVES



**In order to achieve our vision for 2024 we have set four core objectives which we will pursue during the period 2020-2024.**

Our four strategic themes will be embraced in each of these core objectives. For each core objective we have defined key performance indicators (KPIs) and targets for those KPIs, so that we can track our progress against the objectives.

# CORE OBJECTIVE 01

## Increase the quality, quantity and impact of our research, scholarship and innovation.

Structure of wheat leaf surface by Zsolt Váry, UCD  
School of Biology and Environmental Science

### Excellent research, scholarship and innovation are at the heart of University College Dublin, spanning all our disciplines and ranging from deep fundamental investigations to leading-edge applications.

Our commitment to the development and delivery of new knowledge and new solutions is particularly important at this time, as the environment and society is increasingly disrupted by technology. We will continue to address important questions and deliver impact through our findings, with particular emphasis on our strategic themes.

Research, scholarship and innovation have a vital role to play in talent development, and we want all who conduct, support or encounter research in UCD to flourish. We will strengthen and structure the benefits that undergraduate students gain from their education in a research-intensive environment. Postgraduate students and postdoctoral researchers will experience enhanced supports for career development. We will further develop our training programmes for faculty, research staff and research support staff, based on best international practice, to support them in realising their ambitions in UCD.

Excellence in research will remain central to our faculty recruitment, and our new recruitment schemes

will support the growth in our base of outstanding research faculty. We will grow our capacity within the area of our strategic themes, and we will ensure that our research engages and influences each UCD student and influences our behaviour as an organisation.

Partnerships are key to our ability to deliver impact through our research, scholarship and innovation. We will build strong partnerships with leading universities and other research bodies, with industry and with social and community organisations, and manage these partnerships in a holistic manner. A two-way conversation engaging the public will bring external insights into our research and will bring our research to the public in lively and stimulating ways. We will continue to make the case for strong public support of research, based on clear and compelling articulation of the value and impact of research.

Our research intensity will be manifested in all aspects of our operations, and we will be a trusted and valued source of expertise. Our structures in support of research and innovation will be informed by

best international practice. We will enhance the competitiveness of UCD researchers in securing research funding, and in commercialising their research outputs where appropriate. Our programmes for capturing and conveying research impact will be developed further. We will grow our internal funding schemes in support of research, in particular excellent research facing funding gaps in the external environment. Through developing our capability in research analytics, research performance expectations will be set and performance will be measured.

We will promote awareness of UCD research around the world, through our publications, through our engagement with the media, and through our participation in and hosting of international conferences and meetings. We will also promote the mobility of our researchers and the hosting of researchers from partner organisations.

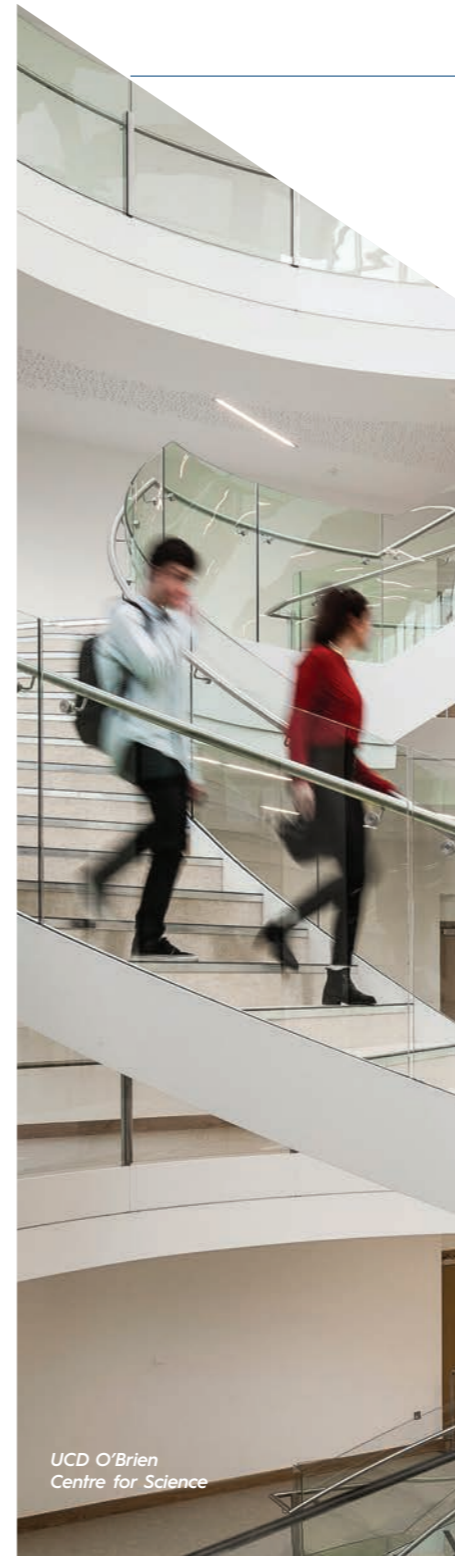
Throughout all our research, scholarship and innovation, we will reflect our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion, and will adhere to the highest standards of integrity, dignity and respect.

# CORE OBJECTIVE 02

## Provide an inclusive educational experience that defines international best practice and prepares our graduates to thrive in present and future societies.

**Our students build their ability to participate in and contribute to society by studying within an academic community and purpose-built learning environment, combining traditional research methods, specialist skills, and new technologies to develop deep subject knowledge.**

UCD students learn at the boundaries of human knowledge and observe the frontier of what is not yet discovered by undertaking their learning in a research-intensive environment. We equip our students to explore that frontier by developing and embedding advanced teaching and learning practices, assessment methods, and sophisticated technologies in the education we offer.



UCD O'Brien  
Centre for Science

We are a global university with a diverse community, and consequently the UCD student experience exposes students to new perspectives, deepens their understanding and refines their ideas. By providing students with opportunities to study for periods abroad and to immerse themselves in other cultures, we enable them to develop the communication and language skills necessary to embrace opportunities and meet future challenges. By providing more opportunities to learn outside the classroom and to research in industrial and professional environments through internships and work placements, volunteering opportunities, and cocurricular activities we position students to learn and demonstrate their learning in new settings. Through this mainstreaming approach - ("University for All") we recognise, promote and value diversity, foster the spirit of inclusion, appreciate the breadth of talent, experience and contribution of all students, and strive to remove the barriers to access, participation and success.

We will continue to value both depth and breadth of learning and the diverse traditions of different disciplines. This will be achieved by building innovative interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary programmes on the foundations of strong subjects and disciplines, and by using the flexibility of our curriculum to enable students to specialise at an advanced level within a given area of study or to explore more broadly a range of different subjects. We will ensure that assessment is varied, that it reliably measures the expected learning outcomes, and that all students receive the feedback necessary to continue learning from assessment activities.

Students will be challenged to encounter the questions raised by a world undergoing rapid digital transformation and facing fundamental

questions of sustainability, equipping them to lead in responding to these changes and building a healthy and sustainable world. We will also provide opportunities to develop the interpersonal, intercultural, and life skills necessary for flourishing in an increasingly global and digital society. Through the development of our faculty and staff, and through purpose-built modules and specialisms, we will ensure that our four strategic themes permeate the educational experience of each student. In this way our graduates will be prepared to take their place in present and future societies.

Students will be provided with access to the supports they need, at the point they are needed and in the most accessible form to develop the attributes required to make the most of their university experience. By fostering an institutional culture that promotes inclusiveness, excellent quality and constant improvement, and that values teaching and research equally - embedding institutional mechanisms that facilitate, recognise, and reward excellent teaching - we will provide structures that enable and promote educational enhancement and student success.

In promoting a culture of integrity and excellence amongst our students, the University will continue to model probity and quality as an institution. We will continue to monitor the experience of our students and the outcomes for our graduates, and to seek and react to their feedback. New ways to collect, analyse, and present this data to best inform institutional decision-making and enhance the quality of the education and student experience will be developed.

# CORE OBJECTIVE 03

UCD Global Lounge



## Continue to build our engagement locally, nationally and internationally.

**To fulfil our mission of contributing to the flourishing of Ireland and the world, we will continue to build our engagement at all levels. This engagement is important both for the impact we have outside the University, but also in ensuring that our students' learning is informed by deep engagement with local and global society, and our research is both informed by and relevant to wider society. Over the period of this strategy we will deepen this engagement.**

We will create a truly global experience for our UCD community, ensuring global character is embedded in all aspects of institutional activity. Opportunities will be provided for staff and students to avail of mobility initiatives, both virtually and physically. This will support the development of intercultural competencies and enhance capacity to actively contribute in a globally focused world. Through our activities we will encourage cultural curiosity and sensitivity in our community of students, faculty, staff, alumni and partners.

We have developed a robust framework to identify, develop and manage global partnerships, and through this framework we will select a discrete number of UCD priority partners who will share our ambition to deliver impact on UCD's four strategic themes. We will develop new collaborative links and pursue opportunities in transnational education to support and expand our global community of learners.

UCD will continue its successful programme of building holistic major strategic partnerships with industry and other organisations, obtaining mutual benefit through engaging in structured ways. We will consolidate our existing major partnerships and build further partnerships where there is mutual interest, enabling us to maximise our impact on society, and augmenting our student experience and researcher engagement. We will link the subject knowledge and expertise of our faculty to the training and development needs of our partners in industry, public service, and in community organisations with customised educational offerings.

Our alumni, who are in almost every nation of the world, are an important part of our UCD community. Over the term of this strategy, we will further connect with, inform, empower and mobilise our alumni to become involved in support of the wider University, so that they actively contribute to our growth and development, whilst also ensuring they find value and relevance in UCD. We will strengthen the links of our University community by matching the ambition of our students with the experience of our alumni by extending our mentorship programmes.

We will implement global best practices in our alumni relations programmes in volunteer management, tailored events, digital communication and outreach, fundraising opportunities, and by growing the number of alumni chapter networks globally. By engaging students in meaningful ways before they join the alumni community, we will

grow a valuable exchange between alumni and students which will lead to more engaged new alumni and help them with their future success.

We will build on our long and proud tradition of staff and students contributing to the needs of society, nationally and internationally. We will leverage our Employee Volunteering Policy, that allows employees to allocate work time to engage in volunteering, increasing the number staff who engage with our community in this way. We will further develop our UCD Community Charity Partner model, through which the University provides additional support to a specific charity. Through the UCD in the Community initiative, we will continue to connect UCD employees and students with the wider community for mutual benefit, and in exchange, empowering the UCD community as socially aware, global citizens. We will grow the UCD Advantage co-curricular awards scheme and ensure it is available to all students. We will expand service-based learning and co-curricular learning opportunities, and/or to put their skills and expertise to use in community-based projects.

# CORE OBJECTIVE 04

## Attract, retain and develop an excellent and diverse cohort of students, faculty and staff.

**Excellent performance requires excellent people working in a supportive environment, and diversity, in all its forms, cultivates the development of ideas and often challenges the status quo.**

We will continue to embed the UCD values in our community, ensuring that UCD is an attractive place to work, study and live. We will employ these values in our recruitment practices for both students and employees, increasing the diversity of both cohorts, while extending opportunities to participate and retaining a high bar for individual excellence. We will provide tailored educational offerings to support lifelong learning for a diverse audience, and continue to expand our recruitment of international students, along with outreach to under-represented groups, to further enhance the diversity of the student cohort.

Central to our mission and vision is the building up of a supportive and inclusive community of students, faculty and staff, alumni and diaspora. We will work together

to make UCD an attractive, friendly and accessible environment, ensuring both the physical and digital campus is welcoming, state-of-the-art, and safe, and that services are responsive to the needs of all those who use them.

We will raise awareness and promote greater understanding of and engagement with equality, diversity and inclusion issues across our University community through implementing and keeping under review our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and Strategy. We will continue the implementation of the Institutional Gender Equality Action Plan, and work towards the achievement of an institutional Silver Athena Swan Award before the completion of this strategy. Continued actions to eliminate gender inequality will result in a growing proportion of women in senior academic and administrative positions. We will continue to promote a culture of dignity and respect and wellbeing for all, and the elimination of all forms of discrimination.

We will increase the number of students we retain through to graduation by

putting in place a comprehensive suite of student support measures and ensuring that our student services are world-class. To support the success of all our students, we will integrate student services to ensure a consistent level of high-quality student support regardless of subject or discipline, location or mode of study, or whether students are being taught or undertaking research. These supports will be bolstered by advanced systems using student data to target and personalise timely interventions. Building on the specialised supports we provide for students from communities experiencing disadvantage, students with disabilities, mature students, refugees and asylum seekers, we will also develop new supports for other communities where we identify a need.



*Healthy UCD faculty and staff bootcamp*



UCD Lochlan Quinn School of Business

# OUR KEY ENABLERS

Pursuit of our strategic themes and core objectives will be facilitated by six key enablers which will provide the foundations for our success. Over the last five years, we have developed plans of varying detail for the future of each of these enablers. During the next five years we will pursue, refine and extend these plans, ensuring that we retain a rolling planning horizon of five years for each enabler.



Participants at a Study Abroad programme for Chinese partner universities, hosted by UCD Global Engagement with UCD Innovation Academy and UCD College of Arts and Humanities



Faculty from across disciplines

## ENABLER 01 Recruit additional excellent faculty members.

The reduction in exchequer funding to UCD over the period of austerity following the Global Financial Crisis in 2008 caused a deterioration in our student-faculty ratio from 17.2:1 to 23.2:1. We have since managed to reduce this ratio to 20.9:1, but this is still well out of line with OECD norms.

Over the next five years we intend to recruit sufficient faculty to reduce our student-faculty ratio to 16:1. This planned growth in faculty numbers provides us with the opportunity to build our capacity in areas of opportunity and need. We will ensure that these additional faculty are excellent in both research and teaching, and we will expect them to contribute to the development of the University's strategic themes.

Growth in faculty numbers will be achieved through two mechanisms. Firstly, we will retain a budget model which increases expenditure in schools as they grow income, ensuring supply of faculty follows demand of student numbers. Except in exceptional circumstances, additional faculty hired through this mode will be at the early career stage, facilitating our rolling faculty promotion system.

Secondly, we will continue to centrally recruit faculty with three streams: the first focusing on excellent early career academics, the second on those with a proven track record of excellence in international arenas, and the third on those working in areas identified as being of high potential. We plan to continue this initiative through the five years of this strategy.

Applicants in all three streams will be evaluated in the same way, and will include the track record and potential (research and teaching) of the applicant relative to the UCD Development Framework for Faculty and international norms for the level being sought; the student-faculty ratio in the relevant school relative to comparator group norms for the discipline; the alignment of the applicant with our strategic themes; and the contribution the employment of the applicant will make to equality, diversity and inclusion goals simultaneously at school level and university level.

Over the period of this strategy we aim to employ an additional 150 additional academics through the first mechanism and 370 academics through the second mechanism.



## ENABLER 02

### Increase our student population, enhancing quality and diversity.

Demographic projections suggest that the number of Irish students coming into third level education will increase significantly over the next 10 years. As Ireland's largest university in terms of full-time equivalent student numbers, UCD should prepare to take a share of this increase.

At the same time, as Ireland's Global University, we are increasingly attractive to international students who wish to receive high quality higher education in an open, welcoming and English-speaking environment.

This increased demand for UCD education provides us with an opportunity to grow in size. There are a number of reasons why growing in size helps to enable the delivery of this strategy. One reason is that we have an opportunity to increase our supply of graduates in areas of high demand, contributing to the flourishing of Ireland and the world.

We also recognise the value to all our students of learning in a diverse multi-cultural environment where alternative perspectives and ways of working can be experienced, and where the intercultural competencies necessary to work successfully in our global society can be developed, and so recruiting more students from other countries and non-traditional groups and communities here in Ireland contributes to providing an student experience that defines international best practice.

In addition, larger student numbers allow us to benefit from economies of scale, delivering teaching and student support more efficiently and more effectively, and the additional fees provide us with the ability to fund state-of-the-art teaching and learning infrastructure.

Consequently, we aim to increase our total student numbers by 25% over the next 10 years, with this increase being through a blend of national and international students. We will focus these increases in areas of high student and employer demand.



UCD Library Hub

## ENABLER 03

### Build world-class academic facilities and student amenities.

We have more students and more employees at UCD than ever before. To ensure that our facilities continue to enable the achievement of our vision for 2024, and to ensure that we have the facilities in place to accommodate the increases in student and employee numbers targeted in the first two of our key enablers, we must plan and implement additional academic spaces, sports and student amenities spaces, and student accommodation.

We have developed a Strategic Campus Development Plan 2016-2021-2026 which defines three distinct character areas: the academic character area (housing our teaching, learning, research and innovation activities); the sports and student amenities character area (housing our sports pitches and halls, our student centre and our student clubs and societies; and our residential character area (containing our student residences together with retail spaces, dining facilities, meeting rooms and support facilities in a 'village centre').

We are developing master plans which will guide the future development of each of the three areas. Over the period of this strategy, these master plans will be finalised, and significant progress made towards their realisation.



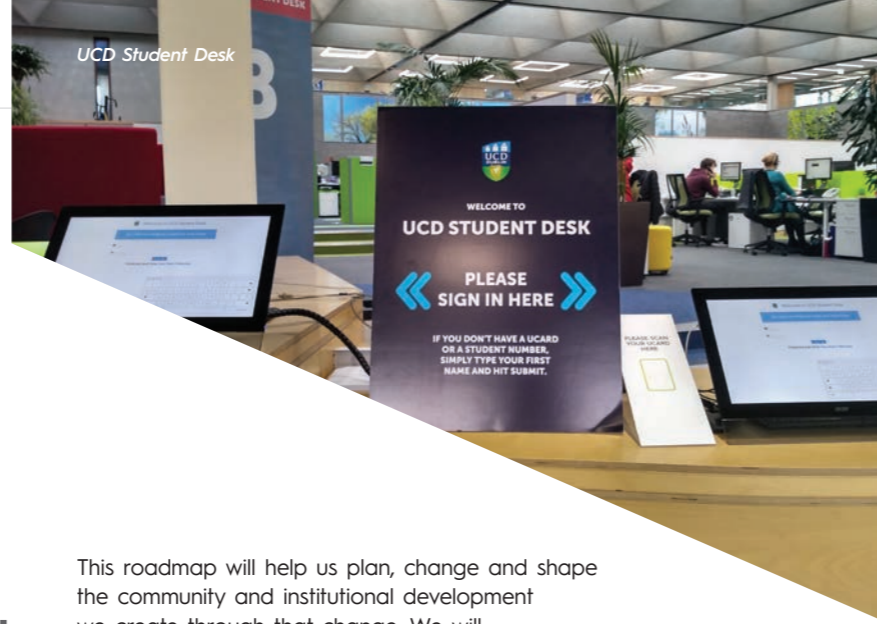
UCD Moore Centre for Business

In the academic character area we will deliver UCD Future Campus Phase 1 (the UCD Centre for Creativity and the UCD Centre for Future Learning); the UCD O'Brien Centre for Science Phase 3; significant enhancements to the Newman Building and the James Joyce Library; and planning of a further significant academic building to provide the capacity required for our forecast increases in student and employee numbers.

In the sports and student amenities character area we will complete the master planning and deliver a new running track, a multi-purpose hall, performance spaces, and re-orientation and re-surfacing of many of our sporting pitches, in partnership with our students.

In the residential character area we will complete Phases 1 and 2 of the residential master plan, providing the Village Centre and approximately 2,200 additional bed spaces, and we will ensure that Phase 3, adding a further 800 bed spaces, is well under way.

We will ensure that our campus developments support the delivery of a student experience that defines international best practice, and that our strategic themes inform the development of an accessible, sustainable, healthy and digitally-enabled campus that also represents international best practice.



## ENABLER 04

### Implement advanced systems and services to support our operations.

Over the course of the last strategy we implemented improvements to our service structures and new IT systems to support the delivery of our mission. UCD has established itself as the leader of digital transformation in higher education in Ireland. It is our ambition to become an international leader by 2024. This will require us to reassess how students register, to recreate how information is captured and accessed, and to reimagine how services are best structured to meet the needs of those who use them.

Over the course of this strategy we will develop a comprehensive and holistic roadmap for the digital transformation of our operations and an updating and streamlining of our services, and make significant progress on the implementation of this plan. In this way we will be able to effectively and efficiently respond to the increases in student and faculty numbers projected, together with the planned infrastructure developments.

This roadmap will help us plan, change and shape the community and institutional development we create through that change. We will ensure that UCD becomes a model for digital transformation in a higher education environment in an Irish context and globally. Implementing this roadmap will mean significant changes to the way we conduct business and deploy staff.

We will focus on four sections of the UCD community – students and their journey, employees and their employment, managers and leaders and their routine managerial tasks, and academics in the routine tasks which enable their teaching and research.

In each case we will ensure that the appropriate digital systems are in place to simplify and reduce the need for staff time to be absorbed in routine tasks, releasing staff to provide higher level support and assistance, and to contribute to the four strategic themes of this strategy. In this way the experience of all members of the UCD community will be enhanced.

This enabler will contribute significantly to the strategic theme of Transforming through Digital Technology, making the campus a model of working in the digital age.

## ENABLER 05

### Develop our faculty and staff.

In this strategy, we commit to ensuring that four strategic themes permeate everything that we do and who we are as a community. This will mean significant change for how faculty and staff conduct business and contribute. To enable this change, faculty and staff will be supported by training and development opportunities and a collegial culture that values a commitment to the University's strategy.

We will expand the development opportunities for all our employees, creating a culture in which optimum performance and development is supported.

We will continue to embed and refine

our 'Performance for Growth' framework, ensuring that each employee has the opportunity to grow and develop. We will put in place new development programmes to ensure each employee has the opportunity to build their knowledge and skills relevant to each of our strategic themes, ensuring that these themes permeate the teaching, learning, research and support services we provide.

With routine transactions and queries being handled by systems, and staff providing high level support and assistance, there will be greater scope for creativity, strategic and critical thinking, problem solving and communications. This will provide opportunities for staff to move away from routine tasks towards more exciting and creative roles, and will lead to development and career advancement opportunities for staff.

We will leverage the collective experience and skills of our faculty and staff by identifying examples of excellence and empowering individuals to share their skills and expertise with colleagues and to lead change. Where faculty and staff encounter challenges, we will promote a culture of collegiality and candour and develop feedback mechanisms so that challenges can be shared and solutions can be found.



UCD staff and faculty at the UCD University Club.

## ENABLER 06

### Generate additional non-exchequer income.

In order to finance our ambitious increase in faculty numbers and our infrastructure programme, we will increase the amount of non-exchequer income we generate. By the end of the strategy period we will be generating an extra €25 million each year in non-exchequer income.

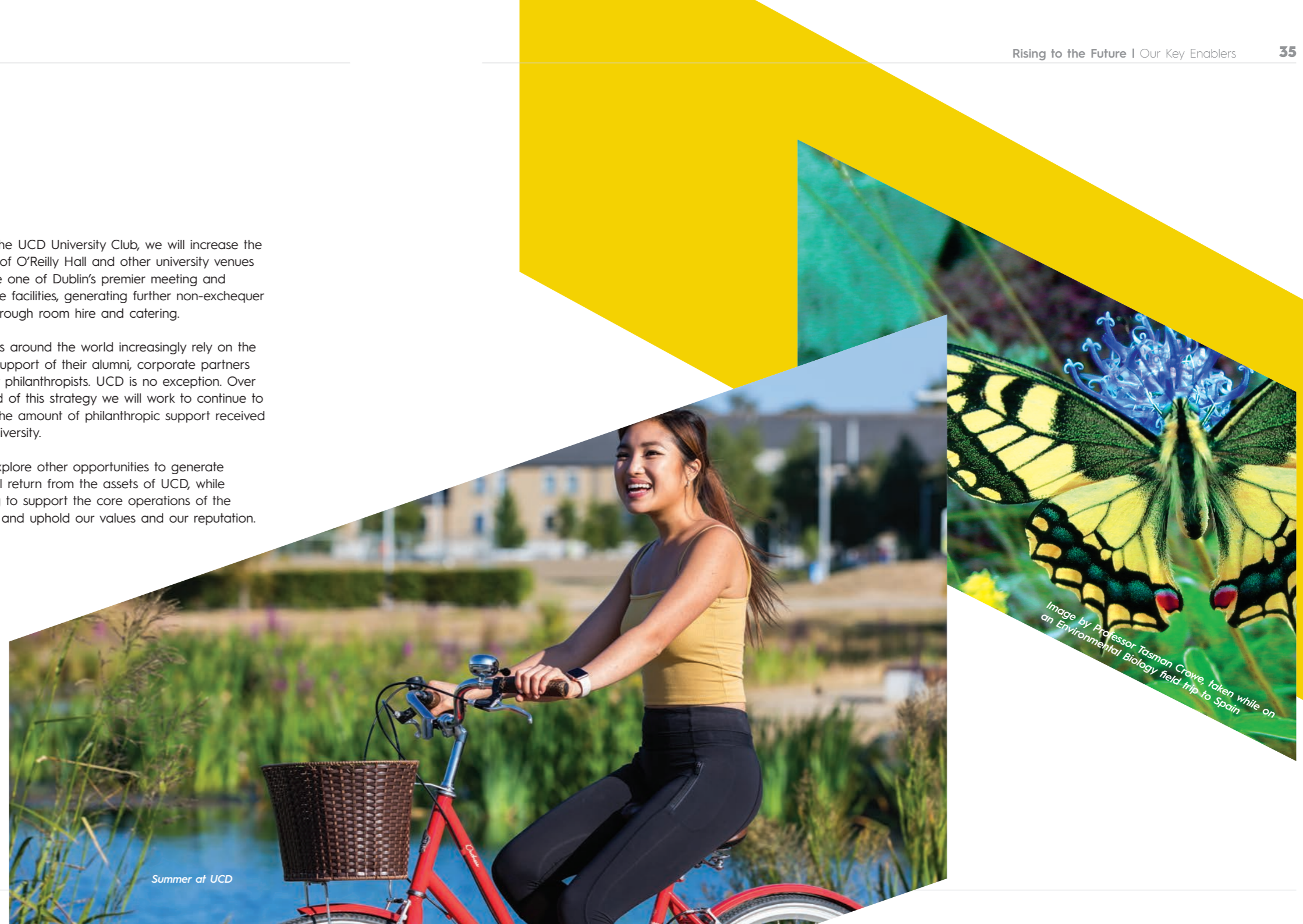
We will develop income generating activities which utilise our infrastructure after hours, at weekends and particularly over the summer trimester, increasing the utilisation of our teaching facilities over those periods of time and increasing the utilisation of our student accommodation over summer.

We will also build summer school and conference activity over summer, and undertake other activities to ensure that the accommodation, sporting facilities and associated student amenities are highly utilised and are generating income to support the core operation of the University. We will give priority to activities that support the core objectives of the strategy.

Through the UCD University Club, we will increase the utilisation of O'Reilly Hall and other university venues to provide one of Dublin's premier meeting and conference facilities, generating further non-exchequer income through room hire and catering.

Universities around the world increasingly rely on the financial support of their alumni, corporate partners and other philanthropists. UCD is no exception. Over the period of this strategy we will work to continue to increase the amount of philanthropic support received by the University.

We will explore other opportunities to generate a financial return from the assets of UCD, while continuing to support the core operations of the University and uphold our values and our reputation.



Summer at UCD

Image by Professor Tasman Crowe, taken while on an Environmental Biology field trip to Spain

# Embracing and Shaping Change

**We live in exciting and challenging times. Through this strategy UCD will 'rise to the future', treating the challenges of our era as opportunities, re-examining holistically how and what we research, how we prepare our students for their futures and how we behave as an institution.**

Uniquely in our history, and as an example of leading international best practice, this strategy identifies four strategic themes that will permeate every aspect of the institution. These themes have been identified through extensive consultation with both internal and external stakeholders and provide us with a future orientation through which we will contribute to the flourishing of Ireland and the world.

Plans for and delivery of our six key enablers are already well advanced, providing us with an excellent foundation on which to build. Although no one can see the future, through this strategy we will position UCD and our graduates to shape that future and to be successful in it.



**TO THE  
RISING  
FUTURE**  
UCD Strategy 2020-2024

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