



# URMAN Annual Report 2022-23

## 1. URMAN Advisory Group

There have been a number of changes to the URMAN Advisory Group membership during the last year. It comprises 8 members who represent different areas / units from across the University including: Aoife Brady, Meadhbh O'Halloran, Pauline Power, Jessica Ralston, Paul Huddie, Sinead McGinley and John Wyatt (Chair). Paul Huddie just joined the Advisory Group in 2023. Over the past year, we have had multiple departures from the Advisory Group, namely Rosemarie Gannon, Caroline Treacy, and Colleen Thomas, all of whom we thank for their important contribution to URMAN AG over their years of service. The current Chair is John Wyatt who commenced in March 2022.

We thank Caitriona O'Leary, assigned by UCD Research to provide Secretariat support to the Group, for her support during this Academic Year for URMAN. This ongoing support is very much appreciated.

The terms of reference of the Advisory Group were reviewed by the group with minor changes in Nov 2023 and are presented in **Appendix 1**. The Advisory Group meets once a month, and following the Covid-19 pandemic meets in a hybrid capacity facilitated by UCD Research in the Research Boardroom. As Covid-19 pandemic restrictions were lifted, the resumption of face to face events of interest to URMAN members was enabled. This included events such as:

- the URMAN Christmas Lunch
- Research Culture World Cafes
- Joint Community of Practice meetings with the UCD Project Management COP

Online events also continued to be hosted during this reporting period which are outlined in more detail in the relevant Work Group updates, meeting needs of the members unable to attend in person as well as covering very relevant topics with high levels of engagement.

We were also able to support and enhance these events for URMAN members with the remaining URMAN budget carried forward from previous years, with the current budget included in Appendix V.

## 2. Working Groups

Early in 2019 the URMAN Advisory Group set up 6 Working Groups and their work has continued since then, with some updates to the structure in Summer 2021. It was deemed that three of the Working Groups had come to a natural end point or could be merged together and that an additional Working Group would be required to manage the AIREN project. All Working Groups are chaired by AG members and some have additional involvement from URMAN members. The Terms of Reference and Membership of each Working Group were refreshed and are presented in **Appendix 2 and 3**.

## 2.1 Membership & Communications Working Group (also incorporating Induction from July 2021):

Membership of URMAN is open to all UCD staff who work in research management and administration. Members self-select if they wish to become a member and join either through a form on the [website](#) or email [urmanexec@ucd.ie](mailto:urmanexec@ucd.ie). As of November 2022, URMAN has 181 members which is an increase of 21 members in the past 12 months.

The channels used for URMAN communications include the URMAN website at <https://urman.ucd.ie>. The website includes information on URMAN's Advisory Group, Working Groups, Terms of Reference, Annual Reports, Resource Signposting for members, Upcoming and Past Events, News and a link to UCD's Research Services Portal.

The Membership and Communications Working Group use Google Groups to manage the URMAN mailing list. Members are kept up to date with URMAN events and activities via this mailing list and events are also posted on the URMAN website.

The URMAN LinkedIn Group has 120 members which is an increase of 12 members in the past 12 months. The group is a way for former UCD staff members to stay in contact with URMAN and where URMAN can post news and events that are open to the public. URMAN has an internal Google Currents Community with 32 members where members can share news, ideas etc.

The Membership and Communications Working Group hosted two online induction events for new members in March and October 2022. It is hoped to run URMAN induction as hybrid events in 2023.

## 2.2 Events Working Group

Five URMAN Events were held during 2023 which are listed in the following Table.

<b>Table 1: URMAN Events held in 2022-23</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Attendees</b>
Research Project Management Webinar	14 March	27
Public and Patient Engagement Event	27 April	11
URMAN BBQ	28 September	28
Research Culture Webinar	15 November	17
URMAN Christmas Lunch	6 December	10

Further to this, in 2023 the URMAN Events Working Group also sponsored two events organised by colleagues:

<b>Table 2: URMAN-Sponsored Events held in 2022-23</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Attendees</b>
UCD Project Management Group	3 October	30 (+20 Zoom)
ERC Project Managers Meeting	11 September	8

The average attendance was 19 members, which is lower than the 2021-2022 average of 28. Three out of five events were held in-person, two online and one (PPI) was hybrid. The Events Committee scheduled additional events this year, despite our smaller number. Our members were once again eager to celebrate International Research Administrator's Day as evidenced by the high turnout at this event. The novelty of an in-person BBQ off campus proved incredibly popular, as our membership valued the opportunity to meet and network in an informal environment. The city centre location also meant that colleagues from the Irish Marie Curie office were able to attend,

increasing our reach even further. Our members indicated that the event made them feel valued and offered an invaluable opportunity to network with colleagues from across the city.

While feedback for all events was positive, the first event of the year, the Research Project Management webinar delivered by Rosemary Gannon, received a deluge of extremely positive comments. URMAN members repeatedly stated that they found the speaker inspiring. This indicates a strong demand for more career-based events, and particularly accounts of RMA career journeys.

Plans for other URMAN events for 2023-24 will continue to respond to member needs and work in tandem with AIREN events.

In December 2019 an URMAN budget proposal for €5k was approved by UCD Research Senior Managers. This budget enables the Events Working Group and Advisory Group to deliver a stronger programme of events that better respond to member interests. A statement of how this budget allocation has been used to date is presented in **Appendix 5**. As much of the budget is to support URMAN in-person events, there was a significant surplus (€3640.41) at the start of 2023. This surplus facilitated the larger BBQ event. As the only expenditure in 2023 related to three in-person events, and two sponsored events, we are again carrying over a surplus (**€2694.26**) into 2024.

### **2.3 Career Development Working Group (new name for the Training Provisions WG from July 2021)**

The Career Development Working Group has maintained the same terms of reference which was previously in place for the Training Provisions Working Group. As outlined in **Appendix 2** it includes two strands:

- 1- Looking to fill gaps in career development initiatives for URMAN members
- 2- Exploring mentoring to support knowledge exchange and career development for URMAN members.

Following on from the creation of the URMAN Career Development LinkedIn Learning pathway for the Research & Innovation Job Family, the URMAN Members Survey highlighted that although a majority of members (74%) are aware they are in the R&I Job family, a majority of members (63%) were unable to identify their job level or their role did not easily map to these levels.

Consequently, the CDWG hosted a joint Community of Practice event with the UCD Project Management Community of Practice, part of which included remit and job family mapping information, detailing the similarities between the R&I job family and other areas across the University. Further events for the 2023/24 Academic Year will be focused on self-identifying key gaps in the skill sets of members which can then be used to inform the future provision of relevant CPD and more informal knowledge-sharing.

### **2.4 AIREN Working Group (commenced as a separate WG in July 2021)**

The URMAN AIREN Working Group established in July 2021 continues to lead and manage the 'All-Island Research Excellence Network – AIREN' project. AIREN is led by UCD URMAN in collaboration with Queen's University Belfast and the University of Ulster with support from InterTradelreland's Synergy programme. The overall aim of AIREN is to support cross border collaborations between universities and industry, particularly in the post-Brexit era. The timeliness and relevance of AIREN is heightened in the current research landscape with the increase in funding programmes specifically aimed at supporting all-island initiatives and North / South collaboration – including the HEA North South Research Programme 2021, with 62 collaborative projects awarded across the

island totalling €37.3m, and the current SFI Co-Centres Research programme with a fund of €73m available from 3 jurisdictions – Ireland, Northern Ireland and the UK.

### **Inaugural AIREN Conference ‘Research for the Future’**

During the year the inaugural AIREN Conference entitled ‘Research for the Future’ took place as an in-person event on 8th September 2022 in the Drawing Offices at the Titanic Hotel Belfast. The Conference brought key stakeholders together to discuss all-island collaborative research and how to further develop and enhance the AIREN all-island network of research support staff. The diverse range of sessions also addressed research culture and shared career development inspirations for research support professionals. The Conference opened with Welcome Addresses by Minister Gordon Lyons, MLA, and Minister Simon Harris, TD, and the day was moderated by Sarah Travers, Journalist, TV Presenter & Event Host. The conference programme included two excellent keynote addresses by Dr Deirdre Lillis (Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science) and Dr Simon Kerridge (University of Kent), and a range of stimulating and interactive sessions, and panel discussions, on topics covering:

- Vision and strategy for research collaboration
- Funding programmes to support North South collaboration, including an overview of the new Peace Plus Programme and insights on the HEA North-South Research programme and Interreg
- Continuing to develop and enhance the AIREN Network
- Research culture and what research integrity means to / for research support professionals
- Sharing career development inspirations.

The Conference recording, programme, and report are available on the AIREN website. There were 157 registered delegates attending as research professional staff from academic and research organisations on the island, and representatives from Government departments, InterTradelreland, and funding bodies attended. The conference provided important opportunities for delegates to meet and network, and to link with colleagues working across the research ecosystem in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. Key messages throughout the Conference highlighted the valuable powerhouse roles research managers and administrators have in the research ecosystem, the importance of acknowledging this, and the need for the research support professional community to better articulate what we do. The value and benefit of the AIREN initiative in establishing an all-island research excellence network for research support professionals was also highly commended, with full support and endorsement from Government Ministers and all conference participants and delegates for developing AIREN Phase 2.

### **Eight AIREN Virtual Events held 2021-22**

To date AIREN has also held 8 virtual events during, 3 of which took place since January 2022, for research managers and administrators in UCD, QUB and Ulster to share knowledge and best practice in research management. The two workshop events were also attended by representatives from other institutions and research bodies:

- Organisational Structures for Research Management & Development, 12th May 2021
- North / South Research Collaboration Opportunities, Workshop 30th June 2021
- Governance & Management of Large-Scale Research Centres, 8th September 2021
- Developing global partnerships /networks to develop research collaborations, 10th November 2021
- North / South Workshop on Industry Academia Research Collaboration, Workshop 8th December 2021

- Research Impact, 26th January 2022
- Supporting PhD & Postdoctoral Researchers, 9th March 2022
- The Role of Research Support Professionals in Research Culture, 15th June 2022

## AIREN Phase 2

The AIREN initiative commenced in January 2021 and is currently funded by the Synergy programme until the end of March 2023. In the coming year the URMAN AIREN Working Group, and the wider AIREN Project Team will plan and develop AIREN Phase 2, including a programme of activities and events; securing further funding; continuing to grow and expand the network by increasing membership which currently stands at 220 members; and by developing its relationship with other relevant networks such as EARMA and ARMA. The input and insights shared at the inaugural AIREN Conference will inform this programme of work. The URMAN AIREN Working Group also appreciates the input, advice and support received from the UCD VPRII and UCD Director of Research with whom they met in August 2022 to provide an update on AIREN.

### Appendix 1 - Terms of Reference - UCD Research Managers and Administrators Network (URMAN)

Title	UCD Research Managers and Administrators Network (URMAN)
Purpose	To provide a network within UCD for Research Managers and Administrators to deliver benefits to the University and those individuals working within the research management and administration space.
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Improved recognition and identity for the profession of research administration and management</li> <li>● Improved opportunities to share knowledge and best practice with a view to developing standardised processes and procedures where appropriate.</li> <li>● To provide a “voice” to the groups in terms of lobbying and influencing UCD policies and practices as they pertain to research activities</li> <li>● To identify common training and professional development requirements for the group and ensure delivery of same.</li> <li>● To provide a forum for engagement with outside parties – e.g. funders, NCPs, IUA, EUA etc.</li> </ul>
Authority / Champion	VP for Research, Innovation and Impact
Secretariat	To be provided by UCD Research
Membership	Self-Selection to the Network by eligible employees as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● All personnel providing services to the research community in UCD</li> </ul>
Advisory Group (AG)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The advisory group (AG) will provide oversight to URMAN.</li> <li>● This group will have 8-9 members drawn from URMAN members.</li> <li>● Appointment to the AG will be by self-nomination. If more than 8 members volunteer initially then an election will take place.</li> <li>● Annually 3 members of the group should step down to allow for new members within the AG.</li> <li>● No member can serve on the AG for more than 5 consecutive years.</li> <li>● The group will have a rotating chair (selected by the AG members). The chair should rotate at least every twenty four months.</li> <li>● UCD Research will provide the secretariat.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The purpose of the group is to strive towards the achievement of the objectives outlined above.</li> </ul>
Quorum	The advisory group will have a quorum of 5 members. In the absence of the Chair the advisory group members present will appoint a Chair.
Sub-groups	From time to time it may be necessary to set up sub-groups to look into specific projects. Each sub-group should have at least one member of the advisory group to act as a communications link between the sub-group and the advisory group.
Established	September 2013
Reviewed & amended	<p>Reviewed May 2018.</p> <p>Amended April 2019 to increase AG membership from 6-8 members to 8-9 members, and to increase quorum from 4 members to 5 members.</p> <p>Reviewed November 2021.</p> <p>Reviewed October 2023 to make language regarding URMAN eligibility for members more inclusive</p>
Next review date	October 2025

## Appendix 2 - URMAN Working Groups: Terms of Reference and Membership as at September 2021

- Membership & Communications Working Group:** Manage the URMAN Membership registrations and induction process. Maintain the URMAN website and mailing list and email account. Manage URMAN LinkedIn and Google Currents accounts. Advise on and co-ordinate all URMAN EXEC communications to URMAN members, and to other units within the university as required. Carry out URMAN surveys with the URMAN membership every 2-3 years and liaise with UCD units such as HR on the same as relevant.
- Events Working Group:** The Events Working Group plan and organise regular URMAN Events to support career development, training, and knowledge sharing for URMAN members. URMAN Events complement, and address gaps, in the current training and development provisions that are offered in the university; and add value by designing / tailoring the URMAN Events to specifically meet URMAN member needs. Events typically cover topics from across the entire research project life-cycle / researcher journey. Suggestions and requests for URMAN Events are submitted from URMAN members through various channels including the URMAN Advisory Group, the URMAN Website, and URMAN Survey, and are also informed by needs identified through the work of other URMAN Working Groups.
- Career Development Working Group:** There are 2 strands to this Working Group:
  - Identify Gaps in Current Training Provisions in UCD:* Drawing on the mapping of training provisions carried out by the URMAN Careers Development Working Group (Report appendix 3.1) identify where there are gaps in the training provisions offered in UCD and where new training provisions (including on-line provisions) are required to support URMAN members. In collaboration with HR this will help inform the university of training required to support the core and functional competencies for the Research Management Job Family.
  - Mentoring Programme:* Explore requirements and appetite within URMAN for a Mentoring Programme to support knowledge exchange and career development for URMAN members. This should be carried out in collaboration with UCD HR and draw on the expertise, training and resources that UCD HR provides to support the roll out of Mentoring in the University.
- AIREN Working Group:** The AIREN Working Group will project manage and deliver the AIREN Project which is a 2-year project between UCD (lead institution), Queen's University Belfast and Ulster University, and is funded by the InterTradeIreland Synergy Programme. AIREN aims to: share knowledge and best practice in research management; raise awareness of funding opportunities to

support North South collaboration; establish an all-island research excellence network for research managers and administrators. Project management includes: setting up the project; holding monthly Project Team Meetings; liaising with and reporting (6-monthly reports) to the funding sponsor; managing the AIREN Project budget; developing and maintaining the AIREN webportal; managing the AIREN email account; preparing / sending AIREN event notices and post-event follow up. Project delivery includes holding 6 Away Day events, 3 Workshops and 1 Conference, and each of the 3 participating universities takes a lead in organising a number of events. UCD is also the lead organisation for organising the AIREN Conference (October 2022).

### Appendix 3 - URMAN Advisory Group and Working Group Members as at December 2022

URMAN Advisory Group	Aoife Brady, Rosemarie Gannon, Meadhbh O'Halloran, Pauline Power, Jessica Ralston, Colleen Thomas (left Dec 2022), Caroline Treacey (left Dec 2022), and John Wyatt (Chair) Secretariat provided by UCD Research
Membership & Communications Working Group	Rosemarie Gannon and Pauline Power (Co-Chairs), Aoife Brady, Jessica Ralston
Events Working Group	Colleen Thomas and Meadhbh O'Halloran (Co-Chairs), Sinead McGinley, Aisling Jackman
Career Development Working Group	John Wyatt (Chair), Aoife Brady, Conor McDermott, Tara Hughes
AIREN Working Group	Caroline Treacey (Chair), Rosemarie Gannon, Matt Sheridan, Sinead McGinley, John Wyatt

### Appendix 4 - URMAN Induction Resources Signposts



#### UCD Research Managers and Administrators Network (URMAN) URMAN Induction

##### Resource Signposts

There is a wealth of information relevant to induction and orientation for new staff available on the UCD website, accessible in a number of locations but all linked through the **UCD People & Organisation Development: Supporting New Starters in UCD page**. A part of this includes local induction. However, sometimes the most relevant support can actually come from relationships across different units in the University. URMAN, the **UCD Research Managers and Administrators Network** was established in 2013 to facilitate these relationships, especially for Research Managers and Administrators, who may be hired in centralised support units or directly working with researchers in many capacities. URMAN has created this summary document to help signpost the information that is available, with particular reference to Research Managers and Administrators moving into new roles in UCD.

 <p><a href="https://urman.ucd.ie">https://urman.ucd.ie</a></p>	<p><b><u>URMAN Website</u></b></p> <p>URMAN holds regular networking and information events throughout the year and provides resources to members. <b>Sign up on the membership tab:</b> URMAN welcomes applications from all personnel with a research manager or administrator role in UCD and all personnel in Support Units providing services to Researchers. New members are invited to meet with members of the Advisory Group for a monthly <b>informal welcome and induction</b> over coffee. If you would like to become more involved, <b>consider joining one of our working groups:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Events Working Group</li> <li>● Membership &amp; Communications Working Group</li> <li>● Career Development Working Group</li> <li>● AIREN Working Group</li> </ul> <p>Join the conversations in our <a href="#">Google Currents Community</a> and <a href="#">LinkedIn URMAN network</a>. You can get in touch with URMAN Advisory Group though <a href="mailto:urmanexec@ucd.ie">urmanexec@ucd.ie</a></p>
 <p><a href="https://airan.network/">https://airan.network/</a></p>	<p><b><u>All-Island Research Excellence Network</u></b></p> <p>University College Dublin (UCD), Ulster University (Ulster) and Queen’s University Belfast (QUB) have joined forces to connect Research Managers and Administrators across the island of Ireland. The AIREN project, which runs from 2021 – 2023, is being delivered with support from InterTrade Ireland’s Synergy initiative.</p> <p><b>Sign up on the membership tab</b>, and join the Away Days, Workshops and Conference to deliver the following 3 objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Share Research Management best practice and knowledge</li> <li>● Identify and develop research thematic areas and maximise funding opportunities</li> <li>● Establish an All-Island Research Excellence Network</li> </ul>
 <p><a href="https://earma.wildapricot.org/">https://earma.wildapricot.org/</a></p>	<p><b><u>EARMA – European Association of Research Managers and Administrators</u></b></p> <p>UCD is an institutional member of EARMA, so all research managers and administrators working in UCD are eligible to be members. This can be arranged through the institutional contact point, Andrea Forde, or by emailing <a href="mailto:urmanexec@ucd.ie">urmanexec@ucd.ie</a>. EARMA provides a useful European network, and provides training and events throughout the year, including an annual conference.</p>



 <p><a href="http://www.ucd.ie/research/portal">http://www.ucd.ie/research/portal</a></p>	<p><b><u><a href="#">UCD Research &amp; Innovation Services Portal</a></u></b></p> <p>The UCD Researcher Portal includes a comprehensive suite of documents, information and points of contact, spanning the entire research project lifecycle, based on the “researcher journey”. It is a “one stop shop” of virtually all the resources needed to manage Research within UCD.</p>
 <p><a href="http://www.ucd.ie/peopledevelopment/ourservices/newtouce">http://www.ucd.ie/peopledevelopment/ourservices/newtouce</a></p>	<p><b><u><a href="#">UCD People &amp; Organisation Development: Supporting New Starters in UCD</a></u></b></p> <p>UCD People &amp; Organisation Development, a part of HR, has a landing page for Supporting New Starters. This provides links to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the <b>Work@UCD</b> page</li> <li>• the <b>UCD onboarding page</b> is available through InfoHub which provides comprehensive checklists, information and actions pre-arrival, first week and first month</li> <li>• information on booking the centralised <b>Orientation for New Employees</b> Programme which is run a number of times per year</li> <li>• information on the <b>Local Induction Process</b> which includes a Local Induction Checklist and Employee Orientation Policy document and a number of other resources.</li> </ul>

V1.2 Sept 2021

**Appendix 5 - URMAN Budget Statement as at Jan 2024**

Date	Event	Budgeted Cost	Allocated Expenses	Over/Under
<b>October 2023</b>	Sponsorship of PM Network Event	200	178	22
<b>September 2023</b>	Sponsorship of ERC Network Event	100	86	14
<b>September 2023</b>	International RMA Day Celebration	500	500	0
<b>December 2023</b>	Festive Social	190		
	Catering		172.5	
	Supplies (reimbursable expenses)		9.65	7.85
	<b>Total</b>	<b>990</b>	<b>946</b>	<b>44 (under)</b>

Balance: €2694.26