



**Trinity College Dublin**

Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath

The University of Dublin



**MEET JOSEF  
VEELSKY, AT 98,  
TRINITY'S OLDEST  
STUDENT AND AN  
INSPIRING EXAMPLE  
OF LIFELONG  
LEARNING**

**SEE PAGE 10**



**AGE-FRIENDLY TRINITY**  
A UNIVERSITY FOR THE AGES



“WHY SHOULD SOCIETY FEEL RESPONSIBLE ONLY FOR THE EDUCATION OF CHILDREN, AND NOT FOR THE EDUCATION OF ALL ADULTS OF EVERY AGE?” **ERICH FROMM**



## TEN PRINCIPLES OF AN AGE-FRIENDLY UNIVERSITY



- 01** To encourage the participation of older adults in all the **core activities** of the university, including educational and research programmes.
- 02** To promote personal and career development in the second half of life and to support those who wish to pursue "**second careers**".
- 03** To recognise the **range of educational needs** of older adults (from those who were early school-leavers through to those who wish to pursue Master's or PhD qualifications).
- 04** To promote **intergenerational learning** to facilitate the reciprocal sharing of expertise between learners of all ages.
- 05** To widen access to **online educational opportunities** for older adults to ensure a diversity of routes to participation.
- 06** To ensure that the university's **research agenda** is informed by the needs of an ageing society and to promote public discourse on how higher education can better respond to the varied interests and needs of older adults.
- 07** To increase the understanding of students of the **longevity dividend** and the increasing complexity and richness that ageing brings to our society.
- 08** To enhance access for older adults to the university's range of **health and wellness** programmes and its **arts** and **cultural activities**.
- 09** To engage actively with the university's own **retired community**.
- 10** To ensure regular **dialogue** with organisations representing the interests of the ageing population.





THREE GENERATIONS OF TRINITY STUDENTS IN ONE FAMILY

## TEN PRINCIPLES OF AN AGE-FRIENDLY UNIVERSITY



DCU has identified ten principles of an Age-Friendly University, which set out the distinctive contributions that can be made by higher education institutions in addressing the needs of older adults. These have been adopted by universities in Ireland, the UK, the USA and Canada which together comprise the Age-Friendly Universities Network.

## FOREWORD

**Trinity College Dublin is a university for all ages that welcomes the opportunity to transform lives and societies through education, engagement, research, and innovation.**



The Provost's endorsement of the Ten Principles of an Age-Friendly University formalises Trinity's ongoing commitment to diversity and inclusion. We welcome the opportunity to celebrate and promote older people's engagement, respect their needs and foster better solidarity between generations.

We are excited to join this global initiative, instigated by Dublin City University, and believe that Trinity and society will benefit from the focused and cohesive actions of the network of Age-Friendly Universities as we work together to meet the challenges and enjoy the opportunities presented by both individual and population ageing.

**Dr Sabina Brennan**

Chair, Age-Friendly Trinity Working Group

## AGE-FRIENDLY TRINITY WORKING GROUP



In 2016, following discussion among a number of interested parties in Trinity, it was decided by the university's Equality Committee that Trinity should commit to the Ten Principles of an Age-Friendly University, and that an Age-Friendly strategy should be developed as part of the Strategy for Diversity and Inclusion. Accordingly, the Equality Committee established a working group with a mandate to progress the adoption and implementation of the Age-Friendly University Principles in Trinity.

# PROVOST’S PLEDGE

*“Trinity is well-positioned to contribute to the public good as a proponent and enabler of positive ageing”*  
(Trinity Strategic Plan 2014-2019).



This brochure highlights just some of the ways that the university has contributed to positive ageing through research, education and civic engagement, and I congratulate all who have been involved in this most important mission.

Trinity is well-positioned to promote more positive ageing in Irish and global society, and in so doing is acting in accordance with our core values of Diversity, Inclusion, Civic Action and Global Citizenship. Therefore, I wholeheartedly endorse the Ten Principles of the Age-Friendly University, which provide a new framework through which Trinity can build on its strong age-friendly foundations. We will continue to promote a more positive

dialogue on ageing in Irish and global society, and will always strive to ensure that older members of the Trinity community are fully enabled to participate in all that university life has to offer.

I am delighted that in adopting these Principles, Trinity has joined a global network of universities who are similarly committed to equality and inclusion for all ages. Trinity will share its experience and achievements in this area with other network members as we, in turn, look forward to learning from their good practice. Together we can ensure that our institutions maximise the potential of all members of our community, regardless of age.

**Prof Patrick Prendergast**  
Provost



“THERE IS NOTHING MORE NOTABLE IN SOCRATES THAN THAT HE FOUND TIME, WHEN HE WAS AN OLD MAN, TO LEARN MUSIC AND DANCING, AND THOUGHT IT TIME WELL SPENT.” MONTAIGNE

# SUCCESS STORIES



The Age-Friendly Trinity Working Group have surveyed a wide range of stakeholders across the university about their ongoing actions which support the Ten Principles of an Age-Friendly University (with thanks to all who contributed). In so doing, the group has gathered information on many exciting initiatives and achievements, a few of which are shared on the following pages. These give a flavour of the dedication and innovation of the Trinity community in relation to positive ageing.



# STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESSFUL AGEING



“LEARNING IS NOT A PRODUCT OF  
SCHOOLING BUT THE LIFELONG  
ATTEMPT TO ACQUIRE IT ”

**ALBERT EINSTEIN**



Online education has been growing at Trinity, with one significant success story being the online course “Strategies for Successful Ageing”, which tackles the challenges to an age-friendly society. This free five-week Massive Online Open Course, delivered by Trinity EngAGE, presented world-leading research in ageing and offered strategies to support health and well-being as we get older. Academics from seven Trinity Schools collaborated with Age Friendly organisations to present information about mental health, physical wellbeing, perceptions of ageing, creativity, and social interaction.

**Since 2016, the course has been run three times, with more than 30,000 learners from over 100 countries registering for the course. The majority of learners on the course were over 56 years, and it has become an important asset for Trinity to engage with older learners around the globe.**

With over 150,000 comments posted on the course, Strategies for Successful Ageing is not only a way for people to learn how to age successfully, but also for meeting others from around the world, and taking part in a lively and active online community. The course is being run again in November - registration is open now on [www.futurelearn.com](http://www.futurelearn.com)



# TRINITY'S OLDEST STUDENT



**AT 98, JOSEF VESELSKY IS TRINITY'S OLDEST STUDENT AND IS AN INSPIRING EXAMPLE OF LIFELONG LEARNING. JOE (AS HE IS KNOWN) HAS TAKEN EXTRA-MURAL COURSES IN THE SCHOOL OF HISTORIES AND HUMANITIES EVERY YEAR SINCE 2010.**

Born in 1918 in Trnava in then Czechoslovakia, Joe witnessed first-hand the rise of the German Reich. His parents and elder brother were killed in Auschwitz. Having joined the Resistance, he was later decorated with the Order of the Slovak National Uprising. Post-war his passion was table tennis in which he ranked 7th nationally and captained the Czechoslovak team. With his wife, Katarina, he escaped the Prague coup of 1948 and came to Ireland where he established his own jewellery business. He made an abiding contribution to Irish life through sport as captain of the Irish table tennis team for over twenty years. He is life president (and co-founder) of the Irish Table Tennis Association, was director of Shamrock Rovers Football Club from 1974-78 and continues in his current role as Executive Vice President of UCD football club. He was made a Commander of the Slovak Order of the White Double Cross for outstanding achievement in sport and for his contribution to the development and maintenance of diplomatic relations between Slovakia and Ireland.

**Joe was awarded an Honorary Masters of Arts in 2016. In so doing, Trinity College Dublin honours these same contributions, sporting and other, on behalf of Ireland. It also celebrates the contribution of immigrant citizens to our community and the importance of life-long learning, of which, in both regards, Josef Veselsky is a shining example.**

## Trinity Retirement Association

**The Trinity Retirement Association (TRA) was launched in April 2014 following feedback from the university's retired members of staff, to enable former staff members to keep in touch with Trinity, with each other, and the wider Trinity community. The Association is open to all the university's pensioners and their spouse/partner, and in January 2017 the Association had 218 members.**



The aims of the Association are to promote a focal point for members to meet and engage in educational, cultural, sporting and social activities; to promote a spirit of self-help and independence and to encourage members to use their energy, talents, skills, knowledge and experience to benefit each other and the university; to encourage positive attitudes to ageing and retirement; and to provide general information of interest to members.

The Association is governed by a constitution and operates on an autonomous, self-financing basis.

Full details can be found on the TRA website at <http://tcdretired.ie/>, email [info@tcdretired.ie](mailto:info@tcdretired.ie).



## AN CHÉADAOIN @ AN BHUTRACH



**Since 2010, Trinity's Irish Language Office has organised a weekly get-together of Irish speakers over coffee on Wednesday mornings in the Buttery, Trinity's popular restaurant.**

Wednesday at the Buttery (An Chéadaoin @ An Bhutrach) draws together students from our Irish language residency scheme in Trinity Hall with Irish speakers from the wider community. The aim is to facilitate a flow of natural conversation and exchange, and this is exactly what has happened. The event has become widely known within the Irish language community in the city and attracts a range of people including many who are retired.

Students greatly enjoy the opportunity to chat and engage with people of the "third age", learning from their reflections on life and wisdom gained through life experiences. In turn, the "third agers" are energised and enthused by engaging with young people with a clear passion for the Irish language.

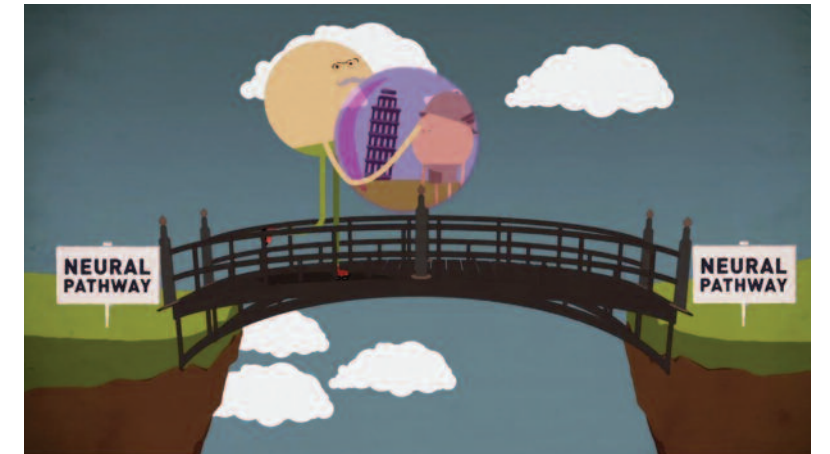
Buttery regulars have attended Irish language events in the university, including

book launches, talks, and dramatic performances. In March 2017, a group of students from the residency schemes joined Buttery regulars for a day tour to Glendalough, furthering this intergenerational exchange in a beautiful natural setting.

Reflecting on the value of the Buttery link across the generations, regular attenders Liam and Nóra Ó Dónaill commented: "As representatives of the Third Age from different disciplines, at Céadaoin sa Bhutrach we like to interact with young Irish speaking students on an equal basis to exchange experiences of University life and to explore together the worldwide opportunities that a University education combined with a love of the language can offer. We also enjoy the music and the craic of these get togethers."

## PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Trinity is committed to increasing the impact and visibility of scientific research, adding value at personal, societal and global levels. One way that Trinity achieves this is by translating complex scientific content with particular relevance for older audiences into easy-to-understand and entertaining animations, websites and public talks.



For example, a series of animated videos to reduce people's fears about memory loss and provide practical advice about brain health developed by Dr Sabina Brennan have been translated into 15 languages and viewed in 146 countries by over three-quarters of a million people.

**The films have also been licensed to 50 organisations, including hospitals and NGOs, on 4 continents for training and education. Science Foundation Ireland presented Dr Brennan - who herself attended university for the first time at the age of 42 - with their inaugural award for Outstanding Contribution to STEM Communication in November 2016.**



## AGEING RESEARCH



Staidéar Fadaimseartha na  
hÉireann um Dhul in Aois

### The Irish Longitudinal Study on Ageing

The Irish Longitudinal Study on Ageing, led by Prof Rose Anne Kenny, Professor of Gerontology, Trinity, Director of Mercer's Institute for Successful Ageing, St James' Hospital, and Principal Investigator of TILDA, is a longitudinal study of 8,504 people aged 50 and above. It is assisting with policy information to ensure independence and successful ageing in Ireland, coupled with novel research into the ageing process. This study provides a comprehensive and accurate picture of the characteristics, needs and contributions of older persons in Ireland. It is the largest such adult study in Ireland and is the flagship project for the Trinity Centre for Research in Ageing.

Find out more at <http://tilda.tcd.ie>.

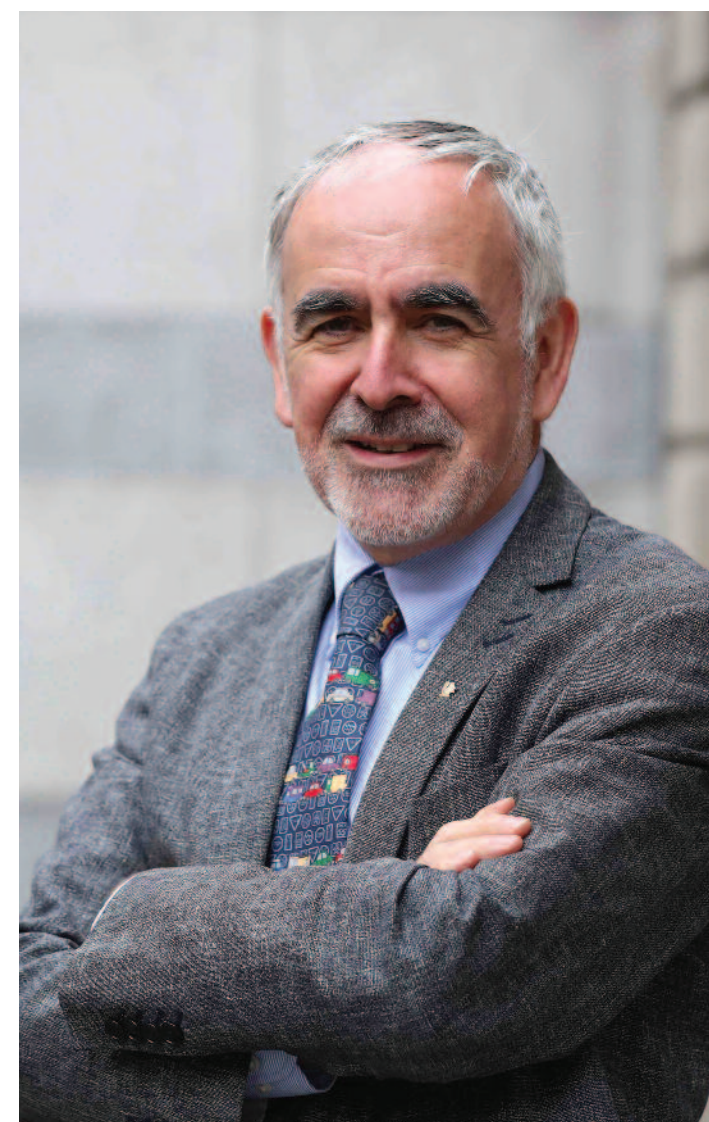
## FUTURE PLANS



The Age-Friendly Trinity Working Group are working on an action plan to enhance the range of positive ageing activity currently in progress, to harness the potential for new actions across academia and services, and to highlight the benefits and opportunities for all to engage with the Age-Friendly agenda. Suggestions, comments and queries are most welcome at [equality@tcd.ie](mailto:equality@tcd.ie)

## THE UNIVERSITY AND THE LONGEVITY DIVIDEND

The remarkable and welcome increase in the life span of Irish people over recent decades has gifted us with a longevity dividend which upends traditional concepts of later life. In the higher education sector, we have been used to examining diversity in higher education in terms of gender and ethnicity: the exciting vista opened by the Age-Friendly University is that a university is missing out if it does not welcome and accommodate students and staff from all stages of the adult lifespan.



The Age-Friendly University views older adults as a particularly important group whose participation in university life is enriching for everybody. As the philosopher and scientist Sir Francis Bacon wrote in *Of Youth and Age*: “Certainly it is good to compound employments of both; for that will be good for the present, because the virtues of either age, may correct the defects of both; and good for succession, that young men may be learners, while men in age are actors.”

Age-attuning a university requires a significant reorientation from a former emphasis on earlier adulthood. This task is facilitated by the national and international prominence of Trinity College Dublin in research and education in ageing, and we are delighted to join the increasing global network of Age-Friendly Universities.

**Prof Des O'Neill**, Dept of Medical Gerontology



“The students, academics and staff at Trinity College deserve enormous credit for working to ensure the university is a welcoming place for older learners. These principles will empower and liberate older people to participate in college life, pursue further education and enhance Trinity College’s standing as a world class place of learning.”

**Justin Moran,  
Head of Advocacy and  
Communications,  
Age Action**

“Active Retirement Ireland is delighted and proud that TCD have adopted the principles of the Age Friendly Universities Network. Education is for all, and older people can benefit from, and add to, university and campus life just as well as any traditional student.”

**Peter Kavanagh,  
Head of Communications &  
Public Affairs,  
Active Retirement Ireland**

“Trinity is a community of education and self-development. Inclusion lies at the very foundation of learning, as without it, we can’t hear anyone’s voice other than our own. The Students’ Union are happy to be on the Age-Friendly committee and actively encourages the college to make Trinity accessible to all, and that it continues its responsibility to its students to become a truly age-friendly campus.”

**Damien McClean, Welfare Officer,  
Trinity College Dublin  
Students’ Union**

“Trinity College have an exciting opportunity through the Age Friendly Universities network to create a space for the older person to share lived experience, continue as a learner and belong to an intergenerational community on a journey together.”

**Maurice O’Connell,  
Chair of the Age Friendly  
Cities and Counties  
NGO Forum**