



Academic Advising Project

Building Back Better: Community focused advisory and mentoring interventions for a redefined post pandemic reality

Project Lead: Dr Maeve Houlihan

Email: Maeve.a.houlihan@ucd.ie

AIM

The **aim** of this proposal is to engage with the real impacts of studying at distance for students and to strive to **Build Back Better** through a series of integrated and relational advisory resources, supports, community conversations, interventions, and development opportunities.

OBJECTIVES

Emerging from this period of radical disruption, students have for 18 months+ missed out on traditional formative milestones, and academic and personal development opportunities. For many, this period has impacted skills, relationships, confidence, and mental health and wellbeing.

Thus, rather than an assumed 'back to normal' – our **objective** is to create time, space and fora to digest and consider these new realities – to harvest what has been learned and gained, facilitating informed discussion about how we want to be, while also taking steps to support student success, development and re-engagement as a community.

STRATEGY

Our **strategy and overall approach** with the Back to Better programme is to focus on building blocks of peer-to-peer insight, community relationships and alumni mentors, building a bank of advisory content and experiences, guided by a Student Advisory Group. We are collaborating with sister proposals College of Business Community of Advisors, and the Smurfit Leadership Development Programme for postgraduate mentors.

- To support new and returning students, with meaningful community connections, and welcoming accessible and relatable advisory support
- To create space for dialogue and reflection to process the pandemic, return to campus and associated gains and challenges, and relate to bigger themes: technological disruption, business, society and sustainability, empowering humanity and transformational learning.
- To build a Student Advice Group (SAG) to inform and drive programme planning.
- To develop a series of orientation and on-demand video advisory and skill building resources building on peer to peer, senior students and alumni mentors advice.
- To build community conversations and experiences around our culture, and to curate a series of unique, value adding opportunities and All-School events