

NCI 75th Anniversary Conference

CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

Shaping the Future:
Advancing Knowledge for Societal and Community Benefit

Thursday, 29 October 2026

National College of Ireland, Mayor Street, Dublin 1

Celebrating 75 years of widening access to education, this conference brings together research, innovation and community engagement across NCI. The programme showcases work with practical relevance to society, education, technology, wellbeing and community life.

Programme at a glance

Time	Kelly Theatre	Room 1.02	Room 1.03
09:00-09:10	Welcome and opening remarks		
09:10-10:00	Keynote: Dr Kristin Hadfield		
10:00-11:00		Inclusion, identity and wellbeing	Responsible AI, fairness and privacy
11:00-11:20	Coffee break		
11:20-12:30	Panel: Future-Ready Education		
12:30-13:30	Lunch and poster session		
13:30-14:30		Community learning and early intervention	Inclusive education, care and participation
14:30-14:50	Coffee break		
14:50-15:50		Community partnership and social impact	Scalable AI, computing and networks
15:50-16:00	Conference close		

Conference programme

All plenary events take place in Kelly Theatre. Parallel oral sessions take place in Rooms 1.02 and 1.03.

09:00-09:10	Welcome and opening remarks	Kelly Theatre
09:10-10:00	Keynote	Dr Kristin Hadfield, Trinity College Dublin
10:00-11:00 Room 1.02	Inclusion, identity and wellbeing	
10:00	Talk EDI to Me: Increasing Willingness to Engage in Gender Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Conversations & Actions among Higher Education Staff Lynn Farrell	
10:20	Developing Ireland's Higher Education Student Mental Health Policies Jessica Surdey	
10:40	Exploring the Influence of Caregiving Roles on Identity Among Networks Supporting Neurodivergent Individuals Michelle Kelly and Megan Sweeney	
10:00-11:00 Room 1.03	Responsible AI, fairness and privacy	
10:00	Fairness and Utility Trade-offs in Retrieval-Augmented Generation for Small Language Models Manuel Amir Freer Valdez and Arghir Moldovan	
10:20	AI Human Oversight for Tactical Asset Allocation: A Pre-Registered Framework Aligned with EU AI Act Article 14 Muhammad Asif Razzaq and Giovany Gomez Molina	
10:40	Efficient Privacy-Preserving Machine Learning with Homomorphic Encryption in Cloud Computing Bernardo Pulido-Gaytan	
11:00-11:20	Coffee break	20 minutes
11:20-12:30	Panel: Future-Ready Education	Harnessing Emerging Technologies for Research and Learning
12:30-13:30	Lunch and poster session	Atrium
POSTER PRESENTATIONS		
Shaping Inclusive School Communities: Youth Participation, Peer Leadership and Restorative Practice Emma Wheatley		
Facilitating Interagency Collaboration as a Lead Agency in an Area Based Childhood Programme, Grangegorman Rhonda Hill, Kappa Grealy and Jackie Cullen		
Artificial Intelligence Towards Personalised Cancer Care Amit K Chattopadhyay		
Deep Learning for Automated Infrastructure Defect and Corrosion Detection Elham Mohammadzadeh Mianji and Muhammad Atique Ur Rehman		

Afternoon programme

Parallel oral sessions resume after lunch. Each presentation is scheduled for 20 minutes, including questions.

13:30-14:30 Room 1.02		Community learning and early intervention
13:30	Home Visiting: Educating families educates ourselves. Michelle Moore, Deidre McCarthy and Lisa Farrelly	
13:50	Early Numeracy Programme throughout the NEIC Cathy Steenson	
14:10	Building Professional Resilience in ECEC Home Visiting: An Arts-Based Participatory Action Research Inquiry Catriona Flood and Meera Oke	
13:30-14:30 Room 1.03		Inclusive education, care and participation
13:30	Beyond access: Building inclusive work placements for students with disabilities Miguel Flores	
13:50	What happens when the educator becomes the learner too? The Key Learnings from Inclusive Education - the IADT Creative Pathways Programme Catherine Rossiter	
14:10	The ProBrain Lab at NCI: Investigating implementation of psychosocial interventions for people living with dementia in Ireland Caoimhe Hannigan and Michelle Kelly	
14:30-14:50	Coffee break	20 minutes
14:50-15:50 Room 1.02		Community partnership and social impact
14:50	STEM Family Learning in the Community: Research-Driven Community Engagement Nikki Ryan and Brigina O'Riordan	
15:10	Shaping Restorative Communities: Community Action Research and Culture Change in the Dublin Docklands and North East Inner City Emma Wheatley	
15:30	The ABC of NCI & DSP - how collaborative provision changes lives Nicola Horgan	
14:50-15:50 Room 1.03		Scalable AI, computing and networks
14:50	Federated Learning as an alternative to protect data privacy in Machine Learning Jorge Mario Cortes Mendoza	
15:10	Beyond Cliques: Finding Close Communities in Tree-Structured Networks Alejandro Flores Lamas	
15:30	AI Anywhere: WebAssembly for Accessible, Sustainable, and Efficient AI Infrastructure Sallar Khan	
15:50-16:00	Conference close	Kelly Theatre