



Trinity College Dublin

Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath

The University of Dublin

Update from the Trinity Centre for People with Intellectual Disabilities,

School of Education, Trinity College Dublin

Spring 2026



Update from the Trinity Centre for People with Intellectual Disabilities, School of Education, Trinity College Dublin

Spring 2026

Dear Partners,

There have been a lot of highlights over the past few months. Here is a brief summary:

- 8 new graduates from Certificate in Arts, Science and Inclusive Applied Practice
- 2 new TCPID Business Partners
- 11 student placements
- 13 current graduate internships
- 3 permanent roles for TCPID graduates
- New Unlocking Ability: Stories of Inclusive Employment podcast series

We will be looking for a large number of internships over the coming months, so if any of you would be willing to provide an internship opportunity to one of our amazing graduates, please email me at devittma@tcd.ie

We are also looking to add more partners to our network, so any personal introductions to colleagues or friends in other companies would be hugely welcomed.

Thank you so much as always for your ongoing support which means so much to us,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Maire Devitt".

TCPID Business Partnerships Manager

Email: devittma@tcd.ie / Tel: 087-6664548

Please follow all our latest news on our website at www.tcd.ie/tcpid as well as on Facebook [@InclusionTCD](https://www.facebook.com/InclusionTCD), Twitter [@IDTCD](https://twitter.com/IDTCD) Instagram [inclusiontcd](https://www.instagram.com/inclusiontcd) as well as on LinkedIn www.linkedin.com/school/inclusiontcd



Save the Date - Thursday November 12th 2026!!!!

Evening event to celebrate 10 Years of our TCPID Business Partners Programme

We are hoping that our partners will join our TCPID staff, students and graduates on the evening of **Thursday November 12th 2026** for what will be a joyous celebration of our partners programme.

The event will be held in a city centre location (details to follow soon).

We invite you to sponsor a table (or tables) at the event. Your company name will appear prominently on the table itself as well as on a large display in the venue.

Your support in purchasing a table (or tables) will allow us to cover the costs for all our TCPID students and graduates to attend.

This event is being organised with the incredible help of our TCPID Business Partner **Conference Partners International** and will be something very, very special.

<https://conferencepartners.com>

More details and booking information to follow very soon.





New Unlocking Ability Podcast

In February we launched our new **Unlocking Ability: Stories of Inclusive Employment** podcast.

The podcast series includes nine episodes, where Marie Devitt speaks with some of our TCPID graduates and their colleagues about their experiences of inclusive employment. Each episode features a different company, showcasing a wide variety of industries and roles.

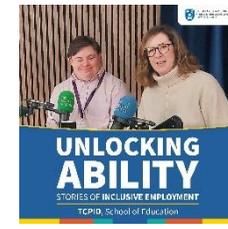
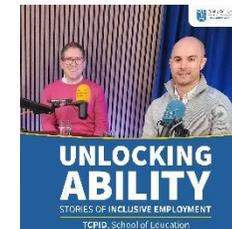
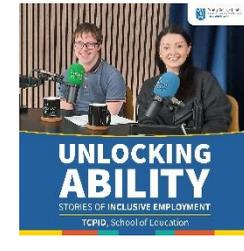
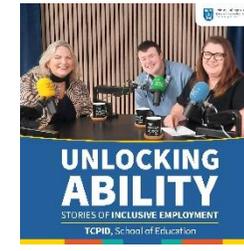
In this series we discuss examples of inclusive employment from the perspective of those directly involved. We explore the importance of inclusion and belonging in the workplace and highlight the positive impact upon everyone involved.

The series is intended to be positive stories of success with incredible insights and recommendations for policy and practice from our graduates and their colleagues

This series highlights the importance of genuine inclusion and belonging in the workplace and showcases the impact that this can have upon everyone involved. The goal of this podcast series is to focus on ability and to open up the conversation about inclusive employment across a diverse workforce.

Thank you to The Podcast Studios for their huge support and brilliant professionalism in recording and producing the series:

<https://www.thepodcaststudios.ie/>



You can find all the Unlocking Ability podcast episodes here so please do check them out:
<https://www.tcd.ie/tcpid/unlocking-ability-podcast/>



Certificate in Arts, Science and Inclusive Applied Practice Graduation February 2026

On Thursday February 5th 2026, we celebrated the graduation of another 8 graduates of the **Certificate in Arts, Science and Inclusive Applied Practice**. Despite the heavy rain, this was a beautiful, joyous occasion, full of emotion and happy smiles.



Alex Byrne

This graduation marked a couple of firsts. This was the first ASIAP graduation led by our new **Pro-Chancellor Hugo MacNeill**. It was a very proud moment for the entire TCPID team to witness Hugo handing out the graduation parchments.

This year also marked the first year of the new **John Kubiak Award** which was awarded to new graduate **Orla Hunt**. The award is for significant personal growth and self-improvement as a TCPID student.



Dr. John Kubiak with Orla Hunt

Dr. Owen Barden congratulated all the new graduates and shared some beautiful words from one of the graduates **Conor Quinn** who had made an off the cuff speech at our SciFest@TCPID event in May.

Conor had said: *"Two years ago when I first came here I was very nervous and I was very scared..... I am going to miss everyone. I am going to miss this place, but I will treasure it in my heart and I have my heart always sealed for my life."*



Huge thanks to **Registrar Professor Neville Cox** who led a beautiful and very moving graduation ceremony.

Thank you also to our **Provost Linda Doyle** who joined the graduates to congratulate each of them in person after the ceremony.

We are so proud of **Alex, Orla, Al, Ava, Rhys, Thomas, Conor and Robert** for everything that they have achieved over the past few years. This is only the beginning of an exciting journey for all of them.



Ava McCahey and Alex Martin



Robert Walsh Garcia, Conor Quinn and Thomas Monk



TCPID, School of Education and Trinity College staff with the new graduates



Conor Quinn with Professor Neville Cox



Conor Quinn and Orla Hunt with Professor Neville Cox



Conor Quinn with some of the TCPID team



Orla Hunt, Ava McCahey, Thomas Monk and Alex Martin with Provost Linda Doyle



Hugo MacNeill, Dr. Conor Mc Guckin, Dr. John Kubiak, Professor Michael Shevlin and Dr. Damian Murchan with Orla Hunt



Conor Quinn and Orla Hunt with some of the TCPID team



Annual TCPID Business Partners Meeting

Thank you to all our TCPID Business Partners who joined us in the **Trinity Long Room Hub** on November 27th 2025 for our annual TCPID Business Partners Seminar.



TCPID Business Partners



TCPID Business Partners

We had a fantastic morning together, exploring ways to create even more opportunities for sustainable, long-term, inclusive employment.

Our business partners are central to creating supported pathways into employment, as well as training and mentoring for our graduates.



TCPID Business Partners



Amy Kennedy with Marie Devitt

Thank you to our graduate **Emma McGrath** who presented so brilliantly alongside a pre-recorded segment from her Microsoft colleague and mentor **Amanda Jolliffe** about how she uses AI to help her in her internship. This was Emma's first solo presentation and she was absolutely fantastic.



Emma McGrath



Pre-recorded video with Amanda Jolliffe



Thank you to our fabulous discussion panel who spoke with such brilliant insights and self-reflection about their work as mentors for our graduates - **Tara Docherty from Jones Engineering, Ian Walsh from Grant Thornton Ireland, Jenifer Tangney from Ornuu and Amy Kennedy from William Fry.**



Amy Kennedy



Tara Docherty



Emer Murphy and Marie Devitt with TCPID Partner logos visible on screen behind them

Thank you finally to our **Provost Linda Doyle** who joined us at the seminar and delivered the wonderful closing remarks on behalf of Trinity College Dublin.

To all our partners, we are very lucky to work with you and to learn from you.

Thank you for your continued support for the TCPID. We are so proud to have developed this incredible network with you.



Provost Linda Doyle with TCPID partner discussion panel



Student Work Placements

Our 11 2nd year students are currently doing their work placements with our TCPID Business Partners. The feedback from all the students has been universally positive. A huge thank you to the 11 companies who have so warmly welcomed our students.





Graduate Internships

In addition to our student placements, we also currently have 13 internships in progress and more due to start within the next couple of months. We have internships currently underway in the following companies, including 3 internships in Trinity College itself:



A&L Goodbody



an post



daa



globalpayments



Grant Thornton



Jones Engineering



Microsoft



Ornua
THE HOME OF IRISH DAIRY



ptsb





Trinity College Dublin
Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath
The University of Dublin

We also have some internships that have finished over the past few months with:



WILLIAM FRY

As always, we are incredibly grateful for your support in providing these wonderful internship opportunities for our graduates.



Permanent Roles

We are thrilled that three more of our graduates have received permanent contracts over the past few months. Two of the graduates, Oscar and Saoirse took part in interviews about their permanent jobs while Conor just wanted to share the wonderful news with a very brief quote. We are so incredibly proud of Oscar, Saoirse and Conor and we look forward to watching as they continue to build their brilliant careers.

Oscar Daly – AIB



TCPID graduate Oscar Daly

Can you tell us a little bit about yourself and your background?

My name is Oscar Daly. I am 23 years old, from Sandycove and am a graduate of the Certificate in Arts, Science and Inclusive Applied Practice in Trinity College Dublin. I worked in Coillte for two six months internships before I was offered an AIB contract for a six month internship. I work in the Customer Care and Conduct department on the Data and Reporting team.

I enjoy watching and playing rugby, attending matches with family, working out and going to the cinema. I also enjoy meeting new people, hanging out with my friends and cousins, and always trying to reach my full potential in everything I do.

I am extremely grateful to my secondary school CBC Monkstown principal Gerry Duffy who suggested I sit the applied Leaving Certificate, which my family agreed with. I wouldn't be where I am now – the first person in my family to have attended and graduated from Trinity College – if it wasn't for him and my family.

What did you enjoy the most about your time as a student in Trinity College Dublin?

Meeting new people across all the modules we completed.

What were your favourite modules on the Certificate in Arts, Science and Inclusive Applied Practice?

My favourite modules were Drama and Disability Rights. From a broader perspective the course seemed like a challenge to me, and I'm always up for a challenge.

Can you tell us what you have done since you finished your studies in Trinity College?

Since I graduated from Trinity College I participated in internships in both Coillte and AIB.



Can you tell us about your first internship in Coillte and the work that you did there?

I worked in human resources and recruitment with Coillte. I particularly enjoyed participating in a workshop in Avondale House, as well as interviewing people from across the organisation for the newsletter. What really left an impact from my time in Coillte was the people, including Megan, Ruth and Ciara who I worked with. My Nana and Grandad both passed away while I was in Coillte, and I wrote articles about the importance of them to me in the newsletter. They were so proud of me working there.

When did you start your internship in AIB?

I started my internship in AIB in July 2024.

Can you tell us about the work that you do in AIB?

Following two months of internships in AIB I secured a permanent position in the Customer Care and Conduct team. It's an enjoyable and interesting job with lots of variety. It's been a pleasant surprise that I've gotten to work with and support the Chief Customer Office. There are six different teams within Customer Care and a lot of the work I do is focused on Data and Reporting. Then I also carry out a lot of general administration tasks and other interesting jobs.

What is your favourite thing about working in AIB?

I really enjoy the variety AIB offers, as well as supporting the Chief Customer Office.

Can you tell us a little about your colleagues in AIB and how they support you?

I work in the Customer Care department in the Data and Reporting team. I previously reported to Vinny and I work alongside Luke and Fabiana. When Vinny retired Luke became my manager and we sit on a team under Rob. Since I was made permanent I am carrying out more jobs across Customer Care. Luke mentioned to me that I'd be working closely with the Chief Customer Office which is completely different to what I've been doing and a real learning experience at just 23 years old. I get support from across the whole AIB team including my manager Luke and also support from Rob who Luke and the whole Data and Reporting team report to.

What do you enjoy the most about working in AIB?

Getting to experience new tasks like working closely and supporting the Chief Customer Office.

How did you feel when you found out that you were being offered a permanent role in AIB?

Shocked, surprised, happy and delighted.



How do you think you have changed since you first started as a student in Trinity College in 2021?

I have changed a lot through learning new skills and taking on new challenges. I have stepped a little more out of my comfort zone than I thought I would ever do and take on new tasks.

What are your goals for the future?

My goal is to continue progressing and growing in AIB, making my way to different leadership positions within the bank. My father was a Chief Operating Officer (COO) in his own company, and I'd love to follow in his footsteps by become hopefully the CCO some day, or maybe a different role altogether. My parents and grandparents and also family and friends told me I would be CEO of a company or the President of Ireland!

In the future in AIB I would like to make my way up to the executive leadership roles. I think it would also be an honour to be appointed to the a school Board of Management part time, perhaps even my old school CBC Monkstown.



TCPID graduate Oscar Daly

From Oscar's AIB colleague Luke Reilly

"Oscar has been great for the team. Whenever he is assigned a task, he takes to it with considerable pride. While our now retired manager Vinny was in charge of getting Oscar settled in AIB, I was charged with making sure he has valuable work to undertake. This has led to him working with colleagues from around the Customer Care and Conduct function. Oscar is known fondly in the office for his confident and affable nature, this combined with the immense pride and diligence he places in his assigned role has led to Oscar receiving compliments from numerous people including senior members of staff. Oscar is a pleasure to work with and I am delighted he has been made permanent. I wish him many happy years working for AIB."

"I am reluctant to say Oscar was ever shy but he was a bit tentative at first. The banking world is incredibly complex and it can be a lot to take in for anyone. But everyone can usually find a niche and Oscar has found his in administrative work. He takes his job very serious and at times it can be challenging but Oscar always finds a solution. The main string to his bow is his wonderfully affable nature. This nature actually helps him to complete his tasks as he has over time built up a network of individuals who know the byzantine world of banking and are more than willing to help him out when they can. I am looking forward to getting Oscar more work across the Chief Customer Office function so he can learn more about AIB and its various operations."



From Oscar's family

From Oscar's Mum Margaret and Dad Kevin

I was beyond thrilled to hear that Oscar was made permanent. We are so proud and happy for him it is an amazing achievement for Oscar we are very grateful to the Trinity staff for their help encouragement and support over the last few years. We are also grateful for the Support and help Oscar has received from AIB.

From Oscar's cousin Ross

I am very proud of Oscar with what he has achieved in his career so far. His hard work and dedication to his job is very inspiring.

From Oscar's Aunty Deirdre

I was absolutely ecstatic when I heard that Oscar had secured a permanent role in AIB, so well deserved. When Oscar was small, I used to bring him into AIB and he always said he wanted to work there when he was older. All these years later he is fulfilling this ambition. I am so proud of him, and he should be so proud of him himself too. Absolutely delighted.

From Oscar's brother Alec

I'm so proud of my brother for landing his first full time job it's a big step, I know his hard work, dedication and determination will take him far.



TCPID graduate Oscar Daly



TCPID graduate Oscar Daly





Conor Lynch – Bank of Ireland

From Linda Mason | Senior Manager Loan Fulfilment, BIF Operations

Conor joined the Bank of Ireland Finance Operations (BIF Ops) team through the TCPID programme in June 2025. He settled in quickly with the team and the tasks assigned so when the internship came to an end we were delighted to offer him a permanent position.

The BIF Ops team have responsibility for finance fulfilment for car and asset finance. It's a busy team consisting of 30 colleagues. Conor's role involves handling post, processing original documents including system updates, filing and storage retention. Working 4 days a week on site in our Operations Centre in Cabinteely, Conor works from 10-2 each day. Conor brings a positive, sunny attitude to the team and enjoys the daily interactions and chats with his colleagues.

From Conor

"The job is great and the team is nice and I am getting along great.

Part of my job is to approve car loans and business loans so that all to it."



Conor Lynch



Conor Lynch with some of his Bank of Ireland colleagues



Saoirse Keogh - Ornuia

My Graduate Internship and Permanent Role in Ornuia

An interview with Saoirse Keogh



Saoirse Keogh

Can you tell us a little bit about yourself and your background?

Hi, my name is Saoirse Keogh and I live in Tullow, Co. Carlow. One fun fact about me is that I have 9 nieces and 3 nephews, so family life is always busy and full of energy!

I also have my own small business, which I'm very proud of. I graduated from Trinity College Dublin in February 2025, and I have been part of Special Olympics for a very long time. I'm a member of Carlow Special Olympics, where I play basketball, bowling, and soccer.

This year was extra special because I was selected to represent the Leinster Team at the Ireland Games in June, playing basketball – something I'm incredibly proud of.

What did you enjoy most about your time as a student in Trinity College Dublin?

One of my favourite parts was learning how to travel up and down to Trinity on the train by myself. I never thought I'd be able to do that, so it gave me a lot of confidence.

I also loved meeting great friends along the way. Being a Trinity student was an amazing experience, and I really enjoyed college life. After classes, we would often go to Costa for lunch and have chats together – those are memories I'll always treasure.

What were your favourite modules on the Certificate in Arts, Science and Inclusive Applied Practice?

My favourite module was Italian, because I loved learning a new language. I never thought I would get the chance to do that.

I also really enjoyed Entrepreneurship & Disability and Introduction to Business. These modules have been especially helpful for my own business, as they taught me more about how to manage customers, set pricing, and understand the business side of running something for myself. I was surprised by how much I enjoyed Introduction to Business – it turned out to be one of my favourites.



Can you tell us what you have done since finishing your studies in Trinity College?

After finishing college, I started a **six-month internship in Ornu**. I absolutely loved my time there, and when my six months were finished, I was offered a **one-year contract**, which I was delighted with.



Saoirse Keogh with some of her Ornu colleagues

Can you tell us about your internship in Ornu and the work that you do there?

When I first started in Ornu, I completed three rotations across three different departments.

First rotation – Ornu Foods International:

In this team, I got to design ideas for stickers for everyone in work. I also worked on a task where I researched celebrity chefs and picked my top three favourites.

Second rotation – Global Brands:

This was another favourite because I got to design more stickers for staff. I also created a desk calendar, choosing and organising my favourite archived photos – one for each month of the year.

Third rotation – Supply Chain:

In my final rotation, I joined the Supply Chain team, where my role has continued to grow. Along with helping with documentation, organising files into folders, tagging orders, and working in SharePoint, my responsibilities now also include managing stock status and helping to ensure products are shipped to the US market. I am learning so much on this team and really enjoying the variety of the work.

Can you tell us a little about your colleagues in Ornu and how they support you?

My colleagues in the Supply Chain team are all so lovely. If I ever need help, I can send a Teams message, and someone is always there to support me. If I have any issues with my laptop, I can go to IT, and they are always very helpful too.



I also had the opportunity to help run a Jersey Day in Ornuia to raise funds for Carlow Special Olympics Ireland, which meant so much to me. I was completely blown away by the level of support from everyone across the business. Together, we raised an amazing €1,545, and it really showed how supportive, generous, and inclusive the Ornuia team is.

I want to especially mention my manager, Eamon, who has been an incredible support to me. He has helped me to navigate and master new tasks, and his guidance and encouragement have made a huge difference to my confidence and growth in the role.

What is your favourite thing about working in Ornuia?

One of my favourite things is chatting with people. When I go for my tea break and pass colleagues, I love saying hello and having a chat. Everyone in Ornuia is so friendly, and I'm really happy to be part of the team.

How did you feel when you found out you were being offered a permanent role in Ornuia?

I knew my contract was coming to an end in March, but I honestly didn't know what was going to happen. When I was told that I was being offered a permanent contract, I was absolutely over the moon. I was shaking – but in a good way – because I really wasn't expecting it.

The first thing I did was ring my mam, and she was delighted. She then rang my brothers and sisters to share the news. I just want to say a huge thank you to Jenifer and the Ornuia team for letting me be part of the team in Ornuia.



Saoirse Keogh with some of her Ornuia colleagues

How do you think you have changed since you first started as a student in Trinity College in 2023?

When I started in Trinity, my confidence wasn't great. Over the past two years, that has completely changed. I never thought I would be able to stand up and speak in front of my classmates – I was always shy and nervous around people.

Trinity College has changed me in so many ways, and my family have seen a huge difference in me too.



What are your goals for the future?

I feel very happy and lucky to have a permanent job, and my main goal is to keep enjoying my work and looking ahead.

I'm also very excited because on 15 July 2027, I will be getting married, and I'm really looking forward to that next chapter of my life.

From Jenifer Tangney, Ornuia

What has Saoirse added to your team in Ornuia?

Saoirse has brought creativity, warmth, and energy to her role. She has a fantastic way of engaging with people and is a great team member. It has been an absolute pleasure to see how she has grown into her role, always willing to get involved in new tasks and learn from others across the team.

Why did you decide to offer Saoirse a permanent contract with Ornuia?

This was an easy decision. Saoirse consistently demonstrated strong productivity, engagement, and a real ability to take on new responsibilities. She has been a fantastic asset to the Supply Chain team and to Ornuia as a whole, and we are delighted to have her as a permanent member of the team.

Quotes from Ornuia colleagues:

'Saoirse is an amazing person whose kindness, creativity, and work ethic make a real difference every day. I am incredibly proud of her journey and even prouder to call her a full-time colleague'

'Saoirse has become a valued part of our Supply Chain team, bringing reliability, attention to detail, and a real willingness to learn. She contributes meaningfully to the day-to-day running of the function, and I am incredibly proud to call her a full-time colleague'





Graduate Refresher Skills Workshop

In October we held our first TCPID Graduate Refresher Skills Workshop. This was for graduates who are currently working with our TCPID Business Partners.

During the workshop we discussed professional behaviour, developing your career and your skills, phishing emails, tax and many other important subjects.

We hope to run this refresher workshop every year from now on.



TCPID graduates with Marie and Emer at Refresher Skills workshop



Student Social Event Hosted by Grant Thornton

Our first- and second-year students were invited to a fabulous social event hosted by Grant Thornton in October.

It was a wonderful opportunity to connect with Grant Thornton staff, build relationships, and take part in some fun and engaging games and activities.

A big thank you to everyone at Grant Thornton for their warm welcome and continued support of for our students and graduates.



TCPID students and staff with colleagues from Grant Thornton





Guest Lecture from Dynamic

Thank you so much to Vicky Woolam who gave a brilliant guest lecture to our 2nd year students for their Marketing module in November. The students learnt all about the incredible work that Dynamic Resources do with world-leading brands!

Well done as always to the wonderful Dave Cormack who brings such energy and enthusiasm to lecturing on this module!

Thank you to all the team in Dynamic for their ongoing support for the TCPID. We are very proud to have you as one of our business partners.



Vicky Woolam and Dave Cormack with some of our 2nd year students



Launch of Co-Learning Report

On November 20th we launched **The Only Thing to Do: A Co-learning Pilot at Trinity**. The event was part of an INHEF Seminar: The Inclusive University in Theory and Practice. It was held in the Trinity Long Room Hub and featured a fantastic student panel with ASIAP students and graduates alongside peers from across Trinity, sharing their experiences of co-learning and the value of genuinely inclusive teaching and learning environments.

Developed through a collaboration between the TCPID, School of Education and the School of English, the Co-Learning project created a shared academic space in which students with intellectual disabilities and undergraduate students in English Studies could learn together in a meaningful and academically rigorous context.

TCPID students AI and Niamh were enrolled in the Irish Writing module, attending lectures and participating in shared tutorials alongside undergraduate students to discuss the course texts. They were additionally supported through a dedicated 'bridging' lecture, designed to build confidence and support meaningful engagement in discussion-based learning.

The project was designed with students at its core and was informed by what both groups of students wanted and needed from their learning experiences at Trinity. For this reason, we felt it was important to share their perspectives directly. With thanks to AI and Niamh, who took the time to reflect on and share their experiences.

It is hoped that this programme will be rolled out across a number of courses and Schools at Trinity over the coming years.

You can download the full report - The Only Thing to Do here: doi.org/10.25546/112205



TCPID, School of Education and School of English staff and students at the launch of The Only Thing to Do: A Co-learning Pilot at Trinity



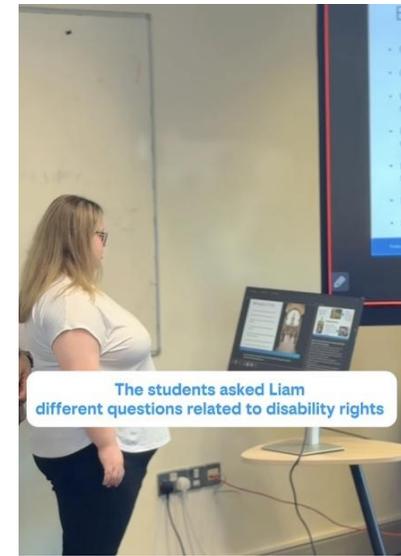
Disability Rights Event organised by TCPID students

In November we were honoured to welcome the **Chief Commissioner of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission, Liam Herrick** to the TCPID.

As part of the visit, our first-year students presented a series of powerful poster displays developed in their Human Rights module with **Cathy Connolly and Angela Mazzocco**, while our second-year students delivered a thought-provoking presentation entitled "Disability Rights are Human Rights" as part of their Disability Rights module with **Dr. Vivian Rath, Dr. Patricia McCarthy and Des Aston**.

Students shared their insights, learning, and reflections on equality, inclusion, and the importance of recognising and realising their rights as active citizens. Their confidence and thoughtful contributions made the event truly inspiring.

A sincere thank you to the Commissioner Herrick for engaging with our ASIAP students and recognising the importance of inclusive education in advancing human rights for all. This is only the beginning of a strong relationship between IHREC and TCPID.





IBEC Inclusive Leadership Forum

Our graduate **Emma McGrath** and her **Microsoft** colleague **Amanda Jolliffe** spoke at the **IBEC Inclusive Leadership forum** in November 2025. They were joined at the forum by our TCPID Ambassador **Hugo MacNeill**.

Amanda and Emma shared their experiences of engaging with the TCPID programme, and Hugo provided information on how employers can get involved. Amanda and Emma also provided insights on how assistive technologies can be used as enablement tools to support people with varied intellectual abilities at work.

The panel discussions were expertly moderated by Michelle Cullen.

Thank you to Megan O'Sullivan-Sweeney and Kara McGann for inviting the TCPID to be a part of this hugely important form.



Emma McGrath, Amanda Jolliffe and Michelle Cullen



Hugo MacNeill, Emma McGrath, Amanda Jolliffe and Michelle Cullen



Representatives from IBEC, Microsoft, TCPID and the Irish Wheelchair Association at the IBEC Inclusive Leadership forum



New Collaborations

We are delighted to announce that two new partners have joined our network over the past few months.

CJK

We are delighted to announce a new partnership with **CJK**.

CJK is a leading provider of mechanical and electrical contracting services delivering projects across sectors including data centres, life sciences, aviation and commercial construction. With a team of over 400 people, the company places a strong focus on developing people and creating opportunities for learning and progression.

Through this partnership, a TCPID student will gain workplace experience within CJK's head office, working across a range of business support functions and learning how different parts of the organisation operate.

To learn more about CJK, please visit: www.cjk.ie



Speaking about the partnership, **Deborah Tighe, Head of HR at CJK**, said:

“We’re delighted to partner with the Trinity Centre for People with Intellectual Disabilities. Welcoming students into our head office team gives them the opportunity to gain real workplace experience while also enriching our own workplace. When new people join a team, everyone benefits — and we’re looking forward to learning from each other.”



Irish Life

We are very proud to announce a new partnership with Irish Life.

Irish Life is one of Ireland's leading financial services groups, now taking care of over 1.6 million customers. We help people to improve their financial, physical and mental wellbeing – helping to build better lives today and better futures.

Irish Life are part of the Great-West Lifeco group of companies, one of the world's leading life assurance organisations. Great-West Lifeco and its subsidiaries have total client assets of CAD\$3.3 trillion* and are members of the Power Financial Corporation group of companies.

Irish Life delivers innovative solutions for personal and corporate customers, backed by the highest standards of service. And as part of Great-West Lifeco, we have access to experience and expertise on a global scale, so we can continuously enhance our leading range of services and solutions.

*as at 30 September 2025

For more information, go to: www.irishlife.ie



Irish Life Chief People Officer Barbara O'Malley said:

"Irish Life are proud to announce our new partnership with @TCPID. Together, we aim to create more long-term and inclusive employment opportunities. We're committed to playing a positive role in opening pathways to employment, while supporting students on the programme through training and mentorship."



Hugo MacNeill Appointed as Pro-Chancellor of Trinity College Dublin

Our TCPID colleague **Hugo MacNeill** was appointed as **Pro-Chancellor of Trinity College Dublin** in October. The event was hosted by our **Provost Linda Doyle** in the beautiful Provost's House.

Hugo has achieved many incredible things throughout his career and has given his time and energy to a number of hugely important causes over many, many years.

The impact of having Hugo as part of our TCPID team over the past 10 years has been immense. His hard work and commitment to creating a more inclusive society has made a huge difference in the lives of our students and graduates.

We are forever grateful to Hugo for everything that he has done and everything that he continues to do for us.



Michael Shevlin, Hugo MacNeill and Marie Devitt



Hugo with Provost Linda Doyle



Hugo with Provost Linda Doyle and his fellow Pro-Chancellors



Mei Lin Yap Awarded Honorary Doctorate

We are incredibly proud that our TCPID graduate **Mei Lin Yap** received an Honorary Doctor of Laws (LLD) from Trinity College Dublin in November. This was in recognition of her exceptional contribution to public service, advocacy, and inclusion.

Mei Lin has been a trailblazer from the very beginning. She was the first TCPID, graduate to take part in our newly established TCPID Graduate Internship Programme back in February 2017. During her internship with **Cpl** her commitment, warmth, and professionalism made a deep impression, and she became a permanent member of staff later that same year.



Provost Linda Doyle with Mei Lin Yap



Rachel Brannigan and Sharon Vize from Cpl with Mei Lin Yap



Marie Devitt and Hugo MacNeill with Mei Lin Yap



Provost Linda Doyle with Mei Lin Yap and her very proud Mum

Mei Lin's journey continued as she took on the role of Ambassador Liaison Officer with the Trinity Centre for Ageing and Intellectual Disability. Her success in both roles demonstrates the value of inclusive employment and shows what is possible when talent is recognised and supported. Mei Lin continues to challenge barriers and inspire positive change in how society sees and supports people with intellectual disabilities.

Along the way, Mei Lin built a remarkable network of allies, friends, and admirers. Congratulations, Mei Lin. Your leadership and kindness continue to inspire us all.



Book Launch – Dr. Owen Barden

In November our colleague **Dr. Owen Barden** launched his new book **Learning with Learning Disability: What Learning Disability Can Teach Us About Being Human**.

The book was launched in the Trinity Business School by **IHREC Chief Commissioner Liam Herrick**, following which **TCD Registrar Professor Neville Cox** facilitated a fantastic discussion.

The book invites us to reimagine how we understand learning disability (more commonly referred to as intellectual disability in Ireland). Rather than learning *from* or *about* learning disability, Dr Owen Barden challenges us to learn *with* it. This subtle yet profound shift means being open to what learning disability can teach us about what it means to be human.

Through historical and philosophical exploration, the book traces how “learning disability” has reciprocally shaped understandings of education, inclusion, and what it means to be human across the 19th, 20th and 21st centuries. By positioning learning disability as an *organising concept*, the book unsettles conventional thinking about what it means to be a person and how that relates to ideas around learning disability — and urges a more relational and inclusive understanding of being.



Professor Neville Cox, Stephen Unwin, Owen Barden and Liam Herrick



Retirement of Gaston McCarthy

In November Dr Patricia McCarthy's wonderful Guide Dog Gaston retired from the School of Education and College life. Gaston was a very popular colleague on campus and we all miss him so much.

Patricia says of her life as an academic with Guide Dog Gaston:

"I began 2020 feeling excited and a little apprehensive as I had got the wonderful news that I would be joining a guide dog class towards the end of February to commence training with my first guide dog Gaston. Now as Gaston is retiring, I am thinking about the significant impact he has had on my life. As an Adjunct Assistant Professor in the School of Education, Trinity College Dublin he is a constant support to me ensuring that I get safely to and from whatever work I am undertaking on any given day. As well as lecturing and supervising master's students we have travelled all over the country presenting at conferences, undertaking research and most recently representing the School of Education at the Athena Swan awards which were held in SETU (Carlow Campus). All these activities have been possible because Gaston is constantly by my side helping me navigate safely whatever environment we find ourselves in. Knowing that it is illegal to refuse entry to a person with a guide dog has given me the confidence I require to undertake my work to the best of my ability. Many people on campus recognise Gaston with his identifiable guide dog harness (and waggy tail!) and often come to say hello to us (even if they only remember Gaston's name). I will begin training with a new dog shortly, but I know that Gaston will be fondly remembered by many people throughout Trinity and he will remain a part of my life when he retires to a more leisurely life of long walks and chasing tennis balls".



TCPID team with Patricia and Gaston



Ann Devitt and Carmel O'Sullivan with Patricia and Gaston



Patricia with Gaston



TCPID represented at International Conferences

We are very proud that our team have been invited to present at a number of high-profile conferences over the past few months.

First ever World Inclusion Congress, Almaty, Kazakhstan

October 2025

Des Aston represented the TCPID at the first ever **World Inclusion Congress** which was held in collaboration with the **HOPE (HELP Others Pursue Education)** and **IFIP (International Forums of Inclusion Practitioners)**.

Des delivered a presentation titled **‘Learning without Limits: A Case Study of Inclusive Practice at Trinity College Dublin’** and also participated in two panel discussions.



Des Aston with colleagues from Think College in the USA



Des Aston with colleagues from Think College and Clemson University

International Conference of Education, Research and Innovation (ICERI)

Seville, November 2025

Marie Devitt represented the TCPID at the **International Conference of Education, Research and Innovation (ICERI)**. Marie delivered a presentation about our work with our TCPID Business Partners with a paper called: **‘Collaborating for Change: Building Bridges to Inclusive Employment through University-Industry Partnerships.’**

One of the core messages from the Conference was "We do not teach to fill students with answers. We teach to prepare them to ask better questions - of the world and of themselves."



Marie Devitt at ICERI Conference, Seville





Erasmus+ Blended Intensive Programme (BIP), Salzburg

November 2025

Barbara Ringwood and Emer Murphy, Senior Occupational Therapists presented as part of this Erasmus+ week at the Salzburg University of Education. Professor Michael Shevlin was also in attendance along with four second year students from the ASIAP programme and their parents.

The Blended Intensive Programme focused on inclusive Post-Secondary Education. There were representatives from Spain, Hungary, Austria, Germany, Ireland (TCD & SETU), USA and Kosovo.

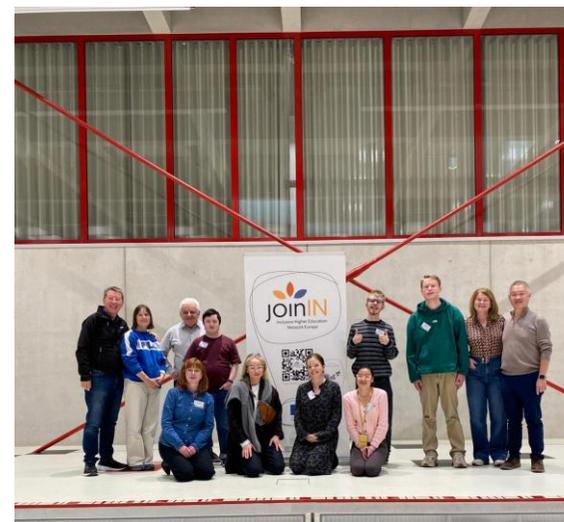
The programme included staff and students in shared and separate workshops across the week. Barbara and Emer each delivered a workshop during the week.

Emer's workshop was a shared workshop focused on ways to develop consent materials for people with Intellectual Disabilities.

Barbara's workshop was a student only workshop focused on the sensory systems and regulation for learning.



Emer's Workshop on Developing Consent Materials



Group Photo Salzburg 2025



PATH 4 Video – From Campus to Community

Our TCPID colleague **Jenny Banks** produced a beautiful video at the end of 2025 entitled: **From Campus to Community: The Impact of PATH 4**.

The video highlights the impact of the Path4 Phase 2 Funding Initiative on Students, Families, Business Partners and the Wider Trinity Community.

This beautiful video explores the inspiring story of the Trinity Centre for People with Intellectual Disabilities (TCPID) based in the School of Education, Trinity College Dublin, through the lens of the groundbreaking Path 4 programme. This short film features voices from students, parents, business partners and the wider college community, sharing how Path 4 creates new pathways to meaningful education and employment.

Discover how higher education is evolving to include everyone, and how the future looks brighter when no one is left behind.

The Programme for Access to Higher Education (PATH) is a dedicated fund, managed by the Higher Education Authority (HEA), to increase participation by under-represented groups in higher education. PATH 4 Phase 2 is a three-year pathfinding pilot that is supporting enhanced course provision for students with intellectual disabilities across 11 higher education institutions. Over €11 million has been allocated to implement and evaluate the pilot initiative.

You can watch the full PATH 4 – From Campus to Community video here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YKWwB8zkd8M>





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The TCPID programme is funded under the
Programme for Access to Higher Education (PATH)
Strand 4 (or PATH 4)



PATH
Programme for Access
to Higher Education



TCPID

TRINITY
CENTRE FOR
PEOPLE WITH
INTELLECTUAL
DISABILITIES

Ionad na
Tríonóide do
Dhaoine le
Míchumair
Intleachta

Learning without Limits
For an inclusive society

School of Education, Trinity College Dublin



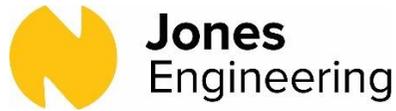
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Thank you as always to all our Business Patrons, Business Partners and other collaborators for your continued support





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MASON
HAYES &
CURRAN

MCCANN FITZGERALD



WILLIAM FRY