



Photo courtesy of Maura Boyle.

Welcome to the latest edition of the information sharing newsletter from MaynoothWorks at Maynooth University. Our goal is to share relevant market news and activities on the commercialisation of Maynooth University research. We hope you enjoy this newsletter.

MaynoothWorks encompasses knowledge transfer, entrepreneurship innovation and enterprise partnership.

www.maynoothuniversity.ie/maynoothworks

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER Q2 2020

MAYNOOTHWORKS JOHN SCANLAN INDUSTRY ENGAGEMENT AWARD

Each year MaynoothWorks recognises excellence in the commercialisation of research at Maynooth University. We consider activity such as invention disclosures recorded, licence deals completed, new patents filed, spinout company creation and developing new collaborations and links with industry as key factors in bringing research to the market place.

Dr John Stephens of the Chemistry Department was awarded the first John Scanlan Industry Engagement Award. Dr Stephens has expertise in Medicinal Chemistry, Synthetic Chemistry, and the application of Chemistry to Biological challenges. Dr Stephens' research is focused on the discovery and application of new technologies at the interface of Chemistry and Biology, with many of his research targets having potential as molecules of biological significance. A number of projects involve working at the intersection of chemistry & food science, as well as medicinal endpoints including diabetes, cancer, and bacterial/fungal infections. Dr Stephens' research has been supported by several funding agencies (EI, SFI, IRC, EU) and partnering with

industry is an important aspect of his work (AF Chempharm, Dual Systems, others confidentially). Dr Stephens is currently leading an interdisciplinary collaboration with a large Irish food company. The main focus of this research is to add value to existing and new product lines. The project is funded through an Enterprise Ireland Innovation Partnership.



Dr John Stephens (centre) receiving the John Scanlan Industry Engagement Award, presented by Prof Ray O'Neill and supported by Dr Karen Griffin, MaynoothWorks Commercialisation Executive

RESEARCHER PROFILE

Dr. Philip Hyland is an Associate Professor in the Department of Psychology and a member of the ALL Institute. Philip's research focuses on the mental health effects of exposure to physical and psychological trauma, as well as understanding how to appropriately describe and classify mental health disorders.

Since 2015, Philip has been working with a small group of world-leading traumatic stress researchers to develop a new diagnostic model of stress and trauma related disorders, and this was included in the recently released 11th version of the *International Classification of Diseases*; the diagnostic manual published by the World Health Organization and used by health practitioners in all United Nations member states. Since then, Philip has established the International Trauma Consortium (www.traumameasuresglobal.com/) to bring together researchers and clinicians from around the world with the aim of advancing the science and practice of traumatic stress studies in order to improve the lives of people affected by trauma. Philip currently serves as the Deputy Statistical Editor for the *Journal of Traumatic Stress* which is the official publication of the International Society for Traumatic Stress Studies.

Most recently, Philip has been leading the Irish section of the COVID-19 Psychological Research Consortium which was established to monitor the psychosocial impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Working together with colleagues from Trinity College Dublin, the National Office for Suicide Prevention, and Mental Health Reform, this research involves tracking a nationally representative sample of the Irish population over time to understand how the quarantine and physical distancing measures enacted to slow the spread of COVID-19 are affecting people's mental health. Philip's team is also tackling issues of social relevance to the pandemic response such as the public's resistance to vaccination, and the implementation of other public health measures.



Philip has received research funding from the European Commission's Horizon 2020 scheme and the Irish Research Council. Through these funding sources, Philip supervises a large and active group of PhD students.

RESEARCH PROJECTS TO TACKLE COVID-19

Maynooth University researchers are leading a range of projects under the Government's Covid-19 research programme, coordinated by Science Foundation Ireland (SFI). In excess of €600,000 was awarded to MU projects in two separate Government funding announcements.

Dr Tim McCarthy in the Department of Computer Science is leading a major project to develop a drone coordination and operations centre, and a platform to analyse data to detect where human activities could pose a risk to public health through the spread of COVID-19.

A project led by Prof Sean Doyle, Biotechnology Programme Coordinator at Maynooth University, will develop two new tests for antibodies against SARS-CoV-2, and help to identify who may have developed immunity to COVID-19. His team includes Dr David Fitzpatrick, Dr Rebecca Owens and Dr Ozgur Bayram at the Department of Biology and the Kathleen Lonsdale Institute for Human Health Research.

Prof Andrew Parnell will lead a team at the Hamilton Institute to generate computational tools to help Ireland predict the epidemiological and economic consequences of easing restrictions during the recovery of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Dr Fiona Walsh in the Department of Biology is partnering in a project led by Teagasc and the APC Microbiome Ireland Sequencing Centre to examine the genetic makeup of Covid-19 viruses circulating in Ireland.