



24th November 2023 | Issue 22

Hello everyone – welcome to the November issue of the G(e)ossip! It's been an eventful month; read on to find out more about what our department has been up to since our last issue.

As we start to wind down for the holidays, we'd like to remind everyone that there will be no December issue. However, we'll be back in January to share all the news from over the holidays with everyone. We hope everyone has a great rest of the year and safe travels to anyone travelling for the holidays!

The G(e)ossip will be released every month. Past issues are archived and uploaded on the Geology website which you can access here.

If you have feedback or anything to be added to upcoming newsletter issues, please send us an email at geossip.tcd@gmail.com.

-The G(e)ossip Team

CHRISTMAS PARTY

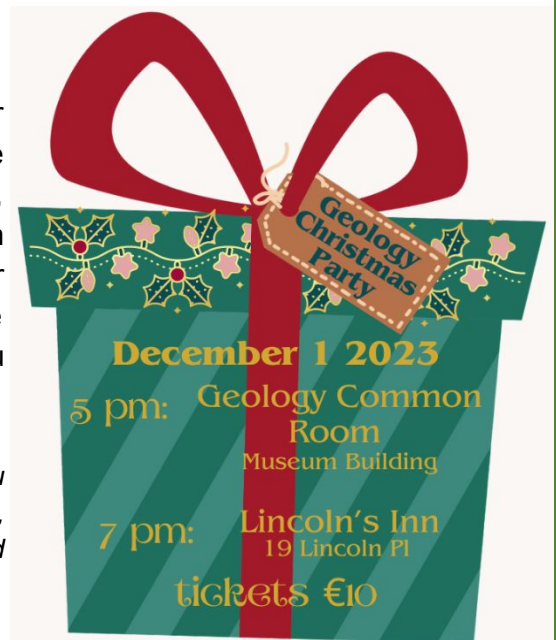
You've probably all already seen the beautiful flyers around the department put together by Swetha, but in case you haven't...

The departmental Christmas Party will be on the 1st of December!

Festivities will begin at **5:00pm in the Common Room** with beer, mulled wine, Christmas crackers, snacks, a quiz, and overall merriment, before relocating to **Lincoln's Inn at 7:00pm**.

Tickets are available for purchase at Sarah's office (Museum Building, first floor, Geology Office) or from Eimear (postgrad offices) for €10 (cash only, please). We hope to see many of you there!

Please direct any queries you may have to the organisers, Eimear (prendeei@tcd.ie) and Dani (dvitareld@tcd.ie)!



CONTRIBUTIONS

We want to hear from you! Did we miss something? Have you got any news to share with the department? Any conferences, talks, publications or fieldwork you've been involved in?

Please let us know at geossip.tcd@gmail.com to be featured in the next newsletter. We would love to hear from you!



GOODBYE BLANKA!

After valiantly heading the G(e)ossip for so long, it's sadly time to officially say goodbye to **Blanka Kovács!** She was a dedicated member of the team, always intent on ensuring everyone and everything was represented in our newsletter. It's difficult to say goodbye as Blanka hands over the reins of the G(e)ossip. Thank you for everything Blanka – we truly hope to do you proud and you will be sorely missed! **Fay Amstutz** will be joined by **Amanda Perera** and **Dani Vitarelli** on the G(e)ossip Team this academic year. The three of us are very excited to be able to work on the newsletter and hope to keep it going strong!

– The G(e)ossip Team (Fay, Amanda, & Dani)



CONGRATULATIONS LUCY!

Many congratulations to **Lucy Blennerhassett**, who successfully defended her PhD thesis "Advances in the detection of particulate matter and aerosols in peat: Exploring Icelandic volcanic activity and multi-source deposition in Ireland" at TCD yesterday. Lucy did an excellent job with both her thesis and viva. Thanks to her examiners, Robbie Goodhue and Gill Plunkett (QUB) and to David Chew for chairing.

Lucy's PhD project involved developing and applying novel techniques to search for aerosols and microscopic volcanic ash in peat. Of note, her research shows volcanic aerosol presence in western Ireland pertaining to the Icelandic Laki AD 1783-84 eruption, which represents the first finding of distinct heavy metal excursions for this historic volcanic event outside of the poles. Lucy has also found evidence for the transport of Saharan dust to Ireland during the Early to Middle Holocene which may be linked to changes in the North Atlantic Oscillation.



STAFF SPOTLIGHT – CHRIS NICHOLAS



Chris Nicholas is an Exploration Field Geologist. Over the last 30 years he has conducted field surveys all around the world from Arctic Canada, eastern Siberia and the snow-covered Japan Alps, to the rainforests of Java, deserts of Kazakhstan, and on to ocean islands such as the Atlantic Cape Verdes and Kilauea volcano on Hawaii. However, his particular speciality for the last 25 years has been exploration across the Equatorial Tropics of Africa, Arabia and the Caribbean, working in collaboration with geologists from Government Ministries, their Corporations and a suite of major Industry exploration companies in those Countries.

Chris graduated with a PhD from the University of Cambridge, UK, followed by Research Fellowships at the University of Cambridge, University of Oxford and Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), USA, before joining Trinity College Dublin as a Lecturer in 2001. Chris' current, main research theme is the evolution of African Rift basins from the Neoproterozoic to the modern day East African Rift System (EARS), and in particular, how tectonics coupled with climatic cyclicity have driven sedimentary dynamics in the Pliocene – Recent Albertine Rift in Uganda and DR Congo. He has been conducting geological surveys there since 2007 and is now Director of a new Albertine Rift GeOsurvey (ARGO), field training and supervising up to 30 Ugandan Geologists, split into 3 Field Teams, as they undertake new field studies in key areas within the Lake Albert and Lake Edward rift basins.

Chris previously received the Provost's Award for Teaching Excellence, principally for field teaching. Chris was also Chair of the Royal Dublin Society (RDS) Science Committee overseeing the creation of what became the nationwide 'ESB Science Blast' science fair for all Primary School-aged children in Ireland. He was also on the Governing Board of the National Museum of Ireland for five years. In July 2023 Chris took up the Martial Art Tae Kwon Do, winning his first belt at the end of October.



Field Mapping with the 'ARGO' Geologists, northern Lake Albert, with the Albert Nile in the background. December, 2022.

COMMUNICATION

Several members of the department attended a very informative lecture by Dr Abeba Birhane (TIME 100AI list, adjunct assistant professor at the School of Computer Science and Statistics, Trinity College Dublin) on the Social and ethical impacts of generative AI during Academic Integrity Week. If you would like to know more about the topic, we recommend these articles ([1](#) and [2](#)) or you can follow [Abeba on X \(Twitter\)](#).



GEOLOGICAL MUSEUM SPECIMEN OF THE MONTH

TCD.2578
Palaeocoma milleri (Ophiuroid)
Jurassic, Lyme Regis, UK



TCD Geological Museum

The specimen of the month is...**TCD.2578!**

This incredible specimen comes from the "Starfish Bed" which is part of the Jurassic Dyrham Formation, a formation well known for exceptional preservation of ophiuroids. It was collected sometime in the 1800s, and is illustrated in the 1865 "[Manual of Geology](#)" of Rev. Samuel Haughton (M.D., F.R.S., Fellow of Trinity College, Professor of Geology in the University of Dublin).

MENTAL HEALTH MATTERS

TCD's Student Counselling Services is open and available to all registered students.

Check out their website [here](#) to read about the services they provide, email them at student-counselling@tcd.ie to request an appointment, and follow them on Instagram at [@tcd_headspace](#) for mindfulness and mental health awareness tips. They now offer [PhD research support groups](#) to keep you on track!

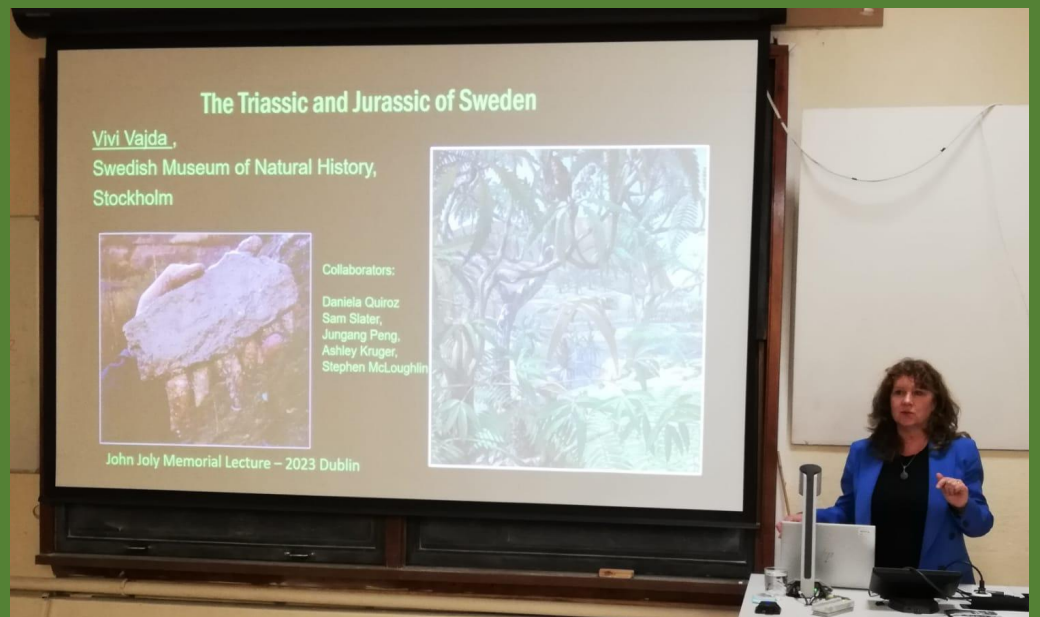
SAFETY AND ENERGY SAVING

Turn off the light!



Please make sure when you're leaving your office for the day to close the door properly, turn off all the lights and appliances. This includes the hallway lights as well.

The **2023 Joly Memorial Seminar** was well attended by staff and students alike. We would like to extend a big thank you to Vivi Vajda for taking us all through the Triassic-Jurassic boundary in Sweden by examining individual species of pollen, spores, algae, and macro plants!



FIELDWORK

Fourth Year Geology student **Katherine Brown** conducted fieldwork this past October in Oman for her capstone project – awesome work, Katherine!



"I had the incredible opportunity to travel to Oman from October 27th to 29th as part of my final year capstone project, "Flash Flood Modeling in Arid Regions using Lumped Models," under the guidance of Eyad Abushandi. During this trip, I conducted a series of experiments in Wadi Al Jizzi to gain insights into its social and morphological structure.

These experiments involved the collection of soil samples from four different locations within the catchment area. These samples will undergo further analysis through sieve and XRF methods at Trinity. Additionally, I performed soil infiltration tests in these areas using the double-ring test to better understand their flood response characteristics. I also gathered slope measurements using automatic levels.

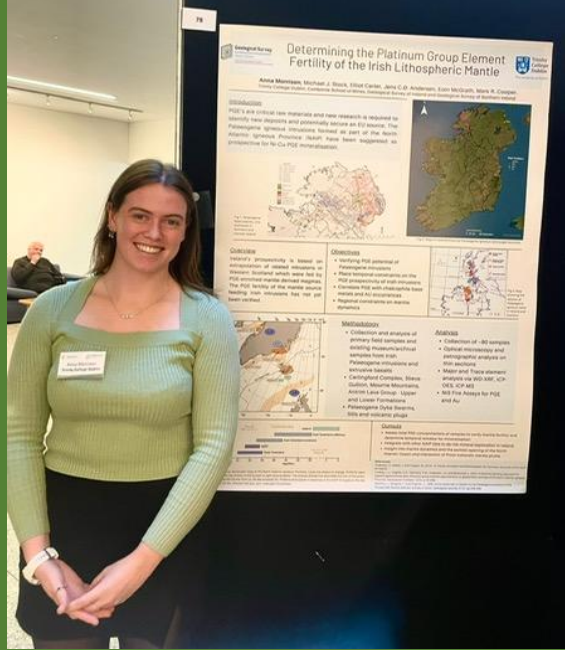
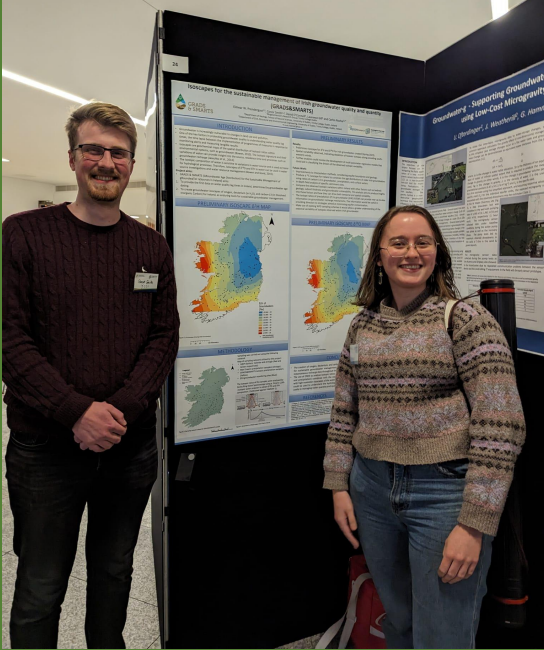
One of the most memorable highlights of the trip was our visit to the Wadi Al Jizzi Dam, where we analysed its dimensions and its role in flood protection. This experience provided valuable insights into the significance of groundwater resources for agriculture and domestic use, as well as how the local culture adapts to water scarcity. We also had the opportunity to explore various irrigation systems in the City of Sohar.

Thanks to my supervisor Eyad Abushandi."
– Katherine Brown



CONFERENCES – GEOSCIENCE2023

Anna Morrison, Conor Smith, Eimear Prendergast, Elliot Carter, and Jack Beckwith all attended the Geoscience2023 conference on 7 November to present their research!



UPCOMING CONFERENCES

[AGU 2023 Fall Meeting](#)

11-15 Dec 2023
San Francisco

[VMGS 60th Anniversary Meeting](#)

3-5 January 2024
Bristol



COMMUNICATION

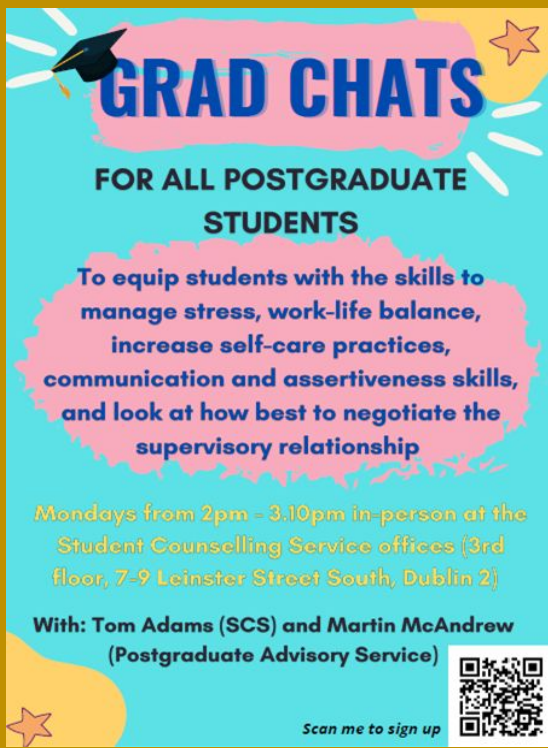
Dublin Magmatism Group at TCD bring together researchers from across different volcanology and magmatism research teams aiming to facilitate collaboration across different institutions invested in volcanological research across Dublin. There are now active social media channels on both Instagram and [X \(Twitter\)](#) please follow [@dublinmagma](#) for updates.



COMMUNITY



As a member of the **Trinity community**, you have the right to study or work in an environment that is **free from bullying, harassment, and sexual misconduct**. [Speak Out](#) provides the opportunity for you to make the University aware of incidents that you have either experienced or witnessed by reporting them anonymously.




GRAD CHATS

FOR ALL POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS

To equip students with the skills to manage stress, work-life balance, increase self-care practices, communication and assertiveness skills, and look at how best to negotiate the supervisory relationship

Mondays from 2pm - 3.10pm in-person at the Student Counselling Service offices (3rd floor, 7-9 Leinster Street South, Dublin 2)

With: Tom Adams (SCS) and Martin McAndrew (Postgraduate Advisory Service)



Scan me to sign up

Learn more on the PG Grad Chats [webpage](#) and pre-register [here](#).

Several members of our department, along with department members from Botany and Zoology, got up to spooky shenanigans this Halloween, including a costume party and bobbing for apples. Congratulations to our apple bobbing fiends Cian (1.67 s), Dr Meabh (2.11 s), and **Blanka** (Geology, 2.17 s)!

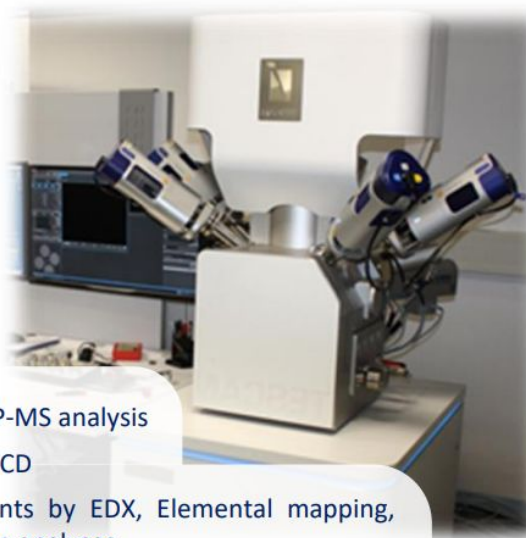


Microbeam Workshop

Monday 4th Dec 2023

Trinity College Dublin

Museum Building
Lecture Hall M4



Program

- Background and basics on SEM and LA-ICP-MS analysis
- Routine techniques used in iCrag LAB@TCD
- SEM: Imaging, Major and minor elements by EDX, Elemental mapping, Feature Analysis, Intro to EBSD and Raman analyses
- LA-ICP-MS: Trace elements, U-Pb geochronology, Mapping vs. spot analyses
- NEW - LA-ICP-MS/MS: Rb-Sr geochronology
- Sample preparation requirements and workflows
- Contacts and fee structure
- Q&A

Before and after the lecture hall-based sessions there will be lab tours in small groups for interested participants.

More info and registration form on <https://www.tcd.ie/Geology/news/2023/microbeamworkshop.php>

COMMUNITY

The University of Dublin Choral Society, including three members of our Department, **Dave Chew, Eimear Prendergast and Blanka Kovács**, gave two delightful concerts, conducted by David Leigh, on the 8th and 9th of November in the Exam Hall, where they performed Mozart's Mass in D Major and Haydn's Nelson Mass. The choir would like to thank everyone from the Department who came and supported them over the two nights. You can learn more about the choir [here](#).



FIELDWORK

Jack Beckwith – accompanied by **Mike Stock, Lydia Whittaker, Dani Vitarelli**, & rock-enthusiast Rémy – collected numerous gabbro samples from the Carlingford Mountains to explore assimilation within the layered mafic intrusion.



FIELDWORK

This October, members of the Critical Ireland team accompanied **Eshbal Geifman** out to the Skerries off the coast of Portrush in Northern Ireland to explore some island geology!



Melanie Maddin will be taking her small business to the RDS this December 6-10th! Melanie is in the final year of her PhD working with Juan Diego. Congratulations Melanie, and absolutely stunning work!



Thread Art Studios is headed to the RDS!!

Hello! My name is Melanie and am in my final year of my PhD. I started embroidering during the COVID pandemic in 2020 and launched Thread Art Studios in 2021.

I create hand embroidery jewellery, as well as pdf patterns, full embroidery kits, stick and stitch packs. Everything can be found in my online Etsy shop, ThreadArtStudios.

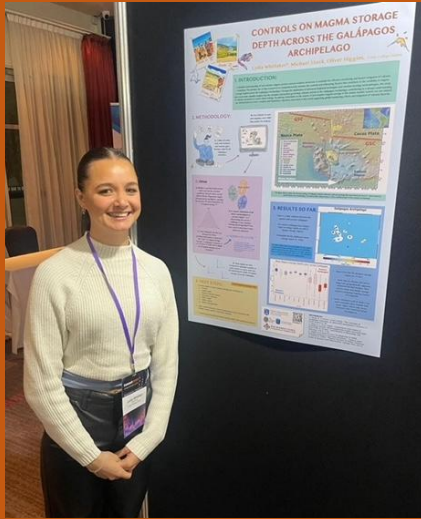
Learning to hand embroider offered a little bit of solace and peace of mind during a very stressful and isolating time.

This December I will be taking my little business to Gifted at the RDS, Dublin, from December 6-10th and have a limited number of free tickets available.

If you'd like to visit this amazing Christmas shopping event, please feel free to get in touch at maddinm@tcd.ie and I will organise some tickets for you!



CONFERENCES – SUMMIT 2023



Lydia Whittaker attended the combined IRC and SFI research summit this month where she presented her research on the Galápagos Archipelago from the first year of her PhD. Amazing work, Lydia!

PUBLICATIONS

Wai Qian Tham, **Subhash Chandra**, Brian Norton and Sarah McCormack “Introducing luminescent solar waveguides for sustainable buildings for enhanced circadian rhythm regulation, *Sust. Build.*, 6, 6, Page – 1-8, 2023 DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1051/sbuild/2023007>.

Thomas Flynn, **Subhash Chandra**, Anita Ortega and Sarah McCormack “Assessment of large-area luminescent solar concentrators as building-integrated geodesic dome panels” *Sust. Build.*, 6, 7, page 1-12, 2023, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1051/sbuild/2023008>.

Zhong Han, Xiumian Hu, Robert J. Newton, Tianchen He, Benjamin J.W. Mills, Hugh C. Jenkyns, **Micha Ruhl**, Robert A. Jamieson, 2023, Spatially heterogenous seawater $\delta^{34}\text{S}$ and global cessation of Ca-sulfate burial during the Toarcian oceanic anoxic event: *Earth and Planetary Science Letters*, v. 622, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.epsl.2023.118404>.

Tianchen He, David B. Kemp, Juan Li, **Micha Ruhl**, 2023, Paleoenvironmental changes across the Mesozoic–Paleogene hyperthermal events: *Global and Planetary Change*, v. 222, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.gloplacha.2023.104058>.

Hesselbo, S. P., Al-Suwaidi, A., [...] **Ruhl, M.**, [...] and Zhao, K.: Initial results of coring at Prees, Cheshire Basin, UK (ICDP JET project): towards an integrated stratigraphy, timescale, and Earth system understanding for the Early Jurassic, *Sci. Dril.*, 32, 1–25, <https://doi.org/10.5194/sd-32-1-2023>, 2023.

Senger, K., Kulhanek, D., Jones, M. T., Smyrak-Sikora, A., Planke, S., Zuchuat, V., Foster, W. J., Grundvåg, S.-A., Lorenz, H., **Ruhl, M.**, Sliwinska, K. K., Vickers, M. L., and Xu, W.: Deep-time Arctic climate archives: high-resolution coring of Svalbard's sedimentary record – SVALCLIME, a workshop report, *Sci. Dril.*, 32, 113–135, <https://doi.org/10.5194/sd-32-113-2023>, 2023.

Li Zhang, Yongdong Wang, **Micha Ruhl**, Yanbin Zhu, Haijun Li, 2023, Re-investigations of the fossil fern *Xiaijajenia mirabila* (Dicksoniaceae) based on new material from the Lower Cretaceous of western Liaoning, China: *Cretaceous Research*, v. 149, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cretres.2023.105543>.

WELLBEING

The [Silver Cloud programme](#) provides a great online tool to help you improve and maintain your wellbeing by addressing issues that can have a negative impact on your life. The program is provided by Student Counselling and is available to everyone in the Trinity Community.

S2S Peer Support

Student2Student

S2S Peer Support is back!

Thanks to the support of Trinity Trust, Student 2 Student is delighted to announce the return of our Peer Support Programme after 4 long years! **This is not the same as our Mentoring Programme.** S2S Mentors are student volunteers who offer group support to every incoming undergraduate student. Peer Supporters are student volunteers who provide **face-to-face, confidential listening and support to any TCD student** on request!

Peer Supporters have undergone over 35 hours of intensive training in active listening, emotional support and self-care. They are highly confidential, non-judgemental and are willing and ready to help! Students don't need to be in distress or crisis to talk to a Peer Supporter, but they can help with the larger problems as well as the smaller things.

[Request a Peer Supporter here!](#)

Please do not fill out a request on anyone else's behalf – but please do encourage any student you know who might need a listening ear to fill this link out themselves.

Peer Supporters aim to respond to requests within 48 hours (excluding weekends). They'll suggest a few possible times and organise an initial meeting. The new S2S space in [House 47](#) has a private room where students can meet for a chat, or Peer Supporters can arrange to go for a walk around campus or meet at a public spot nearby. Meetings can be once off, or as frequent as once a week.

You can find [more information about the Peer Support programme here](#) or email student2student@tcd.ie with any questions.

CONFIDENTIAL HELPLINE

[NiteLine](#) is a non-profit, non-judgemental, non-directive, anonymous and confidential listening service run by students for students. Our service is completely free and open every night of term from 9pm to 2.30am through instant messaging and over the phone. We are run by a team of dedicated volunteer students who have undergone rigorous training with the intention of supporting our peers. Our motto is "no problem is too big or too small."



Free, anonymous, confidential and non-judgemental listening.

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