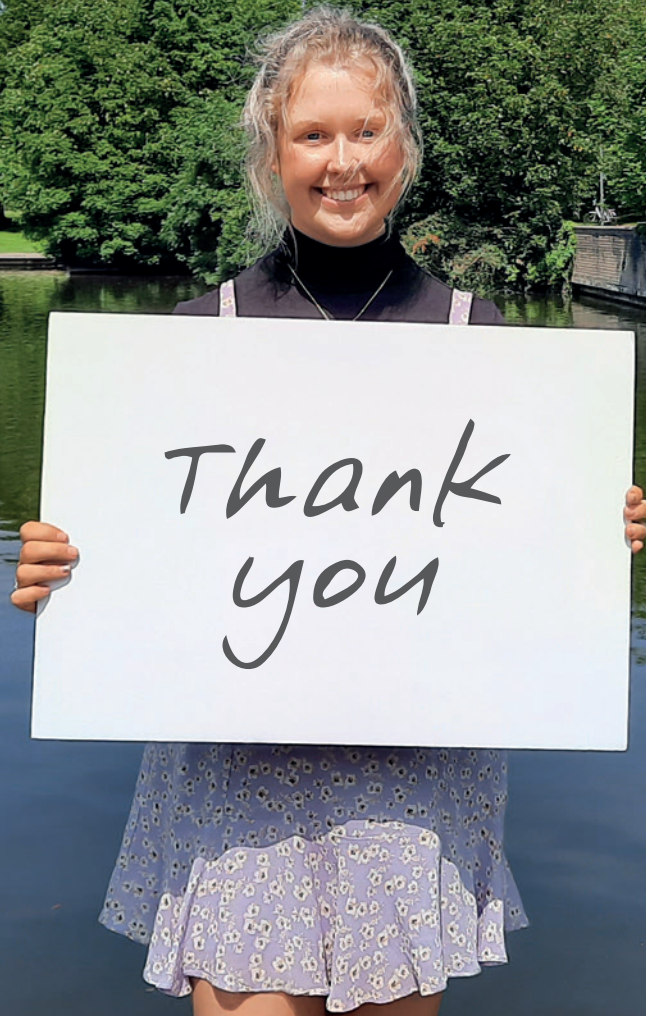


*UCD Champions - Changing Futures*

# IMPACT REPORT

2020  
2021



**UCD CHAMPIONS**  
*CHANGING FUTURES*

# Welcome



On behalf of UCD Foundation I am delighted to share with you your UCD Champions Impact Report for 2020 -2021. In what has been a year like no other, this report is a testament to your enduring generosity and the incredible community of UCD alumni who have come together to make a wonderful difference to their alma mater and in changing the lives of our students.

I am thrilled to have the opportunity to showcase and celebrate the life-changing impact of your support in securing the futures of our students. Thanks to you, the incredible potential of young people across Ireland is being realised. The impact of your generosity is epitomised by the stories of four of our brilliant students, Lorraine, Karol, Kayleigh and Dónal. With your support and belief in them, these remarkable young people have the opportunity and support to truly thrive and succeed on their path through UCD.

Through their hard work and dedication, each of these students has the chance to make the most of their potential. Lorraine is a second year BA student, Karol is continuing in his path through Computer Science, Kayleigh is studying Neuroscience while Dónal is studying Economics & Finance. Their journey through university is a shining example of why levelling the playing field is so important and how with the right support, every student can achieve success. They each act as an inspiration to others, showing that attending university is a goal that can be achieved for all students, young and old, regardless of the disadvantage they may face.

**We have had a challenging yet remarkable year, with 112 new scholarships awarded, including 100 *Cothrom na Féinne* Access scholarships. Following in the footsteps of our alumni, an eager new group of students are starting on their life-changing journey through UCD. Thanks to you and almost 4,300 of your fellow alumni and friends, we have raised €3.52 million in cash and future pledges. In these challenging times, we know it will be a challenge to meet demand for support from our students but your generosity is making a massive difference.**

What it means to be a student studying in university has changed. At the beginning of the pandemic, we set out to ensure that those current and prospective students who would be experiencing new financial hardship, increased disadvantage and growing strain on their mental health would not be denied access to their education. UCD is also the leading research university in Ireland and supporting the Covid-related and other research taking place on campus was a priority. Thanks to the incredible support of UCD alumni and friends, the *COVID-19 Emergency Fund* has raised €705,000 towards student hardship support and research.

I want to extend my heartfelt thanks and appreciation for your enduring support of our students and our University. You are helping to advance UCD's international reputation as a university of academic excellence and a place where education is offered to all. Thank you for believing in our students and for being a part of changing their lives. The impact of your support resonates not only in the lives of our students but across their communities and is felt for years to come.

Thank you for being a UCD Champion.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark McDonnell'.

**Mark McDonnell**

Head of Annual Giving, UCD Development and Alumni Relations

# Your impact in numbers

When it comes to the incredible difference you are making to UCD students today, the figures speak for themselves. Thanks to your support in what was a particularly challenging year, we were able to award **112 scholarships**. These are challenging times for our student population and your generosity is what is helping us meet an increase in demand for support from our students.

## €3.52m

Together with your fellow alumni you helped us raise **€1.79m** in cash and **€1.73m** in future pledges of support.

UCD was awarded University of Sanctuary status in 2018. In the academic year 2020/2021, 42 UCD Sanctuary Scholarships for Asylum Seekers and Refugees were supported centrally by the University.

## 112

100 *Cothrom na Féinne* Access Scholars;  
5 Ad Astra Scholars;  
4 Postgraduate scholarships;  
3 additional undergraduate scholarships.

## €595,907

The amount spent on mental health services for our students including funding for student advisors to help meet demand.

**YOU** and almost **4,300** other *UCD Champions* kindly supported our UCD students in the last year.

## €656,000

€656,000 was also allocated to support the student experience through specific donor requests; including the Sports Development Fund, the UCD Boat Club, UCD Choral Scholars, Research, the Library and Academic Writing Centre, and in support of the Foundation's Student Support Funds by College, which allows Colleges to allocate funds directly to students in need.

# Cothrom na Féinne Scholarships

For students around Ireland, attending university is a dream towards which they tirelessly work. UCD Champions' Scholarships recognise how access to university should not be limited by a young person's financial circumstances, but instead be open to all students with the passion and dedication to achieve their dreams. Across Ireland, many young people face huge adversity on their path to attending UCD, yet as scholars funded through UCD Champions, they have the life-changing support they need to fulfill their amazing potential. Lorraine, Karol and Kayleigh explain the difference a UCD Champions *Cothrom na Féinne Scholarship* has made to them and how thanks to your support they have been able to secure their future.

We want to offer our heartfelt thanks to every one of our donors for being a UCD Champion.



"I would like to say a massive thank you to everyone who has supported my scholarship"

## Kayleigh Kanakis

Neuroscience, Year 4 *Cothram na Féinne* Scholar

"The Cothrom na Féinne Scholarship has been invaluable to me across my four years of studying in UCD. Up until this year it was the only support I received as I could not work for health reasons outside college. It has allowed me to buy stationery, food, and other academic supports. I am incredibly grateful to be a recipient, it has helped to ease the pressure on my family and has allowed me to get to where I am now, almost at the end of my neuroscience degree which has always been my dream. I'm from a single parent household and this year, my mom was unemployed so there was no income coming into the house. Without the scholarship I would have struggled to afford the necessary academic support, so thank you all for what you have done for me.

I would just like to say a massive thank you to everyone who has supported my scholarship over the past four years. I am so grateful for you all. The impact it has had on my studies is huge. I really appreciate what you have done for me. Without you, I am not sure if I could have gotten to the final stage of my degree. Thank you again for making this possible."

Many deserving students like Kayleigh are faced with difficult realities. Unemployment has left many students and parents alike burdened with financial stress, leaving them unable to afford fees, rent and the cost of living. Your support and generosity has helped to reduce the constant strain of financial anxiety, allowing Kayleigh to focus on her education and pursue her dreams of a career in Neuroscience.



**Karol Wojcik**

Computer Science, Year 2  
*Cothram na Féinne* Scholar

**"I am and will forever  
be grateful for any and  
all help given to me  
throughout my time  
in UCD"**

"I started commuting from Carlow in the first month of first year because I couldn't secure reasonable accommodation. When I qualified for the scholarship, I was able to acquire accommodation in Dublin. The Cothrom na Féinne Scholarship is huge in allowing me to pay for a portion of my rent whilst studying in UCD and I can say with great confidence that without it I would struggle and perhaps not be able to afford to continue to pursue my education.

The scholarship to me, it's more of a green light that students in my position can belong in UCD and are welcome at the university. It tells me I belong here too. It has instilled a lot of confidence in me to pursue what I want to do. After college, I want to go on to do a Digital Marketing master's and one day start my own studio.

On a deeper level, I am greatly appreciative of the scholarship as it allows me to take a tiny burden off my hardworking parents, who have done a lot in helping me fulfil my goals and ambitions in studying at third level. I am and will forever be grateful for any and all help given to me throughout my time in UCD, and the Cothrom na Féinne Scholarship will undoubtedly remain close to my heart forever."

Many students like Karol are faced with the pressures of unaffordable accommodation as a direct result of the housing crisis. Thanks to your support, Karol can pay for his accommodation and attend his classes without worrying about the financial costs this requires. No student should be denied a university education just because of the part of the country they live. Your support has helped students in many ways, alleviating financial burdens and enabling them to focus on their education and subsequently, strengthening their journey here at UCD.



## Lorraine Dunster

Arts, Year 2 *Cothram na Féinne* Scholar

**"I don't know if I would have had the means to continue, especially this year, without the help from the scholarship."**

"I entered university through the H.E.A.R scheme. I thought I was so different to everybody else who entered college, but once I was given this scholarship and realised how many others were just like me, it gave me huge confidence. I no longer felt like an outlier. I was really worried about little things like being able to afford a leap card and being able to afford food on campus. I knew I wouldn't be financially able to just go out for food with my friends on campus.

I also didn't have a laptop going into college: I didn't realise I needed one. I couldn't ask anybody about university, in my family, I am the first in a family of ten to go to college so there was no one around me that I could really ask all questions that I had about it.

I used the funds to get my laptop. I bought a printer and a monthly subscription for ink. I was able to buy a desk for all the classes we have online this year. I definitely would have struggled this year without buying a desk to study at. With the scholarship, I didn't even have to think about or stress about the financial burden a laptop, desk or printer would be. I just bought them and was able to just focus on my grades. I would have struggled a lot going into college without the scholarship. I don't know if I would have had the means to continue, especially this year, without the help from the scholarship.



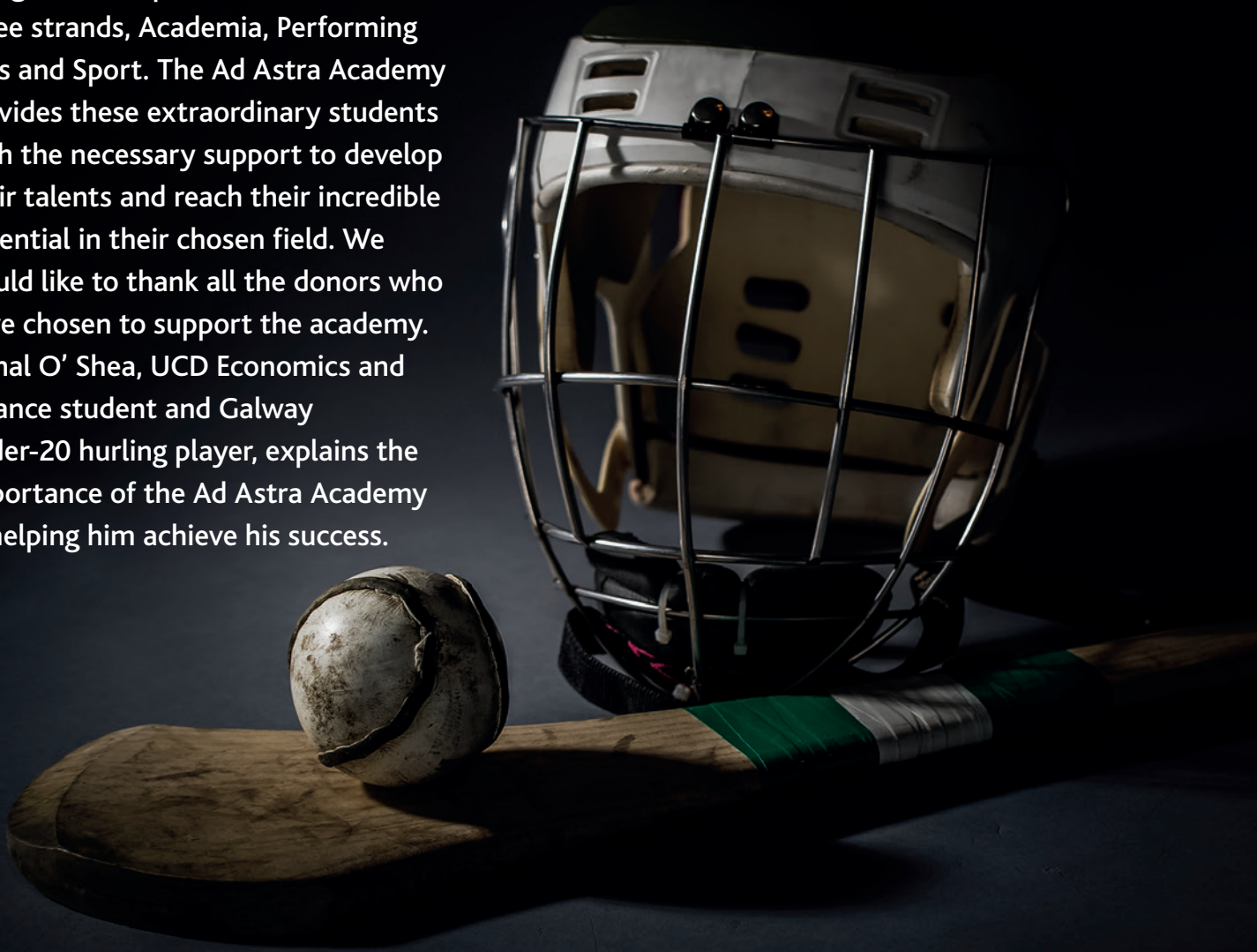
I feel so privileged and grateful to be in this position and to not have to worry about the financial aspects of college. People like me really need that support. Look how far I am going to go because of this scholarship! I feel so much more confident that someone believed in me to give me the financial support to go forward in my studies. Without that, I don't know where I would have ended up."



# Ad Astra Scholarships (Academic & Elite Athlete)

Scholarship recipient: Dónal O'Shea

Through Ad Astra Scholarships, UCD recognises exceptional talent across three strands, Academia, Performing Arts and Sport. The Ad Astra Academy provides these extraordinary students with the necessary support to develop their talents and reach their incredible potential in their chosen field. We would like to thank all the donors who have chosen to support the academy. Dónal O'Shea, UCD Economics and Finance student and Galway under-20 hurling player, explains the importance of the Ad Astra Academy in helping him achieve his success.





Dónal played a starring role in progressing his team's development when he was captain of the minor Salthill/Knocknacarra club team, leading them to their first quarter final of the Galway Minor A Club Championship. In his first year of men's junior hurling, he was central in leading the team to their first final of the Junior A competition, where in previous years they had failed to make such strides. His exceptional performance has brought him recognition as a prestigious athlete among his peers and has led him to be named Electric Ireland's Minor Hurler of the Year in 2018, a highly esteemed accolade among the GAA community that recognises the achievements of Minor players.

## Dónal O'Shea Ad Astra Scholar

Between his athletic accomplishments and intensive training to continue his physical development throughout lockdown, Dónal works tirelessly to achieve academically, becoming the first UCD student to hold both a Sports and Academic Ad Astra Scholarship. "What is unique about the Ad Astra sports scholarship environment compared to others is the emphasis placed on academic development alongside sporting development, awareness about exam timetables and the potential need to reduce or adapt training during exams".

"The true impact of your donation is far greater than the sum of money you give to UCD every year. By helping to create the Ad Astra environment, you are making things possible for many elite athletes that would not be possible otherwise. By making a bursary available to me personally, you are allowing me the opportunity to chase my dreams of success on the hurling field; dreams that in some way are what sport is all about. Thank you."

# Mental Health

Many of our students and alumni know how difficult it can be to navigate through university. The last year has been one of the most challenging years for students. Studying in UCD has changed significantly, with students facing new pressures, new learning environments and increased periods of isolation from friends and family. Maintaining your mental health while in lockdown has been a challenge everyone has had to face, yet for students already struggling with their mental health, the last year has taken a huge toll on their wellbeing. The network of support provided by the UCD Student Counselling Service has been more important than ever in helping those students who need it the most.



Third year engineering student, Bill talks about the challenges he has seen among his peers and the importance of providing student mental health support:

"The pandemic has really added another layer of difficulty to university for students, especially in terms of their mental health. In my year, moving to online learning and being isolated from classmates, along with many of the aids and facilities on campus has had a really detrimental effect on motivation and academic focus for most students.

I know this is an especially big issue for new students, many of whom are going to be finishing their first year of college still having rarely been on the campus or met any of their classmates. For a lot of students who

already needed support, the isolation this year has really made life as a student much more difficult.

The pandemic and distance learning have further highlighted the need to keep improving mental health services in UCD with demand for them likely to be higher than ever. Many students who never looked for help before are now reaching out about their mental health struggles during lockdown and are in need of proper support and counselling facilities. It is so important that there is somewhere to go without delay for anyone who needs help."



UCD Student Union President, Conor Anderson highlights the importance of supporting students with mental health struggles.

"This year has shown, perhaps more than any other, the crucial importance of counselling services for UCD students. The only way we will keep up with demand is through increased funding, making sure that all students are able to avail of the help of qualified counsellors and psychologists at no cost. For many students, this support can make or break their college experience, allowing them to succeed where they would otherwise have failed.

Everyone has the right to qualified mental help. The best way to protect that right in UCD is through a well-resourced mental health service. Nobody should be forced to struggle through alone, particularly at a university like UCD."

# COVID-19 Emergency Appeal

This last year has been a uniquely challenging one for everyone. While the pandemic has kept us apart, a new and deeper sense of community has been fostered and the UCD community has come together in a truly meaningful way, highlighting the deep connection and desire to help shared among our alumni and friends. The *COVID-19 Emergency Appeal* is an alumni driven initiative to support those students most affected by the pandemic and to help drive innovation in pandemic research in UCD.

The nature of studying in UCD has fundamentally changed, with new and unforeseen challenges facing students such as studying remotely, loss of family income and part-time jobs, increased caring responsibilities, illness, and trying to adapt to a new and changing learning environment. Those students already facing disadvantage have been disproportionately affected by the pandemic and now face increased hardship and the risk of having to drop out or abandon their dream of attending university.

Thanks to the amazing generosity of our alumni, those students in hardship due to the pandemic now have the support they need to continue in

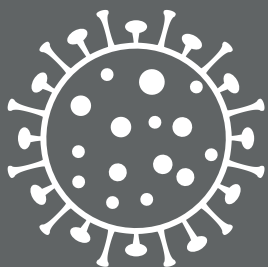
UCD and reach their incredible potential. We want to say thank you to our donors for coming together during the most difficult of times.

UCD has been at the forefront of pandemic research in Ireland. Many of our alumni will be familiar with the incredible work of the National Virus Reference Laboratory and its director Dr Cillian de Gascun. The majority of early stage COVID-19 testing was done by the NVRL. UCD is Ireland's leading research university and over the course of the pandemic, UCD researchers and staff have been working tirelessly to help combat the virus, while also treating Covid patients on the frontlines in our affiliate hospitals.

UCD's pandemic response included the on-campus production of PPE and hand sanitiser at the beginning of the campaign when it was needed most. With the generous support of our alumni, funding was also provided to help support UCD's strategic pandemic research priorities, in particular funding research at UCD Clinical Research Centre.



NVRL team members Dr Suzi Coughlan, Principal Clinical Scientist, Dr Cillian de Gascun, NVRL Director & Chair of the NPHET Coronavirus Expert Advisory Group and Deirdre Bourke, Laboratory Manager



Members of the UCD School of Medicine have been working on the frontline to help those worst affected by the pandemic and develop new ways to combat the virus. For example, Prof. Alistairr Nichol, Chair of Critical Medicine at UCD and the intensive care teams at Galway University Hospital and St. Vincent's University Hospital have worked with a local network of clinical research facilities to identify drugs that can protect against or treat the worst

symptoms of the virus. The clinical trial will allow doctors to respond rapidly to the findings and to improve the outcomes for critically ill patients.

We would like to thank all our donors who supported the *COVID-19 Emergency Appeal*. Your support during this time has been truly inspiring.

# Inspired by our Alumni Volunteers

A very special thank you to the 4,373 alumni who have voluntarily given of their time to support students, fellow alumni, and the wider UCD community.

This has been a challenging year for us all. And we are eternally grateful for the continued generosity and commitment of alumni, like you, who have stuck by us during this difficult period in our collective history. You have helped us offer mentoring opportunities, share inspiring testimonials, lead global alumni networks, and deliver useful virtual events. And we couldn't have continued this important and impactful work without you!

The UCD Alumni Relations team, leading the UCD Alumni Volunteer programme, collaborates with colleagues from UCD Careers Network, UCD Global, and UCD Societies Council to ensure that alumni time, advice, and expertise is available to thousands of students; positively supporting their personal, academic, and career development.

Our social media channels and online UCD Alumni Network have been great places to bring alumni together and to keep everyone up-to-date; particularly now as we depend on virtual communication to stay connected.

## Everyone benefits from volunteering



"The mentoring side is what I really love at the moment and is very important to me and I immediately signed up to repeat the experience for the past three years. What can I do to help young people starting off? It is not always easy starting off so if my experience as somebody who has worked my way up to management and CEO levels can help, I am all for it."

**Elfrieda**, UCD Alumna and Volunteer Mentor

Volunteering can be enriching and rewarding. To learn how you can get involved, follow us on social media, join the UCD Alumni Network at [www.ucdalumninetwork.com](http://www.ucdalumninetwork.com), email Ria Flom at [alumnivolunteer@ucd.ie](mailto:alumnivolunteer@ucd.ie), or call Ria on +353 1 716 1064

# The difference one person can make

You, our community of UCD Champions know more than anyone the importance of supporting talented students such as Kayleigh, Karol, Lorraine and Dónal. The support of just one person makes is often the difference between a potential student receiving a deserved education or not. The students who have benefited from your support have come from disadvantaged backgrounds and overcome tremendous barriers to realising their dream of a university education.

The past year, more than ever before, has underpinned the importance of our alumni support and the transformative impact it plays in our students' lives. Your continued support enables us to break down the social and economic barriers that might otherwise rob us all of the huge collective impact that our talented graduates have, some modest and others that revolutionise society or make life-saving discoveries.

With the pandemic impacting the finances of universities globally, we hope to expand our community of UCD Champions at a critical time for our students, and you can play a role in helping us do just that. Simply sharing this report with a friend or family member could be just the reminder they need to join you in becoming a UCD Champion.

Reaching out to your friends and family, whether they support us by donating or spreading the word, can make a big difference and will enable us to support more underrepresented groups. Ensuring equal access to education and collectively coming together to overcome adversity is at the heart of being a UCD Champion.

**Ask your friends and family to become a part of the UCD Champions community today.**

By encouraging your friends and family to be a part of this wonderful community, bolstered by commitment and generosity, you are furthering our reach and strengthening our mission to empower people through education.

Anyone can donate today either  
online at **ucdfoundation.ie** or  
by calling **01 716 1406**

# Your Legacy

Did you know that with a planned gift, a living legacy, or a gift in memory, you can ensure your alma mater continues to grow for generations to come? Through your special gift you can shape UCD's future, ensuring that what matters most to you is protected.

Your generosity can live on long beyond your lifetime and change the lives of generations of students to come.

Including a gift in your will to the University or establishing a memorial gift to honour a loved one, colleague or friend, is very easy to do. Every legacy gift is precious to us, no matter how small, and by leaving a gift to UCD in your will you can make a lasting difference to the success of the University and our students.

If you would like to know more, let us know using the form below and we will contact you. You can use the Freepost envelope provided to return the below form to us.

Alternatively, you can contact  
Mark McDonnell in complete confidence  
on +353 1 716 1286 or  
email: [mark.mcdonnell@ucdfoundation.ie](mailto:mark.mcdonnell@ucdfoundation.ie)

Please send me information about Leaving a Legacy to UCD

Name

Address

Phone

Email

# Help even more students – for free. *One form is all it takes!*

Your support matters to us, which is why we always ensure that every cent you donate works as hard as possible to help the University and our students to thrive. That's why we'd like you to know about a way you can increase your donation by as much as 45% without it costing you a single cent more! If you have supported UCD Foundation in the past 4 years, and have given €250 or more in the last year, we can claim an extra 45% of your gift from the Revenue. **If everyone who gave over €250 did this, we could raise over €1 million – this could potentially double the number of scholarships awarded this year.**

## Achieve even more through tax-efficient giving

To take part in the scheme, which is also available to PAYE and self-assessed supporters, you simply complete one form – the CHY3 tax form – which takes just a few minutes to do. Then return it to us and we do the rest.

You don't have to fill out any more forms because your new enduring tax relief form will last for five years, and can also be back-dated to the last 4 years.

**+44.93%**  
in ROI

To receive a CHY3 form or a Gift Aid Declaration form, please contact Peter Williamson on (+353) 1 716 1406 or email [info@ucdfoundation.ie](mailto:info@ucdfoundation.ie).

You can also get the CHY3 form online at: <https://www.revenue.ie/en/companies-and-charities/documents/charities/chy3-enduring-certificate.pdf>  
Don't forget to post your form back to us in the freepost envelope.

## UK taxpayer? Your gifts can be worth 25% extra for 0% extra!

If you are a UK taxpayer, we can claim an extra 25p on every £1 you donate from HMRC and it won't cost you a penny more. One quick form does it all. A Gift Aid declaration form covers you for life and there is no minimum amount you need to donate; the only requirement is that you are a UK taxpayer.

**+25%**  
in UK



## UCD Affinity Credit Card

We'd like to say a huge thank you to all our fantastic credit card holders. They truly are **UCD Champions** because thanks to them, our scholarship and student support programmes and the **UCD Sports Development Fund** benefit every time they use their Affinity cards.

You can change lives too with a BOI Affinity credit card.

What better way to show your support for UCD?

To apply, simply call Bank of Ireland Montrose on 01 2697455 or find out more at <http://alumni.ucd.ie/ucd-affinity-credit-card/>



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## FOUNDATION

### UCD DEVELOPMENT AND ALUMNI RELATIONS

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