



Dr. Conor Finlay's career trajectory has been significantly influenced by the Dean's Award he received in 2023. This award acted as a vital starting point, propelling his research independence and enabling numerous achievements that ultimately led to him securing the prestigious SFI-IRC Pathway Programme award in 2024.



Research Impact Case Study

Investment in Research Capacity

Dr. Finlay's Dean's Award 2023 for his project "*Mapping human macrophage anti-microbial function in pleural infection*", facilitated preliminary data collection and importantly, this initial groundwork directly supported his successful application for a Trinity Doctorate Award (2024-2028) as well as a Trinity College Dublin Research Boost equipment award.

Impact on Collaborations and Networking

Since 2023, Conor has fostered a significant new collaboration with Dr. Laura Gleeson's respiratory clinical and research team, leading to the establishment of a pleural biobank resource. The award also supported international collaborations with Leiden University for immunometabolic profiling of macrophages and the University of Manchester for pleural fluid proteomics. His contribution to a Nature Immunology publication comparing human and murine serous cavity immune cells further solidified his position within the international network of serous cavity biology researchers.



Enhancement of Technical and Infrastructure and Commercialisation Potential

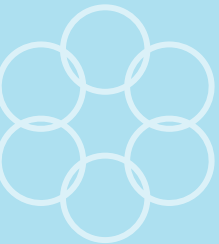
Another key achievement, facilitated by the award, is the significant advancement of the TCD Single Cell Omics facility, which Dr. Finlay created and manages with TTMI infrastructure support. The TCD Single Cell Omics facility has already attracted industry collaboration with Legend Biotech, and Dr. Finlay intends to further increase its capacity by hiring a single-cell omics technician. This development underscores his ambition to become the academic director of a renamed "TCD Omics" facility.



The Dean's Award A Catalyst for Dr. Conor Finlay's Research Success

Achievement in advancing Scientific Knowledge

One of the most important scientific outcomes of Dr. Finlay's team has been the creation of an early version of the Cellular Atlas of Pleural Effusion (CAPE), which maps immune cell populations across pleural health and disease. CAPE provides respiratory physicians and scientists with a crucial reference resource for understanding cellular composition in various pleural conditions, with initial findings identifying distinct macrophage subpopulations in patients with pleural effusion from infection or malignancy compared to those with benign effusions.



Conor and team

Contributions to Teaching and Supervision Excellence

Dr. Finlay's contributions to teaching, supervision, and mentoring has been outstanding. The Dean's award directly an MSc Molecular Medicine student in 2024, who went on to achieve first-class honours. A MSc Genomic Medicine student is currently analysing pleural fluid samples using single-cell RNA sequencing. Dr. Finlay's has also enriched his teaching contributions across multiple programmes, including the Research Skills Module for PhD students, teaching on genetic technologies to bioengineering students, and plans for a new week-long omics training programme in the MSc Molecular Medicine (2025-2026).

Leveraging Funding to Build Research Programme and Independence

The Dean's Award laid the foundation for Dr. Finlay's prestigious SFI-IRC Pathway Programme award in 2024. The SFI-IRC Pathway Award provides funding over a four-year period and includes support for a postgraduate student. This award will now enable Dr. Finlay to pursue his ambitious research goals, further solidifying his trajectory towards becoming a world-leading expert in the field and significantly expanding his research profile.



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