

#BeRCSI Bulletin 3

Dear Colleagues,

We are delighted to see some of you taking some time off this week to spend with your families and recharge.

It has also been so heartwarming to see the many messages posted on WorkVivo as part of the #ThankAColleague initiative and to hear of the wonderful ways colleagues have had a positive impact on and helped each other over these last few months. One aspect that this campaign has amplified is how much we all miss the aspects of on-campus RCSI life where we would randomly bump into colleagues in the corridors, lifts, kitchens and have a quick catch up and see how people are doing! As a way of attempting to replicate the random meetings we had with one another, we have come up with the idea of 'Coffee Roulette'! The Coffee Roulette concept works on the basis, where, if you sign up, you will be randomly assigned to groups of three with colleagues from across the College, for a virtual informal chat and coffee. It is a great way to catch up with colleagues you have not seen in a while, put faces to names or welcome new starters to RCSI. The beauty of Coffee Roulette is you do not know who you will end up talking to! So.... come and take a spin on the Coffee Roulette wheel and join us for our first Coffee Roulette morning which will be held next **Friday, 6th November, at 10am**. If you are interested please register on the [following link](#). Look out on WorkVivo for more details next week.

We would also like to encourage you to take 5 minutes to complete the latest **RCSI Pulse Survey** by **5:00PM, Tuesday, 3 November**. This survey will help us to better understand your views and gather feedback on our current ways of working, RCSI's efforts to continue to support keeping you safe and well, as well as understanding what more staff can do to support each other, the College and our students in the period ahead. An email from the Quality Enhancement Office was sent to you on **Tuesday 27th November** containing a link to participate in the survey. Please do not forward this email to others as it contains your own, unique link to the survey. All staff members will receive their own survey links. If you have any questions about the survey please contact the RCSI Quality Enhancement Office quality@rcsi.ie.

This week's 'Team Spotlight' shines a light on the team that made our successful transition to remote working back in March possible and have enabled so many other aspects of our new ways of working and teaching. Here is a brief look at what our IT colleagues have been up to over the last few months and how the team that have kept us all connected and remained connected with each other!

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Director of Human Resources

The IT Department in RCSI is a central force within the College, its reach and responsibility threads through every department and space (both virtual and physical). Our portfolio covers security, infrastructure, hardware, licensing, application support & development and the helpdesk: these are the operational aspects of what we do. The other half of our teams work is projects. Capital projects are the big investments the University is making to embrace Digital Transformation. These investments are bringing RCSI to the forefront as a higher education institution that is harnessing innovative technology to deliver a world-leading environment to educate. All undertaken in conjunction with our amazing colleagues in Bahrain.

Our priorities have been digital transformation, improving the student journey and experience, migrating to the cloud, supporting research, blended learning to assist with the RCSI growth initiative, improving security, IT infrastructure & systems. With this groundwork in place when COVID struck, we were in a very good position to shift to from the physical to the virtual. Priorities did change overnight and parts of projects already underway accelerated at lightning speed as the University needed to shift, literally overnight. A major project underway THEP Technology had an element to it for online proctored exams, within a few weeks this was scoped, tested, delivered and rolled out to enable students to complete their exams early and get into hospitals where they were needed urgently. Blended and hyflex learning have always been a priority however, the timelines we had envisioned were fast forwarded achieving what we might have hoped for in 2-3 years within 3 months. *This is thanks to the incredible academic, research and professional services staff within the University.* There are many more examples of how priorities have changed, too many to list in a limited wordcount! However, three that are worth mentioning are: zero touch deployment of laptops, a new app to support the creation of student I.D.'s and automated account creation.

Our team spans over the country (mostly across County Dublin) a few of us in Kildare, one currently in the UK (youngest member of our team William Brown) and even one person in the real capital of Ireland, Cork.

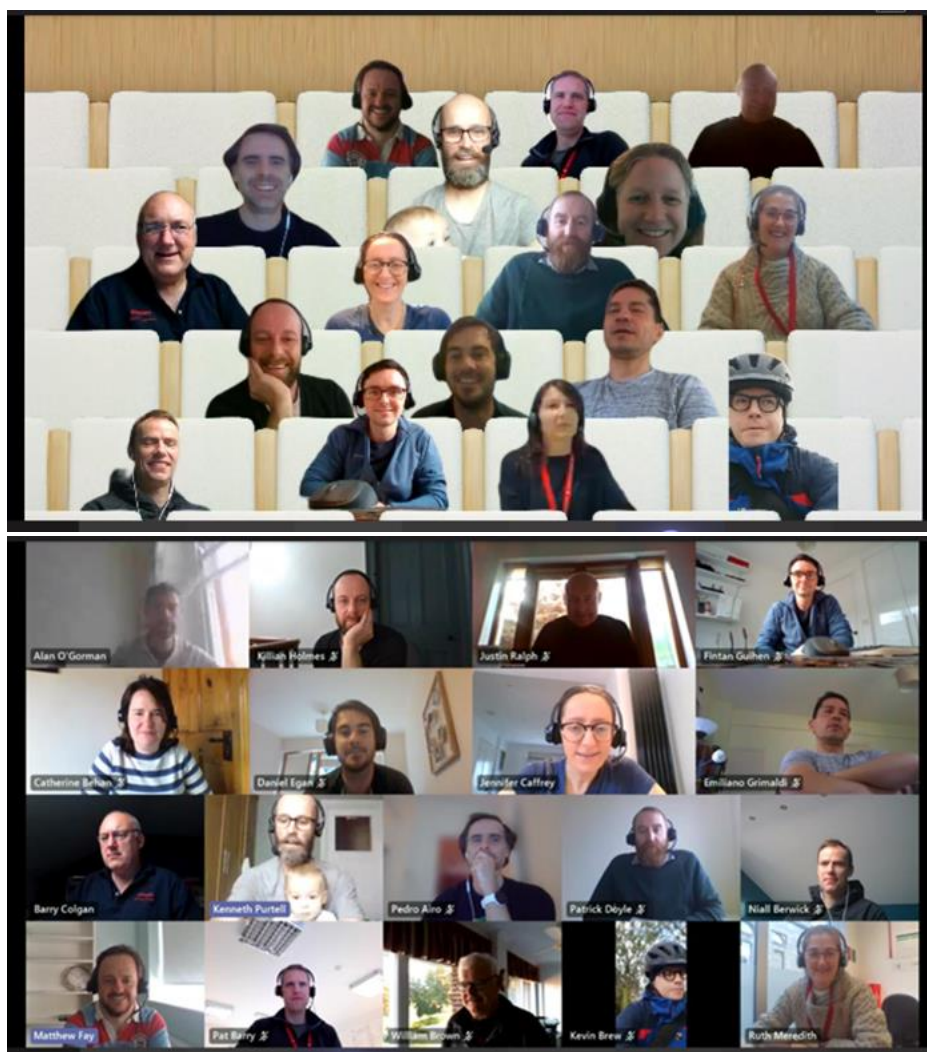
We have team meeting two mornings a week, which is a great way to keep everyone connected. The meetings are set up to get updates from team members and for our CTO Justin to deliver key messages to us but the real reason we all turn up is for the quiz Ken Purtell puts together. If there is one thing that is strong in RCSI IT its competition!

During the full lockdown earlier this year, members of the team were given a chance to present their passion or hobby. It was an opportunity to get to know more about our colleagues in IT, once the ball got rolling this challenge took on a life of its own. Over that period, we were treated to: live acoustic performances, brought on city break slideshows, given tours of gardens and outdoor kitchens, cooking demos, mountain adventures and visual art. Through these morning catch-ups, we got an insight into how these hobbies and interests developed often from childhood, teenage rebellion or simply finding something in life outside of work that brings joy. At many points in these presentations one person's passion struck a chord with the team; one that stands out is Alan O'Gorman recounting music gigs he had been to over the years & many of the team had been to the

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same events. These moments were powerful and connecting particularly in the context of the lockdown were in.

The DEL project has also allowed us to work a lot closer with HPEC, the Media Services team, and our colleagues in Bahrain, which has been a most rewarding experience. Team strengths that have helps us get through this challenging time are Humor, support, compassion, understanding, time, patience, encouragement, resilience, and the most amazing academic and professional services staff any university could hope for. One positive we will take away from this time is how connected a team can be working remotely.



Across the College, individuals and teams are time and again rising to meet the demands and challenges the pandemic presents across all levels and operations. Our colleagues in HPEC recently shared their latest [Fast Facts](#) sheet which contains practical advice on how to manage workload and feelings of overwhelm. While the content is aimed at our academic colleagues the information contained can be applied to any role across the University. Top tips include keeping a time log to

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track where you are spending your time and whether these tasks are planned or unplanned, how to manage your energy and motivation, and also how just linking in with colleagues may help you manage your workload by simply telling another person about the deadlines you are working towards.

Thank you to those who have been inspired by the poetry additions in these bulletins and have emailed poems that have helped them through these times. In times of uncertainty and collective anxiety, poems have the power to provide comfort, meaning and hope. A colleague shared this powerful poem that resonated with them called *The Language of the Birds* read [here](#) by author Stephen Murphy. This poem forms part of the [RTE's Illuminations](#) project which features 30 works from different artists and creatives and explores different aspects of life under the shadow of lockdown. The online gallery is accessible through to early December and features visual art, photography, film, music, poetry, essays and spoken word pieces.

Lastly, we would like to reveal the winners of our Halloween Pumpkin Carving Competition! Our panel of selected experts ensured absolute equity in our rigorous selection process and ranked against a defined set of Pumpkin Carving standards!! The winner of the individual pumpkin submission is our very own Ailis Leonard in HR and the winner of the group pumpkin submission is Helene Duffy in Pathology. Well done to all who got involved.



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Director of Human Resources

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Wishing you all a safe and happy Halloween.

Take care,

Barry and the HR Team

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