At DCU Educational Trust, we are passionate about the power of higher education to transform lives and societies and we believe great things are possible when philanthropy combines with a young, dynamic and ambitious university like DCU. Through our fundraising work, we aim to build meaningful partnerships with DCU’s supporters for today and for the future in order to further DCU’s mission to transform lives and societies through education, research, innovation and engagement.
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Private fundraising plays a critical role in enabling DCU to advance its mission and 2017 was another successful year for our Shaping the Future Campaign. Supporters of DCU contributed more than €7.5 million in private funding to projects to transform not only the future of our students’ education, but also the future of our country and our society.

Last year, our donors gave generously to a wide range of projects including support for young people from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds to fulfil their potential through our Access Scholarship Programme and support for Ireland’s future athletics and GAA stars through the DCU Sports Academy. 2017 also saw our donors and sponsors invest in strategic projects to transform Irish society, from projects to assist Irish family businesses to initiatives with potential to change the future of Irish education. I hope that you will enjoy this report which provides some insights into these and many other projects made possible thanks to the generosity of our supporters.

Larry Quinn,
Chair,
DCU Educational Trust

At the heart of what we do in DCU Educational Trust are the relationships we build with those who share our passion for the transformative power of education and the liberating impact of knowledge. Throughout 2017 it was a privilege to work with alumni, friends, corporations, trusts and foundations with the desire to enable the University to continue to deliver life-changing scholarships, progressive social initiatives and research to address some of society’s greatest challenges.

Every donation makes a difference, whether it is a company enabling a new academic chair, a foundation facilitating a capital project or an individual contributing to a scholarship. I have been struck by the scale of support from companies for the vision for DCU, but one notable highlight in 2017 was the enthusiasm of DCU alumni to keep in touch with the University and to give back in multiple ways. During our two telethons, our student callers spoke with 1,553 graduates who, in addition to offering careers support, guidance and mentoring, pledged more than €160,000 to support Access Scholarships at DCU. This level of support is a testament to the understanding and passion which DCU’s alumni share for the University’s mission to transform lives and society.

Nathalie Walker,
CEO,
DCU Educational Trust
2017 was another very significant year for Dublin City University. It was the year in which our student numbers crossed 17,000 for the first time and in which our ranking as one of the world’s leading young universities was reinforced in both the QS and Times Higher Education World University ranking tables.

As Ireland’s fastest growing university, infrastructural and capacity enhancements are critically important to us and the rollout of our Campus Development plan was particularly evident across our three academic campuses, two in Drumcondra and one in Glasnevin. There were many highlights to celebrate during the past year in terms of the academic achievements of our students and staff, research accomplishments and funding awards, and extracurricular successes in areas such as sport, entrepreneurship and the arts. But, perhaps the most significant development in 2017 was the launch of our new Strategic Plan (‘Talent, Discovery and Transformation’) covering the period October 2017 – September 2022. The plan sets out an ambitious vision for DCU over the next five years and, as the title suggests, our primary focus will be on developing and attracting Talent, on the Discovery and application of knowledge, and on the Transformation of the world around us through what we do.

In my eight years to date as President of DCU, I have become acutely aware that achieving the ambitious aspirations of this dynamic University is hugely dependent on the generosity and guidance of our friends and supporters, including our rapidly growing family of alumni. There were many manifestations of such generosity and support in 2017, including the appointment of the new Desmond Chair in Early Childhood Education, the AIB Chair in Data Analytics, and multiple donations to support our growing numbers of Access students and our University of Sanctuary initiatives for immigrants and refugees.

Aligned with our ambitious vision, our Shaping the Future Campaign seeks to generate support for 20 impactful projects with the potential to transform not only our students’ education but also the future of our society. More than €30 million has already been generated as part of the Campaign thanks to the generosity of our friends, alumni and supporters. The University is tremendously grateful to each and every one of our supporters for the role you are playing in making the vision for DCU a reality.

Professor Brian MacCraith,
President,
Dublin City University
Since its launch in 2015 with 20 flagship projects, our Shaping the Future campaign has made a huge impact with projects working to address societal issues like equality of access to higher education and global challenges such as the provision of clean water for everyone. We hope that you enjoy reading about the progress of many of these projects in this report.

A full overview of all our campaign projects can be found on our campaign website: shapingthefuture.dcu.ie/campaign/campaign-projects
Leaders in Knowledge Creation
In 2017, DCU’s Prometric Chair in Assessment Michael O’Leary and the Centre for Assessment Research, Policy and Practice in Education (CARPE) continued to deliver research to enhance the practice of assessment across all levels of the educational system. In October 2017, CARPE also welcomed John Gardner from the University of Stirling for the annual CARPE lecture, creatively entitled “The Quantum of her Wantum cannot vary – or can it?” on the topic of imprecision in educational assessment.

Student Centre
Work continued on the construction of DCU’s new state of the art Student Centre. The Centre, which has been funded through a student levy, voted on by the students themselves together with significant donations from The Tony Ryan Trust and Bank of Ireland, will be officially opened in September 2018.

Charles Kernon, CEO and President of Prometric, and Garret Sherry, Prometric Vice President and General Manager of Ireland, pictured on a visit to DCU to learn more about CARPE’s ongoing work and vision.
Ireland India Institute
For the Ireland India Institute, 2017 was the first year of its Global India Project, an EU-funded European Training Network coordinated by DCU with 15 PhD fellows in six EU universities partnered with six top Indian universities. Through this project, DCU recruited five Global India PhD fellows to research topics including security, women and politics, environment and business. 2017 also saw the Ireland India Institute deliver a range of high profile events that included an event on ‘Sustainable Lifestyles: Yoga and Indian Traditions’ in partnership with the Embassy of India, the first Postgraduate Conference on South Asian Studies and a conference on ‘India and Europe: Debating the Challenge of Climate Change’.

Age-Friendly University
A further nine universities from around the world joined our Age-Friendly University network, bringing the total number of members to 20. In keeping with DCU’s commitment to open up every aspect of campus life to respond to the needs and interests of older adults, DCU saw a growing number of older people taking undergraduate modules while a further 260 older people participated in DCU’s Love of Lifelong Learning Programme, taking modules in subjects ranging from psychology and economics to life writing and digital photography.

Fáilte ar Líne
2017 saw the Campaign’s Fáilte ar Líne project partner with the FutureLearn platform, which boasts more than 7 million learners globally, to develop Irish 101, an online course that will enable the Irish diaspora to learn about Irish culture and the Irish language from beginners level, from any location in the world.
DCU Institute for International Conflict Resolution and Reconstruction (IICRR)
DCU’s IICRR was awarded €900,000 in Marie Curie EU H2020 funding in 2017 to lead the SHADOW research and training programme to explore the nature of informal economies and shadow practices in the former USSR region over the next four years, led by IICRR’s Dr Abel Polese. 2017 also saw three IICRR PhD students Bitopi Dutta, Cornelia Baciu and Tajma Kapic win very prestigious Irish Research Council PhD scholarships, for their work on India, Pakistan and Bosnia Herzegovina respectively. The Institute’s researchers continue to publish extensively on topics ranging from the Northern Ireland peace process to peace building in Kosovo and to organise policy focused events on the protection of civilians in conflict, migration, EU security and the Middle East crisis.

DCU Institute for Future Media and Journalism (FuJo)
In 2017, FuJo secured research funding from the Irish Research Council for projects on the Citizens’ Assembly and online hate speech; from the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland for a project on new cultures of digital video consumption and for continued participation in the Reuters Digital News Report survey; and from the HSE’s National Office for Suicide Prevention for analysis of the HSE’s monitoring of suicide coverage. FuJo also successfully secured H2020 funding of €3.9 million to coordinate a Marie Curie European Training Network called JOLT which will look at harnessing digital and data technologies for journalism. JOLT will bring four new PhD students to DCU with a further three PhD students to be hosted by industry partners in the BBC and Irish Times.

DCU Water Institute
DCU’s Water Institute continued to develop innovative approaches to the challenges of water quality, delivery and management. New partnerships and projects established included monitoring emerging contaminants with Arizona State University and the Environmental Protection Agency, the three-year EU-funded MONITOOL project to assess the chemical status of coastal waters through passive sampling and a research pilot with IBM to leverage Internet of Things technology for environmental water monitoring and management.
Transforming Student Lives and Supporting Potential
Transforming Student Lives

1,300 Access students supported

210 athletes supported by DCU Sports Academy

15 asylum seekers commence studies in DCU

10 arts bursaries awarded

4 participants in Washington Ireland Programme

17 memorial scholarships

6 overseas summer internships with corporate supporters
Bank of Ireland announced in 2017 that it would renew its support for the DCU Sports Academy until 2020. This renewed funding will enable DCU Sports Academy to continue to support male and female elite athletes from track and field and inter-county GAA players to reach their optimum performance levels and combine their studies effectively. The Academy supported 210 elite athletes in 2017.

Since it was established in 2006 with the backing of Bank of Ireland, DCU Sports Academy has provided athlete support programmes that include strength and conditioning, nutrition, sports performance development, academic guidance and career advice.

DCU also appointed a new Director of Sports and Wellbeing, James Galvin, who will drive the development of a new strategy for sport at DCU in keeping with the University’s commitment to elevating the relevance, value and importance of university sport, enhancing the quality of the student experience and contributing to the sporting pursuits and wellbeing of students. James joined DCU from the Federation of Irish Sport where he previously served as CEO.

“The DCU Sports Academy plays an important role in providing our young student-athletes with the opportunity to thrive in a healthy and rewarding atmosphere and to develop as well-rounded graduates with the skills and attributes necessary for a fulfilling life beyond the classroom. We are immensely grateful for the continued support of Bank of Ireland in making this happen and for their ongoing commitment, support of and interest in our students’ development.”

James Galvin, Director of Sports and Wellbeing, DCU
Sophie Becker from Wexford is a promising young Irish athlete, who has represented Ireland in international competition at the U23 European Outdoor Athletics Championships in the 400m sprint discipline. Sophie is also the reigning Irish Indoor 400m Varsity Champion. She is currently in second year studying for a BSc in Genetics and Cell Biology and is supported by the DCU Sports Academy.

Sophie began running at the age of ten when a family friend suggested that it would help to control her asthma. She quickly realised that she had a talent and from the age of 15 began to train seriously with her running club, St Joseph’s AC. She knew she wanted to study genetics and settled on DCU after attending an Open Day which led to her getting in touch with Enda Fitzpatrick, Director of DCU’s Athletics Academy: “Enda told me about the scholarships, training and other supports that I would get in DCU which definitely influenced my decision to study here.”

Now in her second year at DCU, Sophie believes that training with DCU has taken her performance to a new level: “Through the DCU Sports Academy, I have a new coach, Jeremy Lyons, and a new training group which have really upped the level that I am training at. I really wouldn’t be where I am today, representing Ireland, without this support. The facilities in DCU are amazing too, we train in Morton Stadium and I have access to a gym in St Clare’s which is one of the best I have come across. It is amazing to have everything that I need so close.

“I am training six days per week which can be hard on the body but through the Sports Academy I get subsidised physio visits. I really can’t emphasise how much this helps to keep my body in shape. When you’re training at such a high intensity, you need to get rubs out to ensure that your muscles are recovering well. “My sports scholarship has also been a great help in enabling me to pay for warm weather training from which I have seen great results and in paying for race fees, flights and accommodation to race abroad.”

Sophie is currently working hard and is focused on completing her degree by 2020 at the same time as aiming to qualify for the European Athletics Championships in Berlin this summer and the Olympic Games in Tokyo in 2020.
At 22 years old, DCU student Diarmuid O'Connor has experienced sporting achievements of which most young GAA players could only dream. Playing with the Mayo senior football team since 2014, he has won an All-Ireland minor title in 2013, a Sigerson Cup in 2014, an All-Ireland under-21 title in 2016, played in two All-Ireland Senior Football Finals and was voted Young Player of the Year for 2015/16. Diarmuid has achieved all of this success whilst also maintaining high academic standards to progress to the final year of his PE and Mathematics course.

How has the DCU Sports Academy helped you to develop and balance academic life with performing at the highest levels in sport?

In first year, I was offered a place on campus in a house with other GAA players. It was great to live with people with the same interests. My friends from my course had a different lifestyle, I didn’t get to socialise as much but living in the house made it easier as I wasn’t on my own. The sports scholarship really helped in other ways too such as access to physios and nutritionist talks about what to eat and the importance of sleep, something that I possibly didn’t always get enough of!

There was also never any pressure from DCU to play football. Niall Moyna and Michael Kennedy [Head of Gaelic Games] always say that your course comes first. At 18 years of age, you can be so focused on your football but they kept an eye on how you were getting on with your course too.

You played in All-Ireland finals in 2016 and 2017 that featured over 20 DCU students and alumni. What does that say to you about the influence of the Sports Academy?

The people involved in the Sports Academy and the knowledge that they have of sport is so impressive. I have learned so much from them about everything from tactical awareness and skills to knowing that rest is just as important as training. Some managers might want to train all the time with no time to recover, but if Niall Moyna knew that a player was not 100% he would always give them time off if necessary.

Ross Munnelly was my fresher manager, I’ve also worked with Ken Robinson, Niall Moyna, Dermot Sheridan, Sean Boylan and obviously Michael Kennedy is always there too. I think you learn something new from every manager that you work with. I’ve gotten lots of ideas from my managers in DCU and I’ve definitely brought some of these back home with me.

What attributes do you think that really top sports people all share?

I think mindset is the number one thing. A lot of people are more skilful than me but their head might not be in the right place. Focus and determination are key. If your head is in the right place, you can train yourself to do anything.
DCU Access: Giving Talented Youth the Chance to Excel

DCU’s Access Programme is the largest programme of its kind in Ireland and a flagship project in the Campaign for DCU. It aims to make third level education attainable to talented students from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds and provides a range of personal, financial and academic supports to enable students to thrive and excel in their studies once here.

In 2017, we were grateful to secure more than €1.2 million in pledges enabling us to support our highest ever number of students through the Access Scholarship Programme. The number of Access students enrolled at DCU stood at 1,300 in September 2017.

In addition to donating to the core Access Scholarship Programme, our donors also generously supported complementary initiatives. This included two accommodation scholarships for Access students coming from homeless backgrounds and support from Oath for the annual DCU Access Maths Outreach Quiz Series, which encourages students from linked secondary schools in north Dublin to achieve the mathematics grades required to enter university.

“What really inspires me about the Access Programme isn’t just the tenacity and determination of these students, often from families where third level education isn’t the norm, but the outcomes of the programme. With 93% completing third level education, 53% undertaking postgraduate study and 96% of those who seek it entering the workplace, this is a programme that makes the rhetoric of transformation a reality.”

Nathalie Walker, CEO, DCU Educational Trust
Laura Horan: Access Made DCU a Possibility

“At the age of eight my mom and I were left homeless, spending most of our time on people’s couches and in shelters until we were housed four years later.

Up until 6th year, I never thought I could go to college or that I could afford to go. I decided I was finally done rebelling though and feeling sorry for myself and I resolved to study hard for my Leaving Certificate. After finding out about the Access Programme, I started to believe DCU was a possibility.

When I first came to DCU I instantly fell in love. I made friends with students who were as open minded and intelligent as myself. I found clubs and societies full of people who enjoyed the same activities I did. For the three years of my degree, I was on campus every day morning until night either doing college work, hanging out with friends or working on project ideas for radio shows or documentaries, just because I couldn’t get enough of what DCU had to offer.

Because of my background I thought I would feel like an outcast at university but I have never felt more at home! DCU is a diverse space that gives each student the opportunity to express themselves.

I am an amazing person because of DCU. Not only have I learnt the skills I need for journalism, multimedia, PR and marketing, but I have also gotten the opportunity to help others and to make great friends and memories. I have found the motivation and confidence to build a new path that I wouldn’t have been able to go down without the help of the donors who support the Access Programme.

The scheme helped with financial and personal support during difficult times, it helped me grow my social skills with people similar and different to myself but most importantly it taught me how important it is to help people from disadvantaged backgrounds see the potential they have in life.

A donation to the Access programme, not only helps Access students to better their lives but it also creates a chain reaction of people who are grateful and in return will give back to society in their own way.”
“A donation to the Access programme, not only helps Access students to better their lives but it also creates a chain reaction of people who are grateful and in return will give back to society in their own way.”

Laura Horan, BA in Journalism 2017
Access Scholar
Access Graduate Raymond Moran is Aiming High

Access graduate Raymond Moran grew up in an area where it wasn’t the norm to progress to higher education. Today he has a BSc in Genetics and Cell Biology and a PhD in Molecular Evolution and is aiming to win a Nobel prize. Here he explains how the support of the DCU Access Programme has contributed to his success and ambitions for the future.

“I have always spent a lot of time thinking about who I could become and where I could go and since an early age I have been determined to never be limited by my education. Where I come from and where I still live, progressing to higher education just isn’t the norm and can feel somehow out of reach for many people.

Since coming to DCU to pursue a degree in Genetics and Cell Biology, I have worked hard to forge my own path but my success was also achieved with the support of others. The personal and financial support that I received from DCU and the Access Programme has been critical in enabling me to go further and be better than I ever thought I could be.

I want to be the best in the world at what I do and to make a significant difference in the lives of others, through research that will improve the health of many people.

I find it somewhat surreal to think about how much I have changed since coming to DCU. I arrived planning to simply make it through my course and get a steady job but DCU and Access taught me not to set myself limits and that anything is possible.

My ultimate dream is to win the Nobel Prize one day and I truly believe that is achievable. I know that this goal will take me on a journey that requires continuous learning and hard work but one that I hope will ultimately impact society and more importantly, people.

I see myself as a representative. There are a lot of people in my position, who avail of DCU’s supports to achieve their goals and who crucially need supports like the Access Programme to realise their ambitions.

It is incredibly humbling to get the support of DCU’s donors, people who have allowed me to achieve without even knowing me and others alike. It is remarkable.”
Each year DCU Educational Trust is delighted to be able to support a modest range of special student initiatives and to meet other pressing needs for the University as they arise from funds given to unrestricted projects.

Recognising Students’ Artistic Talents

In 2017, our unrestricted funds enabled us to recognise the talents of ten DCU students who were awarded with an arts bursary to help them pursue excellence in their chosen fields of music, photography, videography and visual arts. The Arts Bursary was established by DCU in 2009 to promote excellence in artistic and cultural activities and to encourage students to excel in their craft. It is jointly funded by DCU’s Office of Student Life and DCU Educational Trust.

Washington Ireland Programme

Each year, through our unrestricted funds we sponsor DCU students to participate in the prestigious Washington Ireland Programme. The programme brings together young leaders from across Ireland and Northern Ireland for a year-long leadership and skills development programme, which includes a summer semester and work placement in Washington DC.

Thirty young people are selected for the programme each year through a competitive recruitment process. The programme identifies promising young people with a commitment to service, a track record of leadership and who excel both in influencing their environments and in making significant contributions for the benefit of others. It builds their skills through work experience, educational opportunity and hands-on citizenship both at home and in the US. In 2017, four DCU students were selected: Aíne Lawless, Sarah McLaughlin, Diana Oprea and Rachel Wheeler.

“It can be hard to juggle funding my studies and music at the same time. I’ve had the same concert flute since I started playing and I really need to upgrade to a better one but with the cost of rent in Dublin, investing in instruments can sometimes go on the back burner. This bursary relieves a lot of pressure and will enable me to finally get my new instrument.”

Ciara Casey, 2017 bursary recipient

A Little Goes a Long Way…
“I have always been somebody who tried to start initiatives in my community and tried to get people involved, particularly when it came to my passions for youth education and youth empowerment. So when I first came across the Washington Ireland Programme (WIP), the leadership aspect really appealed to me. I knew I would gain exposure to leaders from diverse fields whose experiences I could learn a lot from.

At our induction before we departed for Washington DC, I got to meet the participating students from a very diverse range of backgrounds. I didn’t actually know a lot about the history of Northern Ireland before the programme so I was like a sponge trying to absorb all the information on its politics. The programme taught me a lot about diversity and tolerance.

From the induction, I could immediately see I was amongst a group of very impressive people that I could learn a lot from. The group was a great source of inspiration and we have remained in touch ever since.

The experience of completing a summer internship in Washington DC was incredible. During our first week orientation, we heard from a number of high profile speakers including Barack Obama’s speech writer.

I did my work placement with the American Chemistry Council, a trade organisation representing chemical companies in the US. It was my first experience of working in an office and I was thrown in the deep end from day one, developing my skills working with spreadsheets, writing reports and dealing with people.

The programme also improved my resilience and self-knowledge. I now know my values, principles and who I am as a person. Taking part has encouraged me to reach out further as a leader. After returning from the summer internship, I did my community service element of the programme working with a number of organisations including with UNICEF as a Youth Ambassador, giving workshops to children on the Sustainable Development Goals, as well as with DCU’s Enactus Society, EIL Explore and I joined the board of the Global Citizenship Awards.

WIP is all about leadership and service and in the future I hope to maintain a balance between both of these aspects in my life. I know I would like to be a leader in business but I will always want to keep this balanced with my voluntary work advocating for youth education and youth empowerment.”
In 2017, we once again remembered past students, staff and friends of DCU through memorial scholarships which were awarded to 17 students for the 2017/18 academic year. These scholarships were named in honour of 13 individuals who have played a key role in the life of the University and in Irish society, including journalist Veronica Guerin, former Taoiseach Charles Haughey and mountaineer Ger McDonnell who became the first Irish person to scale K2 in 2008. We were also honoured to establish two new memorial scholarships for 2017/18:

— The Volkswagen Group Ireland Stephen Moran Memorial Scholarship which will support one student on DCU’s Access Programme each year.
— The Dr Tim Mahony Memorial Scholarship which was created by Toyota Ireland in memory of Dr Tim Mahony, one of Ireland’s foremost business figures and a leading philanthropist. This new scholarship will support one student per year studying the BA course in Contemporary Jazz and Music Performance at DCU.
We are honoured to acknowledge the 2017/18 Memorial Scholarship recipients:

— The Orla Benson Memorial Scholarship: Arun Decano
— The Frank Durkan Memorial Scholarship: Lisa Lavelle
— The Charles J Haughey Memorial Scholarships: Aoife Farrell; Sean Trimble; Jessica Kidd
— The Dr Tim Mahony Memorial Scholarship: Mario Lazcano
— The Aidan McDonnell Memorial Scholarship: Leah Lynn
— The Ger McDonnell Memorial Scholarship: Jordan Morrissey
— The Volkswagen Group Ireland – Stephen Moran Memorial Scholarship: Aíne Murphy
— The Paddy Moriarty Memorial Scholarship: Christine Andreeva
— The TJ O’Driscoll Memorial Scholarship: Farhat Omar
— The Nicola Radford Memorial Scholarship: Danielle Fitzpatrick
— The John Thompson Memorial Scholarship: Daniel Simicic
— The Paddy J Wright Memorial Scholarship: Cassie Hunt; Chloe Neville
— The Veronica Guerin Memorial Scholarship: Conor Molumby (2016/17 recipient)

“The individuals remembered through our memorial scholarships shone brightly in their own lives and made a mark on society, so it is fitting that their legacy will be honoured and live on in the bright and gifted scholarship recipients selected this year.”

Mary Shine Thompson, DCU Educational Trust Council of Trustees
In September 2017, 15 asylum seekers and refugees began their studies in DCU as part of our University of Sanctuary programme. This was an important step in a journey that began in December 2016 when DCU became Ireland’s first University of Sanctuary for our commitment to welcoming asylum seekers and fostering a culture of inclusion.

Five young people living in direct provision received a scholarship to study as a full-time undergraduate student on campus in 2017/18, with one scholarship offered by each of DCU’s five faculties. A further ten asylum seekers were also given the opportunity to study via DCU Connected, the University’s suite of undergraduate and postgraduate distance learning programmes.

Our corporate supporters eBay and Vodafone donated in-kind gifts which significantly contributed to the successful integration of the University of Sanctuary students into campus life. This included the provision of laptops, mobile phones and other academic equipment critical for students to participate fully in course activities and university life.

Shepherd’s Story

Shepherd moved to Ireland in 2007 from Zimbabwe, fleeing political persecution and violence under the regime of Robert Mugabe and his ZANU-PF party. Since arriving in Ireland, Shepherd has spent over ten years living in direct provision in Portlaoise. He is now studying Management Information Technology and Information Systems with DCU Connected through the University of Sanctuary.

“She life in direct provision can be very difficult and boring. I went from having a job, working every day and having a routine to all of a sudden having that taken away from me and being put in a place where I just sit there. I wanted to be doing something constructive with my time.

Being able to study with DCU Connected through the University of Sanctuary has completely changed me. I am a totally different person now that I wake up every day knowing I have something to do, it has given me purpose.”
Addressing Societal Challenges Through Research and Innovation
Professor Mathias Urban was appointed as the *Desmond Chair in Early Childhood Education* at DCU in 2017. The Chair was created thanks to the generosity of businessman and philanthropist Dermot Desmond.

Mathias is a prominent name in the field of early childhood studies who is known for his research in international early childhood policy and professional practice. His work on professionalising the early years workforce is particularly well-known in Ireland. His research collaborations reach across Europe, North and South America, Australia, New Zealand and Africa. He is President of the International Froebel Society and Chair of the International DECEET network (Diversity in Early Childhood Education and Training).

Professor Urban is leading the establishment of a new Centre for Early Childhood Research at the DCU Institute of Education that will contribute not only to scholarship but to the development of national and international public policy in the sector.

**What attracted you to the Desmond Chair in Early Childhood Education position?**

I was impressed by DCU’s ambition to take leadership in this field and to invest substantially in early childhood education by creating the only early childhood chair at an Irish university. I also found it attractive that the Chair is clearly situated in what I call the Bermuda triangle of research, policy and practice. DCU weren’t looking for somebody to conduct disconnected ivory tower research. Instead, they are interested in research that can make a difference to children’s lives by influencing policy and impacting on practice in early childhood care and education.

I enjoy getting things off the ground and feel honoured and humbled to be given the opportunity to shape the Centre for Early Childhood Research, its vision and research agenda. As the only early childhood Chair in Ireland, this opens a unique opportunity, and a huge responsibility, to influence the future direction of the early childhood sector in Ireland and beyond.
What are the major research projects and initiatives that you are currently focusing on?

My work in recent years, in collaboration with many others internationally, has focused on the support systems we build around young children and families in our societies. I am interested in what I call 'Competent Systems in Early Childhood': How do the various (human and institutional) actors in early childhood education and care interact and come together, or not, as the case may be, to enable more just and equitable early childhood experiences and outcomes for all children, regardless of their background? How do all actors – in crèches and preschools, in county and city administrations, in colleges and universities, in professional associations, and in government departments – use their capacity, their agency, to make a difference? We are asking similar questions in locations in Ireland, in Europe, in Latin America, Africa and Asia, so we can learn from and with each other.

I am really interested in what we can learn from initiatives in so-called developing countries in the global south, for instance in Latin America, where early childhood is seen as a public responsibility and where the policy discourse extends beyond education and childcare to include well-being, health, nutrition, (in)equality and social cohesion. Early education and childcare are important without doubt, but they have to be developed in the context of all factors that influence a child's life. The reality is that an increasing number of children, including in the most affluent countries, are growing up under what some used to call, carelessly, 'third-world conditions': marginalisation, poverty and malnutrition.

In our new Centre for Early Childhood Research we will be hosting a world class research team that builds on existing expertise in DCU’s Institute of Education and other faculties, together with international doctoral research students, and supported by a global network of the leading critical scholars in our field. This will, I am convinced, enable us to look at the early childhood sector in Ireland with fresh eyes.

What do you see as the particular challenges in the Irish early childhood sector today?

The past ten years have seen remarkable progress in the early childhood sector in Ireland with the publication of the Síolta and Aistear frameworks, and the ‘Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Charter and Guidelines’. These form a great basis for further progress but coordination, bold leadership, and substantial investment at Government level is required.

The Irish early childhood sector is incredibly dynamic but it is also very fragmented. Unlike in other countries in Europe, in Ireland we see a lot of small, independent, private providers of services for young children. Such a structure can lead to a conflation of interests between business requirements, professional practice and workforce interests. There is currently no strong professional organisation for early childhood practitioners in Ireland, and although the picture is changing, in the past it has made it very difficult for the sector to speak with one voice. There are many highly committed practitioners out there and some excellent practice, but significant issues remain in terms of recognition of the workforce and pay.

What impact do you hope that your research will have on the early childhood education landscape in Ireland and internationally?

I am confident the Centre will contribute to the debate and provide strategic leadership to adopt a new comprehensive systemic approach to early childhood. We will proactively promote close collaboration between research, policy and practice in the field, and we will encourage and facilitate shared learning from and with partners in the global south and north.

My aim is to place our Centre, and the developments we initiate here in Ireland, firmly on the map of global early childhood research so that DCU becomes a go-to place for cutting-edge systems research in our field.
Supporting Postgraduate Research at DCU

Philanthropy plays a key role in enabling postgraduate research at DCU. With funding from our supporters, doctoral researchers at DCU are addressing societal challenges in diverse areas from improving heart attack treatment and ensuring an inclusive education system to exploring the potential of entrepreneurship to alleviate poverty in developing countries.

Autism Education Research

In 2017, Paul and Margaret Kerley agreed to fund a four-year PhD research position in the School of Inclusive and Special Education within DCU’s Institute of Education. This funding will enable doctoral research to commence in 2018 on issues relating to the inclusion of students with autism in mainstream education.

Alleviating Poverty Through Entrepreneurship

Can entrepreneurship be a vehicle for the alleviation of poverty in developing countries? This is one of the questions which Philip O’Donnell, a doctoral researcher with DCU Business School, is working to answer. His research has been made possible through a fully funded PhD scholarship supported by US-based company Bennett Hospitality.

Philip’s research has involved spending over four months in the slum community of Mukuru in Nairobi, Kenya which is home to an estimated 500,000 people. Most of Mukuru’s adult population earns a living through small, informal enterprises, around a quarter of which yield an income of less than €3 per day. Whilst 880 million people live in slums around the world, with this number expected to treble by 2050, this kind of entrepreneurship garners little attention in the shadow of research into venture capital-backed technology entrepreneurship.

As Philip explains, “Although we are quick to cite entrepreneurship as a means to escape poverty, we know very little about how it looks or functions in settings like this. The purpose of my study is to explore, in an immersive way, how entrepreneurship is made to sustain in a deeply impoverished context, and to understand whether these entrepreneurs perceive it as a realistic means to break the cycle of poverty.”

During his fieldwork, Philip spoke with stallholders working in Mukuru on a daily basis gathering a range of perspectives on entrepreneurship. His interactions provided insights into the different enterprise models in the slum, from those who cycled through various types of business or those who copied their neighbours’ businesses to the entrepreneurs who learned a craft or sought to capitalise on emerging technology.

Philip is currently in the final stages of completing his doctoral thesis which will draw conclusions on the relationship between individual capability and the poverty-breaking potential of entrepreneurship and which will look at the implications for development interventions such as providing soft loans or microfinance.
Improving Early Diagnosis of Heart Attacks

Arabelle Cassidy, a PhD candidate in Dublin City University’s School of Biotechnology, was the winner of the DCU Allergan Innovation Award for 2017/18. The award provided Arabelle with a bursary of €5,000 to further her research to develop antibodies that allow for earlier and more accurate diagnosis of heart attacks in patients.

Delayed diagnosis of heart attacks can lead to poorer patient outcomes. At present, heart attacks are diagnosed using tests like an electrocardiogram (ECG) but Arabelle believes in future they could be diagnosed in minutes through a simple blood test. After a heart attack, a marker called cardiac troponin is released into the bloodstream in low concentrations. Arabelle’s research involves generating new more sensitive antibodies in the laboratory that can detect the presence of cardiac troponin at very low levels.

Under the guidance of Principal Investigator, Professor Richard O’Kennedy, Arabelle is collaborating with colleagues to develop a panel of antibodies that detect the presence of cardiac troponin. The ultimate goal is to develop a point of care device that can be used by doctors to quickly analyse a blood sample.

Speaking on receiving the award, Arabelle stated, “I was so delighted to receive this award which will enable me to travel to Hamad Bin Khalifa University in Qatar to collaborate with other researchers working in this field and to access state of the art characterisation systems to further my research. I have already identified some promising antibodies but there is a lot more work to do to determine their qualities.”

The Allergan Innovation Award Programme was launched by Allergan in March 2017 to mark 40 successful years of business in Ireland. DCU is one of six Higher Education Institutions that Allergan is partnering with in Ireland to provide funding to accomplished scholars who wish to advance innovative research studies in the field of life sciences.
In keeping with DCU’s reputation as Ireland’s University of Enterprise, support given through DCU Educational Trust enabled the UStart student accelerator programme to support ten start-up student enterprises in 2017. We are thankful to our donors who generously gave their time and financial support to this project.

The four-month accelerator is run by DCU’s Ryan Academy for Entrepreneurs and is open to profit and not-for-profit ventures from all DCU students, giving them the opportunity to develop innovative ideas and launch viable start-up companies.

The 2017 programme culminated in a Demo Day where participants pitched to a panel of judges and potential investors with two technology start-ups emerging as joint winners of the Best Start-up Opportunity title:

— Happy Scribe, a new transcription tool to help researchers and journalists save time and money transcribing interviews, led by André Bastie (Master’s in Electronic Commerce) and Marc Assens (Erasmus Computer Science).

— Giveback.ie, an online platform and social enterprise, led by James Gallagher (Computer Applications), which enables Irish consumers to help some of the most vulnerable people in society by simply shopping online. As consumers shop, they generate revenue which is donated to homeless charities.
Giveback.ie co-founder and third year Computer Applications student, James Gallagher, explains how UStart helped to develop the idea.

“GiveBack.ie came about last summer when my girlfriend, Victoria Ryan Nesbitt, and I had the idea to install something on a user’s device that works in the background and when the user makes a purchase, we receive a commission which is passed on to homeless charities. The beauty is that it doesn’t cost anybody anything extra to do this.

I had affiliate connections with a lot of retailers so we brought them together and they got on board with the idea so we started building the desktop extension.

Around this time, I first heard about UStart and the programme definitely lived up to expectations. We received help to build our mobile app and we have added another co-founder Seán Judge. One unexpected benefit for me has been the extent that I learned from the other UStart participants and how they tackle their own challenges.

The best thing about UStart was probably the mentoring though, from helping us to craft our story to looking at finance. UStart really took us to the next level and it has also helped us become more connected to the start-up ecosystem.”
Leading the Way for Irish Family Businesses

DCU’s Centre for Family Business is the first centre of excellence and learning in Ireland, translating leading Irish and international research into best practice for incumbent and future generations of Irish family business.

Ongoing philanthropic support from PwC, AIB and William Fry in 2017 enabled DCU’s Centre for Family Business to continue to serve as a hub of expertise, offering advice to Irish family firms on the challenges they face, from generational succession and the integration of family and non-family talent to inheritance, growth and exports. The Centre provides a platform to enhance the competitiveness of Irish family firms, to offer insights into international best practice and, ultimately, to help shape future policy in relation to this thriving sector.

In 2017, the Centre continued to engage with family businesses through a range of activities that included its annual national conference on the topic of ‘The S-Word: Navigating Succession in Family Business’, e-zines read by 2,600 family businesses, a roadshow and two Women in Leadership and Family Business events. The Centre also published a research report on ‘Family Business in the Irish Services Sector’ in 2017.
Rachel O’Connor is Head of Sales with Colourtrend, one of Ireland’s leading decorative paint brands. She is now the third generation of family to work in the company which her grandfather first established as General Paints in 1953 in an old Famine workhouse building in Celbridge. Here she describes how the company has benefited from its engagement with DCU’s Centre for Family Business.

“The Centre brings together family businesses across many industries and identifies common themes and needs, such as professionalising the business, bringing in and blending non-family member leaders at Board and Management level, and succession planning. We find there is a lot to learn from other family businesses in how they have addressed these issues.

For Colourtrend, the Centre has helped us with succession planning. As a company, we don’t do it very often and there are no hard and fast rules. In 2017, the Centre brought Paul and Audrey Darley over from WS Darley and Co in the USA and I really enjoyed their presentation. They are a fourth generation family business and a leading equipment provider to fire and emergency services worldwide. As a bigger and older company, I liked that they had a charter, explicit company values and family councils, things that we do at a more basic level.

In general, I find the speakers at Centre for Family Business events are very frank and open – they don’t just give the glossy side. It is refreshing to attend the events and to network with a group of peers where people are very open about the challenges that they face, and where we all want to see fellow Irish companies succeed.

Eric Clinton, Director of the Centre for Family Business, has also been great to work with, and it’s interesting to hear about the Centre’s research in this area.”
A number of donors have been passionate in their support of pioneering projects in DCU’s Institute of Education that are helping to transform education in Irish primary schools today.

One of these projects is the Western Seaboard Science Project which has been supported by the Irish American Partnership since 2003. It aims to improve the teaching and learning of primary science in rural schools by providing professional development for teachers.

Another innovative initiative made possible through philanthropic support is the Write to Read literacy project which aims to help primary school children see themselves as readers, writers and thinkers through the provision of professional development for teachers and literacy resources for schools participating in the research project. Write to Read has been supported by Deutsche Bank since 2012.
Engaging With the DCU Community
In 2017 DCU Educational Trust created a new award to honour donors who demonstrate a vision, generosity and sustained passion for change that is truly extraordinary.

There could only be one recipient of the inaugural DCU Educational Trust Medal for Transformation through Philanthropy and that was Charles F Feeney. Through the work of The Atlantic Philanthropies, Chuck Feeney, as most people would know him, transformed the physical landscape and intellectual life of DCU. The legacy of his unparalleled contribution, with gifts of more than €128 million to DCU, will continue to benefit our students and academic community for many decades to come.

Professor Brian MacCraith, President of DCU, was a recipient of funding from The Atlantic Philanthropies early in his career. Here, he explains about the impact of this once in a generation philanthropist.

“In the not-so-distant past of the 1980s, Ireland was a very different country dealing with the challenges of economic recession, high levels of unemployment and mass emigration together with many other social and human rights issues. Unsurprisingly in this environment, education suffered from a serious lack of investment and, in particular, higher education was in the doldrums.

This was the Ireland that Chuck Feeney encountered when he began to explore the country of his ancestry in the mid-1980s. Like the great visionary he is, he recognised that education is the pathway to social advancement and economic prosperity.

“Irish education had not kept pace with the rest of the world,” Feeney stated at the time, “with educated people you can achieve more.” And so began a journey of three decades of philanthropic investment that transformed not only DCU but also Ireland.

The Atlantic Philanthropies investments in DCU focused not only on research but also significantly on projects to transform the student experience. Funding for sports facilities, parking, the library and student accommodation was as important to Chuck as funding for the National Institute for Cellular Biotechnology, the National Centre for Plasma, Science and Technology and the National Centre for Sensor Research. Around our campus much of the infrastructure you see today, would not have been possible without the gifts of Chuck Feeney - from our Chemical and Biological Sciences building and the Computer Applications Building to the John and Aileen O’Reilly Library and The Helix.

In fact, The Atlantic Philanthropies has invested in more than 15 buildings since the formal establishment of DCU as a university in 1989. In the 28 years since then, DCU has achieved international recognition for the quality and impact of its research, its focus on the student learning experience, and its emphasis on social inclusion and equity of student access to educational opportunities. We rank consistently in the top 50 young universities worldwide, a feat that would not have been possible in this time-scale, without the support and investments of The Atlantic Philanthropies. It really was a privilege to be able to honour a donor who for so long gave anonymously, for the absolutely remarkable transformation he and The Atlantic Philanthropies enabled.

The future of DCU students and Irish society has been transformed through Chuck’s incredible contributions, and for this, we express our deepest gratitude.”
The DCU Educational Trust Medal for Transformation through Philanthropy was accepted on Chuck Feeney’s behalf by Mary Sutton, Country Director of the Atlantic Philanthropies in Ireland, at our 2017 Leadership Circle Dinner. The medal was subsequently presented directly to Chuck Feeney in person at the Ireland Funds Gala, San Francisco, in March 2018 by DCU President, Professor Brian MacCraith.
Each year DCU alumni and friends give generously to support Access scholarships, sports scholarships, research activities and academic excellence. In 2017, DCU Educational Trust ran two telethon campaigns in May and November to raise funds for the DCU Access Scholarship Programme. These telethons were a huge success leading to 1,553 conversations with alumni and raising over €162,000 to support scholarships for Access students at DCU.

Overleaf, Fiona Kelly, a DCU Accounting and Finance graduate, explains how she was inspired to support Access scholarships after speaking with a student caller during our May 2017 telethon.
Fiona Kelly: Sharing the Possibilities I Enjoyed at DCU With Others

“I absolutely loved my time at DCU and it’s where I met so many of my friends. Looking back, a lot of personal development was crammed in to those five years. It’s only a decade later that I fully appreciate that as much as DCU was about getting an academic education, it was just as much about personal development.

Peter McVerry spoke to one of my final year classes and the key message I took from it was that while we’re not all afforded the same start in life, society can level that playing field. I believe that education is transformative and it can have a positive impact not just on the student’s future but also on broader society’s future.

I recently became a supporter of DCU’s Access Programme after I was contacted as part of the Telethon. The caller and I spoke about his first-hand experience of a friend who was a beneficiary of the Access Programme and the possibilities it had afforded her. Getting a first-hand testimonial of the way DCU Access had impacted on this student inspired me to become a supporter of the programme.”

“I feel I have gained so much from my own time in DCU, it’s nice to think that I can be part of levelling the playing field and helping to share the possibilities that I have enjoyed with others.”
In June 2017, friends and supporters of Dublin City University joined us for our annual Leadership Circle Dinner to celebrate how the generosity of the University’s leading donors is helping to transform lives and societies.

As you will have seen on page 36, in 2017 we honoured renowned philanthropist Chuck Feeney with a new award, the DCU Educational Trust Medal for Transformation through Philanthropy. This award was accepted on Chuck Feeney’s behalf by Mary Sutton, Country Director of The Atlantic Philanthropies in Ireland.
In keeping with tradition, the Trust presented three additional awards on the night to honour the contribution of individual DCU donors, corporate supporters and DCU staff to furthering the University’s mission:

— The **Individual Leadership Award** went to Gay White in recognition of her sustained personal support for the DCU Access Programme since 2004, giving not only generous gifts to the programme but also her time through her involvement with the DCU Alumni Council and DCU Educational Trust Council of Trustees.

— The **Staff Leadership Award** went to Professor Kate Irving from DCU’s School of Nursing and Human Sciences in recognition of her contribution to improving the lives of people living with dementia through projects that include the Dementia Elevator programme, fittingly supported by The Atlantic Philanthropies.

— The **Corporate Leadership Award** was presented to AIB in recognition of their support for the DCU Centre for Family Business and the AIB Chair in Data Analytics, which both demonstrate the company’s awareness of how philanthropy can contribute to improving our economy and society. DCU graduate Robert Mulhall, Managing Director – Retail, Corporate and Business Banking, accepted the award on behalf of AIB.

The talents of DCU students were celebrated on the night through musical entertainment from the award-winning traditional music group SeanChas and singer-songwriter Katie Gallagher. Attendees also heard from Journalism student Laura Horan whose story can be seen on page 17.
Gay White is a member of the DCU Educational Trust Council of Trustees and has been a member of DCU’s Alumni Council since 2010, chairing it from 2012 to 2016. Her longstanding support for the DCU Access Scholarship Programme was recognised at our 2017 Leadership Circle Dinner when she received the Individual Leadership Award.

Gay is a chartered Work and Organisational Psychologist who graduated from DCU in 2001 with a BA in Humanities which she completed as a part-time student through Oscail followed by an MSc in Organisational Psychology from Birkbeck College, University of London. Gay has enjoyed a distinguished career working as an HR consultant and as Head of Human Resources at the Institute of Banking in Ireland from 2013 to 2017.

What does DCU mean to you today?
“DCU is a really practical university. Practicality screams out here—what you get in DCU is not academia for its own sake but a huge focus on practical application in the real world. For me, this is what differentiates DCU, it gives the theory but it also focuses on practical application, which prepares students for their future careers.

I also find DCU to be a very ambitious, energetic, young and vibrant university; and that opinion is enhanced every time I set foot on campus and I can feel the energy about the place.”

What inspires you to support the DCU Access Programme?
“I first heard about the Access Programme when a student called me during a telethon in 2004 and it was a ‘no brainer’ to support it. There are so many bright people who deserve to participate in third level education and the inequality of opportunity that exists is a sad reflection on our society.

Life has been good to me and it’s always nice to be able to give back in some way.

My father has inspired me a lot through the value that he placed on education. Although he didn’t have the gift of a higher education himself, he believed in equality of opportunity, in particular for women, which was quite progressive at a time when the marriage bar was still in force.

I share his value and love of education— I see it as the answer to most of society’s ills. The more that we can educate people and open minds, we will have a greater impact on problems such as poverty and social inequality in all its manifestations. Unfortunately, recent cuts to funding for third level education mean that universities now rely more than ever on the support of employers, alumni and philanthropy in order to achieve their ambitious goals and to continue to have a positive impact on society.”
Our work to building meaningful partnerships with DCU's friends and supporters often creates openings to improve the DCU student experience or can lead to a life-changing opportunity for a DCU student.

**Summer Internships**

Our continued engagement with our corporate partners enables us to provide a number of transformative internship opportunities for DCU students. Two students from DCU's Access Programme were awarded placements on Digicel’s prestigious internship programme working with the company in the Caribbean whilst four DCU Business School students received places on the Bennett Hospitality Internship Programme in South Carolina in the United States.

Above: 2017 Digicel Interns - Amy Redmond and Moize Haidar.

Left: 2017 Bennett Interns - Peter Shannon, Niamh Devlin, Brian McCarthy and Katrina Puncule.
Leadership Insights

Our partnerships also provided our students and the wider DCU community with the opportunity to hear the insights of top Irish and international business leaders.

In February, real estate investor and property developer Stephen Vernon, visited DCU as part of the Citi Speaker Series to deliver an address to final year Business Studies students. During his talk, the man behind the development of Blanchardstown Shopping Centre outlined his own entrepreneurial journey, moving from Managing Director of Green Property plc since 1993 when the company was listed on the Irish Stock Exchange and the London Stock Exchange to leading a leveraged buyout of the company in 2002 in a €1.85 billion transaction.

In May, Bill McDermott, Global CEO of software giant SAP also visited DCU to give an address on the topic of ‘Leadership in the Digital Age’ as part of the Distinguished Speaker Series organised by DCU’s Leadership and Talent Institute in partnership with The Irish Times Executive Jobs. Mr McDermott was presented with an award at the event by DCU President, Prof Brian MacCraith to recognise more than a decade of support for, and commitment to the DCU Access Scholarship Programme by SAP.
“I believe strongly in ‘giving while living.’ I see little reason to delay giving when so much good can be achieved through supporting worthwhile causes today.”

Chuck Feeney
Our Council of Trustees

The work of the DCU Educational Trust is guided by its four directors and 20 Council members who voluntarily give their time and expertise to guide the work of the organisation:

- Larry Quinn (Chairperson and Director)
- Professor Brian MacCraith (Director)
- Eamonn Quinn (Director)
- Jerry McCrohan (Director)
- Bernie Cullinan
- Raymond Reilly
- Michael Bennett
- Pat Brazel
- Robert Cooney (retired 2017)
- Colin Cunningham (retired 2017)
- Tommy Drumm
- Robert M. Dunn
- Pamela Farrell Venzke (retired 2017)
- Paul Kerley
- Paul Keogh
- Liavan Mallin
- John Martin
- Marianna O’Dwyer (retired 2017)
- Michael O’Halloran
- Mary Shine Thompson
- Gay White
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The Campaign for DCU
Dublin City University Educational Trust

The DCU Educational Trust is a registered charity (CHY 8960) established in 1988 to advance the development of Dublin City University.