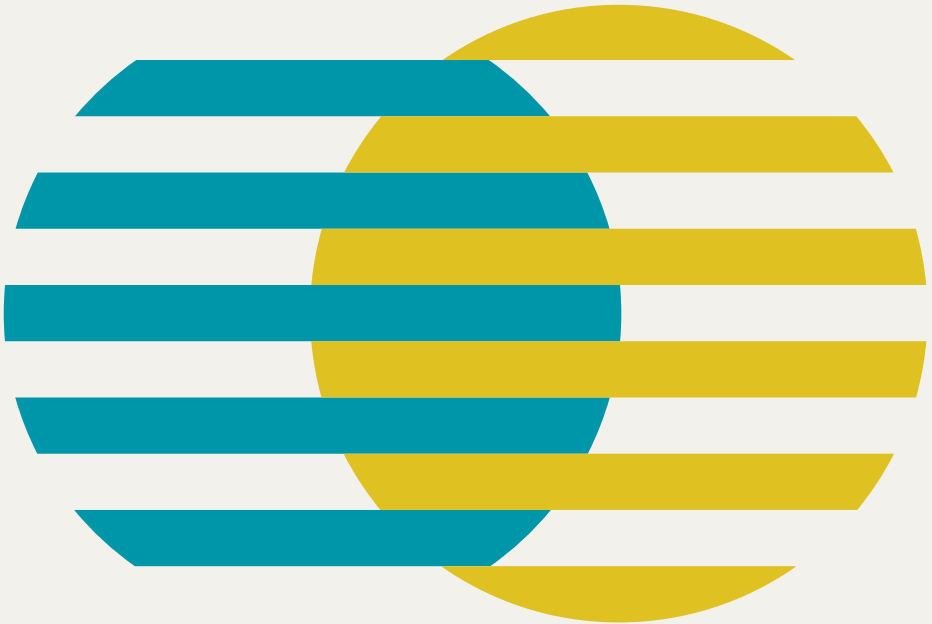


# Achieving Equality at Work Reasonable Accommodation in Practice

Monday, 7 October 2019

Radisson Blu Hotel, Golden Lane, Dublin 8



Coimisiún na hÉireann um Chearta  
an Duine agus Comhionannas  
Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission

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# Conference Welcome



**Emily Logan,**  
Chief Commissioner,  
Irish Human Rights and  
Equality Commission

“ The aim of this conference is to make reasonable accommodation a part of everyday employment policy and practice, ensuring access to employment and progress in the workplace for people with disabilities on an equal basis. Most recent CSO figures indicate that the unemployment rate amongst people with disabilities is 26.3%, more than double the rate for the population as a whole.

The Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission was established in 2014 as Ireland's independent national human rights and equality body to promote and protect human rights and equality in this country. One of the Commission's strategic priorities is to advance socio-economic rights, in particular, decent work. In this 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary year of the International Labour Organisation, advancing the

rights of people with disabilities and the socio-economic right to decent work are the backdrop to this conference.

Article 40 of the Irish Constitution states that all citizens shall be equal before the law.

Under the *Employment Equality Acts 1998-2015*, an employer is obliged to provide reasonable accommodation to enable a person who has a disability: to have access to employment; to participate or advance in employment; or to undertake training - unless the measures would impose a disproportionate burden on the employer. For public bodies this also means taking reasonable accommodation into account, as part of their wider commitments under the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) recognises: *“the right of persons with disabilities to work, on an equal basis with others; this includes the right to the opportunity to gain a living by work freely chosen or accepted in a labour market and work environment that is open, inclusive and accessible to persons with disabilities” (Article 27).*

Disability is not the impairment itself, but rather attitudes and environmental barriers that result in disability. By shifting the conversation from the individual to the collective, towards a more inclusive and diverse

workplace, we can begin to dismantle some of the wide-ranging barriers that people with disabilities face. Reasonable accommodation tackles these obstacles to working on an equal basis with others.

The UNCRPD recognises that people with disabilities themselves act as the primary agents of change in realising equality for themselves in every sphere of life, including employment – *nothing about us without us*. Today we bring together people with disabilities, employers, recruiters, trade unions, disability organisations and policy-makers to do just that; to learn from each other and work through the practicalities of making reasonable accommodation a reality.

We are grateful for the valuable advice of the Commission's Worker and Employer Advisory Committee, chaired by Commissioner Tony Geoghegan, with Ibec and ICTU representatives. Our thanks also to the members of our Disability Advisory Committee who have all helped shape and promote this conference.



**Emily Logan**

**Chief Commissioner,  
Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission**

## Accessibility Information

- All sessions will be interpreted in Irish Sign Language.
- An audio induction loop will be available in the main Plenary room. Please switch your hearing aid to the 'T' setting.
- Sessions in the main Plenary room will be live transcribed.
- A quiet room is available. Please ask the conference team at the registration desk for more information.
- Disability Liaison Officers are available to assist.
- The conference will be livestreamed online at the following link:  
**[www.ihrec.ie/livestream](http://www.ihrec.ie/livestream)**

# Conference Timetable

## Achieving Equality at Work Reasonable Accommodation in Practice

Monday, 7 October 2019

Radisson Blu Hotel, Golden Lane, Dublin 8

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### Opening Plenary

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**09:00** Registration

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**09:30** Welcome and Opening Remarks

- **Emily Logan**, Chief Commissioner,  
Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission
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**09:40** All Human All Equal: Perspectives on  
Achieving Equality at Work

- Video
- 

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**09:45** Opening Address

- **Finian McGrath TD**,  
Minister of State for Disability Issues
- 

**09:55** Keynote Address

- **Stefan Trömel**, Senior Disability Specialist,  
International Labour Organisation
- 

**10:10** Panel Discussion

#### Chair

- **Fergus Finlay**, Independent Chair,  
Comprehensive Employment Strategy for  
People with Disabilities Implementation  
Group

#### Panellists

- **Adam Harris**, Founder and Chief  
Executive Officer, AsIAM
  - **Seònaid Ó Murchadha**, Disability  
Employment Specialist
  - **Siobhan Barron**, Director,  
National Disability Authority
  - **Niall Leavy**, Head of Strategic Projects,  
Public Appointments Service
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**11:10** Tea/Coffee Break

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## Parallel Workshops

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11:30

### Re-imagining Recruitment

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#### Chair

**Deirdre Toomey,**  
Diversity and Inclusion Lead,  
Public Appointments  
Service

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#### Panellists

**Brian Hayes,**  
Chairperson,  
National Platform of  
Self-Advocates

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**Seònaid Ó Murchadha,**  
Disability Employment  
Specialist

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**Margaret Crawley,**  
Head of Human Resources,  
Houses of the Oireachtas

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**Catherine Kelly,**  
Director of Services, WALK  
and **Peter Furlong,**  
Operations Manager, KARE

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### Starting Work

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**Dr. John Bosco Conama,**  
Director,  
Centre for Deaf Studies,  
Trinity College Dublin

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**Bernie Bradley,**  
Social Inclusion Officer,  
Monaghan County Council

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**Caroline McGrotty,**  
Co-ordinator,  
and **Lorraine Gallagher,**  
Information and Training  
Officer, WAM Programme,  
AHEAD

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**Niall O'Hanlon,**  
Access Officer,  
ESB

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**Robert Forde,**  
Electric Ireland, Santry

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### Remaining and Progressing in Work

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**Dr. Shari McDaid,**  
Chief Executive Officer,  
Mental Health Reform

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**Dr. Norma Clark,**  
Project Manager,  
NIDMAR Programme,  
Scottish Government

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**Barbara Brennan,**  
Co-ordinator,  
See Change

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**Siobhan Bourke,**  
Human Resources Business  
Partner, SSE Airtricity

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## Closing Plenary

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### 13:15 Next Steps...

#### Chair

- **Emily Logan**, Chief Commissioner, Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission

#### Panellists

- **Dr. Norma Clark**, Project Manager, NIDMAR Programme, Scottish Government
- **Vivian Rath**, Conference Rapporteur and IHREC Disability Advisory Committee Member
- **David Joyce**, Equality and International Development Officer, ICTU
- **Danny McCoy**, Chief Executive Officer, Ibec
- **David Cagney**, Chief Human Resources Officer, Department of Public Expenditure and Reform

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### 14:00 Close, followed by light lunch

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## Speaker Biographies



### Emily Logan

**Chief Commissioner,  
Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission**

Emily Logan is the first Chief Commissioner of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission appointed by President Michael D Higgins on 31 October 2014, following an open competition. On behalf of the Commission she also serves as Chair of the European Network of National Human Rights Institutions (ENNHRI). In the decade prior to her appointment, Emily served as Ireland's first Ombudsman for Children, accounting directly to the Oireachtas.



### Finian McGrath TD

**Minister of State for Disability Issues**

Minister McGrath is accountable for developing and articulating Government policy on improving the lives of people with disabilities and their carers through three Government Departments; Health, Employment Affairs & Social Protection

and Justice & Equality. The Minister focuses on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities as well as their Equality of Opportunity, Access to Early Childhood Care and Educational needs.

## Stefan Trömel

**Senior Disability Specialist,  
International Labour Organisation**

Stefan Trömel, Senior Disability Specialist in the International Labour Organization (ILO) since August 2013. His duties include the coordination of the ILO Global Business and Disability Network. Between 2008 and 2013, Stefan was Executive Director of the International Disability Alliance, and prior to that, he was the Director of the European Disability Forum. Stefan was actively involved in the negotiation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.



## Fergus Finlay

**Independent Chair, Comprehensive  
Employment Strategy for People with  
Disabilities Implementation Group**

Fergus Finlay has recently retired after 13 years as CEO of Barnardos, Ireland's largest children's



charity. For twenty years prior to that he was employed as Senior Adviser to the Labour Party. He has been a lifelong campaigner for the rights of people with disabilities and is currently chair of the government task force to implement a comprehensive employment strategy for people with disabilities.

## Adam Harris

**Founder and Chief Executive, AsIAM**

Adam is the Chief Executive Officer of AsIAM, having held the position since he founded the organisation in 2013. Adam set up AsIAM based on his own experiences growing up as a young autistic person in Ireland, with the aim of giving autistic people a voice and starting a national conversation. Over the past five years, he has worked to build a more autism-aware and understanding Ireland.



## Seònaid Ó Murchadha

**Disability Employment Specialist**

Founder of Amputee Disability Federation Ireland, Seònaid Ó Murchadha has been promoting the abilities of people with disabilities for decades. From working as a presenter on Irish





nationwide television and radio to supporting employers to recruit and place graduates with disabilities in mainstream employment, she enjoys challenging attitudes to promote the greater inclusion of people with disabilities in the workplace. Most recently, she worked as HR & Disability Project Manager for the Employer Disability Information service advising employers on the recruitment, management and retention of people with disabilities. She developed partnerships with many employers and employer groups, as well as organising the WorkABLE Future 2018 Conference in conjunction with the Irish Wheelchair Association and Hays Recruitment. Seònaid is currently working as Employment Facilitator, supporting young people with disabilities to develop skills and get closer to the labour market as part of the Ability Programme with Fingal LEADER Partnership.



## **Siobhan Barron**

### **Director, National Disability Authority**

Siobhan Barron is the Director of the National Disability Authority (NDA), the independent statutory body established to provide information and evidence informed advice to the government and officials on matters

of policy and practice relevant to the lives of persons with disabilities. Through its work the NDA aims to guide the effective development and implementation of strategies, policy and practice by government departments, agencies and practitioners including co-ordinated action by those bodies, and particularly the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The NDA has a specific function to monitor the employment of persons with disabilities in the public service. Through its statutory Centre for Excellence in Universal Design the NDA promotes the universal design of the built environment, products, services and ICT so that they can be easily accessed, used and understood by everyone regardless of their age, size, ability or disability.



## **Niall Leavy**

### **Principal Psychologist, Public Appointments Service**

Niall has 30 years public service and HR experience, across organisations in the UK and Ireland, including the Public Appointments Service and the Central Bank of Ireland. Niall has been at the forefront of introducing highly

advanced and innovative approaches to the recruitment, assessment and development of people. With a grounding in organisational psychology, Niall has led on a range of significant Strategic HR, Organisational Development and talent management related projects, helping to shape and transform public service organisations into more customer and performance focused organisations.



## Deirdre Toomey

### **Diversity and Inclusion Lead, Public Appointments Service**

Deirdre Toomey was appointed Diversity and Inclusion Lead with the Public Appointments Service in February 2019. Deirdre's role is to engage PAS in embedding progressive diversity and inclusion systems, processes and practices across its recruitment business areas. In her previous role with the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission, Deirdre engaged with public sector organisations to raise awareness and support implementation of the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty. Throughout her career, she has been passionate about maximising opportunities for people from



## Brian Hayes

### **Chairperson, National Platform of Self-Advocates**

Brian Hayes works part-time in Kilkenny County Council. He is chair of the National Platform of Self-Advocates, an independent advocacy organisation run by people with intellectual disabilities. Brian is a graduate of the Leadership and Advocacy programme in the Waterford Institute of Technology and has been the chair of Séasamh and the Inclusion Ireland Advocacy Sub Committee of the Board. Brian was appointed to the Taskforce on Personalised Budgets and the Make Work Pay Consultation Group. Brian is a member of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission's Disability Advisory Committee.



## Margaret Crawley

### **Head of Human Resources, Houses of the Oireachtas**

Margaret Crawley MBA CIPD is a career civil servant and is currently Head of HR Services in the Oireachtas Service. The Oireachtas

Service aims to promote greater inclusion and diversity in the workplace. Margaret is leading on the OWL Programme to provide work learning opportunities to those with intellectual disabilities.



## Catherine Kelly

**Director of Services, WALK**

Catherine Kelly has worked in the field of intellectual disability for over 25 years. She began her career as a registered nurse working in front, middle and senior management positions in a number of disability organisations across Leinster. In 2005 Catherine was appointed to the position of Director of Services with WALK. She has a particular interest in the development of person-centred, socially inclusive supports for people who have complex needs, and in the provision of supports that are driven by an equality and human rights agenda. She is also an associate lecturer with TU Dublin.



## Peter Furlong

**Operations Manager, KARE**

Peter Furlong is an Operations Manager for the KARE Organisation, which provides services and

supports to people with an intellectual disability in the Kildare/West Wicklow areas. Peter is passionate about promoting employment opportunities for people with disabilities through the Supported Employment model. Peter has 25 years' experience working in the field of intellectual disability. Peter manages KARE's Supported Employment Service which incorporates two training initiatives: Project OWL at the Houses of the Oireachtas and Project SEARCH at Naas General Hospital.



## Dr. John Bosco Conama

**Director, Centre for Deaf Studies, TCD**

Dr. John Bosco Conama is the Director of the Centre for Deaf Studies in Trinity College. He is the Board Director of the Irish Deaf Society and he has been involved in many committees and working groups within the Civil Service to monitor the progress of Deaf and disabled people in society. His recent publications have focused on Deaf people in society, especially focusing on language rights and equality. John Bosco is a member of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission's Disability Advisory Committee.



## **Bernie Bradley**

**Social Inclusion Officer,  
Monaghan County Council**

Bernie Bradley has worked in the area of accessibility and equality for 25 years, across the community, voluntary and public sectors. Since 2004 she has worked in local government, leading significant cultural and organisational change in equality and accessibility in Monaghan County Council. Bernie has developed numerous policies and initiatives to improve accessibility for people with disabilities that have been implemented in local authorities throughout the country. Bernie holds a Master's Degree in Public Management and a Professional Diploma in Human Rights and Equality. Bernie is a member of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission's Disability Advisory Committee.



## **Caroline McGrotty**

**WAM Programme Co-ordinator, AHEAD**

Caroline McGrotty has over ten years' experience of working and volunteering with various organisations within the Deaf community and in the disability sector. She holds qualifications in Deaf Studies and Equality



Studies. She is currently Vice-Chair on the board of Sign Language Interpreting Service (SLIS) and currently manages the WAM Programme in AHEAD. The WAM Programme is a workplace internship programme for graduates with disabilities in conjunction with national and international employers in Ireland.

## **Lorraine Gallagher**

**Information and Training Officer, AHEAD**

Lorraine Gallagher has worked in the area of disability and equality for a number of years. She is currently the Information & Training Officer for AHEAD and manages AHEAD's information service, dealing with a wide range of queries relating to the education and employment needs of people with disabilities. Lorraine designs and delivers training packages and seminars to a wide range of audiences in Ireland and Europe including teaching and support staff, guidance counsellors, students, parents and employers. She is also the tutor for participants completing the AHEAD Start Needs Assessment blended learning course and the sub editor of the AHEAD online journal.



## Niall O'Hanlon

### Access Officer, ESB

Niall O'Hanlon has held the role of ESB Disability Access Officer since 2011, and has been an employee of the organisation since 1981. Niall manages the ESB's Traineeship Programme for People with Disabilities, and acts as its representative on the Department of Communication, Climate Action & Energy's Monitoring Committee, monitoring the 3% employment target of State/Semi-State organisations on employment of persons with a disability. Niall is a wheelchair user and is married with two children.



## Robert Forde

### Electric Ireland, Santry

Robert Forde joined ESB in 2006 and is presently based in Electric Ireland in Santry. Robert is also a motivational speaker. He travels around Ireland sharing his experience of becoming blind at a young age and how he has overcome his disability to do what is most important to him. Asked how he views the world, Robert says, "Initially I had doubts I would get a job or be able

to move on in life after being left blind, but I proved that attitude wrong. Instead of learning to live with blindness, I made the blindness learn to live with me! I was going to succeed, and that was all that mattered." Robert has also developed his own website, [www.optimisteyes.com](http://www.optimisteyes.com)



## Dr. Shari McDaid

### Chief Executive Officer, Mental Health Reform

Dr. Shari McDaid was appointed Chief Executive Officer of Mental Health Reform, the national coalition advocating for reform of the mental health system, in October 2013. She has been a member of the Healthy Ireland Council, the National Taskforce on Youth Mental Health, the Disability Stakeholders Group and the Oversight Group for the review of A Vision for Change, and has held roles with Amnesty International, the National Disability Authority and Shine. Shari received her PhD from the Equality Studies Centre at UCD, and co-edited the text 'Mental Health in Ireland: Policy, practice and law', published in 2014 by Gill and Macmillan.





## Dr. Norma Clark

**Project Manager, NIDMAR Programme,  
Scottish Government**

Dr. Norma Clark has worked as a MH Occupational Therapist since 1986. Norma has a specialist interest in employability and education, establishing several services within Fife, Scotland; e.g. Fife Employment Access Trust, Employ Your Mind, Focus Education Service, the latest being the Fife Individual Placement Support (IPS) Service. Norma believes strongly in partnership working. Currently, Dr. Clark is the Project Manager of the NIDMAR 5 year programme aimed at training up to 300 individuals to become Certified Disability Management Professionals (CDMPs) to maintain meaningful employment for workers with long-term health conditions, injuries or disabilities.



## Barbara Brennan

**Programme Co-ordinator, See Change**

Barbara Brennan is the Programme Coordinator for See Change; the National Stigma Reduction Partnership and has been a public speaker, facilitator and trainer who has worked in this area since 2009 starting conversations



## Siobhan Bourke

**HR Business Partner, SSE Airtricity**

A highly capable HR leader, Siobhan Bourke is the Lead HR Business Partner with SSE Airtricity in Ireland. She and her team are responsible for the delivery of a full complement of people services ranging from performance management, succession, talent management and organisation design, to resource planning, graduate recruitment and pay frameworks. She has worked in both private and public sector industries with a track record of achievement in delivering within both large and medium-size enterprises. With specific interest in building health and wellbeing strategies within workplaces, Siobhan is also a qualified Life Coach and enjoys working with clients who are seeking to make positive and lasting changes in their lives.



## Vivian Rath

### Conference Rapporteur and Member of IHREC Disability Advisory Committee

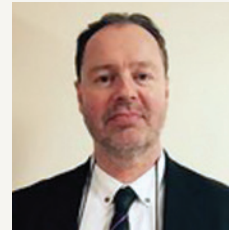
Vivian Rath is a PhD Researcher in Trinity College Dublin researching the social involvement of students with disabilities in higher education. Vivian was Director of AHEAD for 6 years, and a founding member of the national third level mental health campaign Pleasetalk.org. A person with a disability, Vivian has been a disability activist for many years, campaigning for greater participation of people with disabilities in public and political life. Vivian is a member of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission's Disability Advisory Committee.



## David Cagney

### Chief Human Resource Officer, Department of Public Expenditure and Reform

David Cagney was appointed Chief Human Resource Officer for the Civil Service in September 2015. His remit includes the development and implementation of the People Strategy for the Civil Service, including HR policies in the Civil Service, workforce planning and policies on recruitment; promotion; mobility;



## David Joyce

### Equality and International Development Officer, Irish Congress of Trade Unions

David Joyce is Equality and International Development Officer with the Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU). His areas of work include the promotion of equality at a number of levels: within trade unions and in Irish workplaces as well as at the national policy level. This involves the development of policy on equality-related issues and the production of guidelines for trade unions on various equality issues. David has represented Congress on a number of external equality and development-related bodies.



## Danny McCoy

### Chief Executive Officer, Ibec

Danny was appointed CEO of Ibec in 2009. He is also President of the Statistical and Social Inquiry Society of Ireland, an Honorary Fellow

of the Academy of Engineers, and member of both the Export Trade Council and the OECD-BIAC working group on Corporate Taxation. He has had an extensive academic career, including positions at DCU, University College London, University of Oxford and Trinity College Dublin.





**16-22 Sráid na Faiche,  
Baile Átha Cliath 7, D07 CR20**  
16-22 Green Street,  
Dublin 7, D07 CR20

**Guthán/Phone +353 (0)1 8589601**

**Facs/Fax + 353 (0) 1 8589609**

**Ríomhphost/Email [info@ihrec.ie](mailto:info@ihrec.ie)**

**Idirlíon/Web [www.ihrec.ie](http://www.ihrec.ie)**

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