Healthy Trinity

Healthy Trinity aims to harness the energy and positivity of our community. If everyone is to fulfil their potential, our environment must support health, and healthy behaviours must be a natural part of life on campus.

Healthy Trinity is a cross-university initiative involving over a hundred academic, professional services and student partners.

**Tobacco-free campus**

A milestone for the initiative this year was the introduction of a tobacco-free policy which removed tobacco use from the entire campus, with three minor exceptions.

The policy was introduced in partnership with the Students’ Union and Graduate Students’ Union and supported by student-led campaigns, which highlighted the local environmental impact of smoking, by focusing on a clean campus and fresh air, and the global impact, by highlighting the detrimental effects of tobacco production on the planet.

Healthy Trinity engaged the energy of Trinity’s clubs and societies to facilitate alternatives to tobacco use. For example, during the Healthy Library initiative, student clubs including volleyball, table tennis, Frisbee and soccer set up ‘come and try’ events beside the library. Students and staff could participate for as long as they liked, in their ordinary clothes, in an active break rather than a cigarette one. Our student meditation and yoga societies moved their weekly sessions to the Berkeley training room and the Library provided board games for social breaks, all to highlight how study breaks could be used positively rather than for smoking.
With car use of only 1.5% among staff and students when commuting daily to campus, Trinity is a world leader in sustainable transport use and has very high modal share for cycling.
Healthy Trinity used the introduction of the policy to practice the ‘Living Lab’ concept, as described by the International Sustainable Campus Network’s third principle. This is important as there is a deficit of global research on tobacco free campuses. Healthy Trinity Ambassadors completed regular circuits of the campus to request compliance with the policy and to conduct research into how many were smoking. Through this, we determined that there has been an 83% reduction in frequency of observed smoking in certain zones on campus. We have published one paper on our work to limit tobacco use and will continue to contribute to the knowledge base by using our campus as a living lab.

**Research-led and innovation-driven**

Healthy Trinity has ten committees focused on a breadth of topics including eating, alcohol, mental health, workplace and physical activity. Each committee is co-led by an academic and professional service partner. Through this structure, academics bring the latest research in their area to professional service staff who facilitate innovation within Trinity’s services as well as the publication of data. This year, the physical activity group installed stair prompts that encouraged people to use the stairs rather than the lift; the group presented at a conference on their findings. The alcohol, mental health, healthy eating, smarter travel and tobacco groups all took data on the Trinity population and will use it for future initiatives.

Healthy Trinity engages in teaching innovation. H-TOT is an online platform where first year students can learn how to maintain work-life balance. Previously available to medical students only, its content was extended this year to include more health behaviours and it was launched for all junior fresh students in September 2019. Another innovation involves professional services staff teaching on academic courses related to health topics.

**Active commuting – promoting cycling**

Healthy Trinity looks beyond our campus for opportunities to promote health. There is strong evidence that active commuting promotes physical activity. With car use of only 1.5% among staff and students when commuting daily to campus, Trinity is a world leader in sustainable transport use and has very high modal share for cycling. However Healthy Trinity data taken in 2019 suggests there is an opportunity to increase cycling as between 2011 and 2018, cycling modal share in Trinity declined by 37%.

To address this decline, Healthy Trinity continued to work with partners in the National Transport Authority (NTA) to promote walking, cycling and public transport. This year we won
two of the NTA's Smarter Travel awards - for best engineering project and for best lecturer. We also worked more closely with Dublin City Council (DCC) to assess building segregated cycling infrastructure between Trinity's campuses and residences. Trinity also hosted a Bike Curious event in partnership with DCC to mark the global cycling conference, Velo City, held in Dublin. We invited the public to attend a pop-up Dutch Cycling Lab, a showcase of ongoing Trinity research related to walking and cycling, a showcase of student inventions addressing cycling-related problems, and a seminar with three international cycling experts. We also installed Ireland’s first disability bike parking.

UN Sustainable Development Goals
Healthy Trinity frames the university’s health policies, data and actions within the UN Sustainable Development Goals. With so many actors contributing to the achievement of the Goals, Healthy Trinity has devised a framework to show how small actions in our community are contributing to the Goals.

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