



Rialtas na hÉireann  
Government of Ireland

# **Eighth National Forum on Education for Sustainable Development**

Friday 1 December 2023

TU Dublin Campus, Grangegorman



## Programme of Events / Clár Imeachtaí

09:30 – 10.00	<b>Registration</b>	Tea and coffee Exhibition Stands
10:00 – 10:25	<b>Welcome &amp; Opening Remarks</b>	<b>Paul Lemass</b> , Assistant Secretary General, Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science
	<b>Progress on ESD to 2030</b>	<b>Siobhán Sleeman</b> , Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science & <b>Leona De Khors</b> , Department of Education
10:25 – 11:00	<b>Keynote speakers</b>	<b>Mohammad Naeem</b> , UN Youth Delegate  <b>Arjen Wals</b> (Online), Professor of Transformative Learning for Socio-Ecological Sustainability at Wageningen University and UNESCO Chair of Social Learning and Sustainable Development.
11:00 – 11:30	<b>Break</b>	Tea, Coffee and Networking Tour of Exhibition Stands
11:30 – 1:00	<b>Break-out Sessions</b>	<b>Break-out 1: Transforming Learning</b>  <b>Panel Chair: Dermot O'Donovan</b> , Atlantic Technological University  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Gabriela Martinez Sainz</b>, Ad Astra Fellow and Assistant Professor, UCD School of Education</li> <li>• <b>Derek Grant</b>, Director of Curriculum and Assessment, NCCA</li> <li>• <b>Anmarie Ryan</b>, Associate Professor in Marketing, Kemmy Business School, University of Limerick</li> <li>• <b>Susan Hegarty</b>, Head of School of History and Geography, DCU</li> </ul>
		<b>Breakout 2: Partnerships for ESD</b>  <b>Panel Chair:</b> Elaine Nevin, Director of ECO-UNESCO  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Fergal McCarthy</b>, Principal, Kinsale Community School</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>David Nyaluke</b>, UCD Proudly Made in Africa Fellow in Business and Development</li> <li>• <b>Sean McCabe</b>, Climate Justice Officer, Bohemians Football club</li> <li>• <b>Eimear Manning</b>, Youth &amp; Climate Justice Development Officer, National Youth Council of Ireland</li> </ul>
11:30 – 1:00	<b>Break-out Sessions</b>	<p><b>Breakout 3: Sustainable and Inclusive Learning Environments</b></p> <p><b>Panel Chair: Dearbháil Lawless</b>, CEO Aontas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Dara Ryder</b>, Chief Executive Officer, AHEAD</li> <li>• <b>Anne Dolan</b>, Lecturer, Mary Immaculate College, Limerick</li> <li>• <b>Una Fitzgerald</b>, Chair of the Irish Green Lab Network and University of Galway</li> </ul> <p><b>Breakout 4: Creative thinking for Climate Action and Sustainability</b></p> <p><b>Workshop Chair: Eileen Leahy</b>, Youth Reform Strategy &amp; Participation, DCEDIY</p> <p><i>Student Workshop with The Big Idea</i></p>
13:00 – 14:00	<b>Lunch</b>	Lunch and Networking, Exhibition Stands & Sustainability Walking Tour
14.00 – 14:30	<b>Keynote speaker</b>	<b>Lord David Puttnam</b> , British film producer, educator and environmentalist
	<b>Video</b>	<b>First 5 Garden of Wonder and Discovery</b>
14:30 – 15:15	<b>Panel discussion</b>	<p><b>Panel Chair: Jennifer Boyer</b>, VP Sustainability, TU Dublin</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aobheann Ní Shuilleabháin, Chair of Citizens Assembly on Biodiversity Loss and Associate Professor, Mathematics Education, UCD.</li> <li>• Frank Geary, Director of Irish Development Education Association</li> <li>• Tania Banotti, Director of Creative Ireland programme</li> <li>• Aisha Ojuolape, TU Dublin student and N-TUTORR Student Champion</li> </ul>
15:15 – 15:30	<b>Closing Remarks</b>	Event close

## **Speaker Biographies**

### **Paul Lemass**

Paul is the Assistant Secretary General in the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science, with responsibility for Corporate Functions, Capital Investment and Climate Action. He is also the Department's Climate and Sustainability Champion. Paul Lemass joined the Department of Further and Higher Education Research Innovation and Science in August 2022.

Prior to this, he was Assistant Secretary General in the Department of Housing responsible for Housing Policy including the development of Housing for All. He has also served as Assistant Secretary for Local Government and as Environment Counsellor in the Permanent Representation of Ireland to the European Union. He holds a degree in Mechanical Engineering from UCD and a Masters in Business Administration from the Kellogg School at Northwestern University in Chicago.

### **Siobhán Sleeman**

Siobhán Sleeman works in the Higher Education Policy and Reform unit of the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science, with responsibility across a range of policy areas including Education for Sustainable Development, Skills initiatives (Human Capital Initiative, Springboard+, Languages Connect), Teaching and Learning, Digital Transformation in HE. Before joining the Department, Siobhán worked in the Higher Education Authority, Dublin City University and in the not-for-profit sector. She holds a Masters in Business Administration (UCD Smurfit School) and MSc in Development Studies (SOAS, University of London).

### **Leona De Khors**

Leona De Khors is an Assistant Principal Officer in the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Unit of the Department of Education with responsibility for a number of department strategies including Languages Connect – Ireland's Strategy for Foreign Languages in Education, the Department's input to the 20 year Strategy for the Irish Language and ESD to 2030 – the 2nd National Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development. Leona co-ordinates the Department's input on the SDGs and is a member of the SDG Interdepartmental Working Group as well as being the Irish Delegate on the EU Working Group on Schools: Learning for Sustainability.

### **Mohammad Naeem**

Mohammad Naeem is an 18-year-old activist from County Mayo. He currently serves as the United Nations Youth Delegate for Ireland, the youngest to ever be selected globally. He is also the Deputy President of the Irish Second Level Students' Union. Mohammad has been involved with Mayo Comhairle na nÓg and served as chairperson of the group. He was also appointed to the National Youth Assembly of Ireland as a sitting delegate where he played a vital role in the organisation and facilitation of the Climate National Youth Assembly.

### **Arjen Wals**

Arjen Wals is a Professor of Transformative Learning for Socio-Ecological Sustainability at Wageningen University. He also holds the UNESCO Chair of Social Learning and Sustainable Development. Wals is also a Visiting Professor at Norwegian Life Science University in Ås where he supports the development of Whole Schools Approaches & Sustainability.

His recent work focusses on transformative social learning in vital coalitions of multiple stakeholders at the interface of science and society. His teaching and research focus on designing learning processes and learning spaces that enable people to contribute meaningfully sustainability. A central question in his work is: how to create conditions that support (new) forms of learning which take full advantage of the diversity, creativity and resourcefulness that is all around us, but so far remain largely untapped in our search for a world that is more sustainable than the one currently in prospect?

### **Dermot O'Donovan, Atlantic Technological University**

Dr Dermot O'Donovan is the Head of Department of Creative Education in the School of Design and Creative Arts, at the Atlantic Technological University. The Department offers programmes of initial teacher education in a range of technological and creative post-primary disciplines. Dermot holds a Bachelor of Commerce from UCC, a National Certificate in Furniture Design and Manufacture and Master of Science from GMIT. He also holds a PhD in Higher Education Research from Lancaster University, focusing on ESD in Higher Education in Ireland. Dermot is a member of the HE-FET ESD Advisory Group.

### **Gabriela Martinez Sainz**

Dr Gabriela Martinez Sainz is an Assistant Professor in Education at University College Dublin researching and teaching children's rights, global citizenship and education for sustainable development. Her overarching research interest is understanding how key elements essential for global, plural and sustainable societies – such as sustainability, human rights and citizenship – are taught and learnt. Her latest research focuses on the teaching and learning processes of SDG target 4.7 in digital spaces to better understand the role technologies can play in education.

### **Derek Grant**

Dr Derek Grant joined the NCCA in 2016 and is an Early Childhood and Primary Director. He is a member of the team redeveloping the primary curriculum and updating Aistear: the Early Childhood Curriculum Framework. Prior to this, he was a primary school deputy-principal and principal. He has 15 years teaching experience. He holds a Masters Degree in Education Management and a Doctorate in Education Leadership and Management

### **Annmarie Ryan**

Dr. Annmarie Ryan, Associate Professor at the University of Limerick's Kemmy Business School, founded the Digital Futures Lab. She's led various futures labs, like the Health Futures Lab (2015) and Health Research Futures Lab (2016), funded by the Irish Research Council. A pioneer in higher education, she introduced a studio approach and created immersive digital learning environments to the Business School. Currently, she coordinates a €0.25 million EU-funded project (EULab), aiming to establish a European network of Mission Labs: an innovative approach to sustainability competence development. Her research focuses on space and place in the realisation of sustainable market futures, boasting over 100 scholarly works in prestigious journals and conferences.

### **Susan Hegarty**

Susan Hegarty is a geographer and Associate Professor in the DCU School of History and Geography, and is a member of the DCU Water Institute. She is a Senior Fellow of the Higher Education Academy. Susan is enthusiastic about transmitting the importance of Geography to the wider public

and in embedding fieldwork and skills in undergraduate programmes. She has led the development of the BA in Climate and Environmental Sustainability in DCU - one of the DCU Futures suite of programmes.

### **Elaine Nevin**

Elaine Nevin is the National Director of ECO-UNESCO since 2002. Elaine holds a BA in Geography and Political Science and an MA and a Higher Diploma in Education. She has worked in the field of environmental education since 1995 and believes that empowering, educating and engaging young people is an essential component to achieving sustainable development.

Elaine has headed up a range of projects in ECO-UNESCO including the Young Environmentalist Awards programme; Youth for Sustainable Development peer education, the development of ECO-UNESCO as a QQI accredited centre, and the development of Green Youth Employability programmes. She is currently heading up ECO-UNESCO's involvement in the UNESCO Global Action Programme on the implementation of ESD and is a member of the key partner network for the implementation of UNESCO's GAP under the key priority area 4 - 'Mobilising and Empowering young people'.

Elaine sits on and has sat on a range of bodies including the Irish Environmental Network, National Youth Council of Ireland (past Vice-President; current Chair of the NYCI Specialist Organisation Network), and is the Chairperson of the Advisory Group on the National Dialogue on Climate Change. She was a Ministerial Appointee to the Environmental Protection Agency in 2011 and was reappointed to the EPA Advisory Committee in 2016; she is a member of the Advisory Committee for the National Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development in the Department of Education, and sits on the Steering Committee of the Regional Centre of Expertise in ESD Dublin.

### **Fergal McCarthy**

Fergal McCarthy is the Principal of Kinsale Community School for the past 10 years. Fergal is a member of the National Executive of the Association of Community and Comprehensive Schools as well as serving the National Executive Committee of the Teaching Council of Ireland. Fergal is also a member of the Executive Committee of the European Federation of Educational Employers (EFEE) and is currently serving EFEE as Vice President.

As well as being the most successful school in Ireland in the BT Young Scientist and Technology Exhibition, and the most successful school in Ireland in the VEX Robotics World Championship, Kinsale Community School has also pioneered initiatives in respect of sustainability, climate change and biodiversity. These initiatives resulted in attracting an EU Council of Ministries meeting to Kinsale Community School on May 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> 2023. This event provided students with the opportunity to speak truth and science to EU policy makers.

### **David Nyaluke**

David Nyaluke is the Proudly Made in Africa Fellow in Business and Development, based at University College Dublin College of Business working to incorporate the teaching of Africa and sustainable development in business education in Ireland. Prior to joining UCD and Proudly Made in Africa, David was a teaching fellow at Kimmage Development Studies Centre and Maynooth University, focusing on the role of business, NGOs and state in development. David holds a PhD from Dublin City University where he investigated the trajectories of political and development transformations of African states from independence into the 21st Century.

### **Seán McCabe**

Seán McCabe, Head of Climate Justice and Sustainability at Bohemian FC, leads initiatives that aim to engage and empower communities through climate action. He has worked with Bohemians since 2020 and has begun advising the European Football for Development Network on football and sustainability. Seán has worked on climate justice in various domestic and international fora since 2012, including as policy advisor to former Irish president Mary Robinson and authored "The People's Transition: Community-led Development for Climate Justice". Most recently, he has worked with the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child on the development of authoritative guidance on protecting child rights in climate action and is working with the UNFCCC to develop a strategy for fan engagement under the Sport for Climate Action framework.

### **Eimear Manning**

Eimear Manning (she/her) holds a Master of Science in Environmental Sustainability from UCD. She works as the Youth & Climate Justice Development Officer in the National Youth Council of Ireland where she manages youth-led projects centred on issues of climate change, climate justice, and meaningful youth inclusion. Eimear sits on a Drafting Committee creating a new Council of Europe Recommendation on 'Young People and Climate Action'. Eimear was also nominated by the Department of Education to be Ireland's representative on the UNECE Education for Sustainable Development Steering Committee Youth Platform and has since become a key partner for the ESD for 2030 Network (ESD-NET 2030).

### **Dearbháil Lawless**

Dearbháil Lawless is the CEO of AONTAS, the National Adult Learning Organisation. AONTAS is an SDG Champion for 2023. Dearbháil has worked in the adult and community education sector in a variety of roles teaching and managing education-based projects. She also lectured in Higher Education at DCU and Marino Institute of Education. She's passionate about social justice and equality. Dearbháil is the Co-Chair of Coalition 2030. This is an alliance of 70 civil society organisations working together to advocate for the effective implementation of the SDGs.

### **Dara Ryder**

Dara Ryder is Chief Executive Officer of AHEAD, an Irish NGO established in 1988 which is dedicated to creating inclusive environments for people with disabilities in education and employment. He became CEO in 2020 having previously managed AHEAD's digital presence and developed a suite of online CPD programmes relating to Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and inclusive practice in his role as Digital Media and eLearning Manager there. His research interests include examining the participation of students with disabilities in higher education, exploring the learning experiences and desires of students with disabilities, and examining the implementation of Universal Design and UDL in policy and practice.

After graduating from Queens University in 2005, Dara joined Dun Laoghaire College of Further Education as a lecturer, where he became interested in inclusive education when working first-hand with students with disabilities in his classroom. When the opportunity arose in 2008, he joined AHEAD where he has been working ever since on creating inclusive environments in education and employment for people with disabilities.

## **Anne Dolan**

Dr. Anne Dolan is a lecturer in primary geography with the Department of Learning, Society and Religious Education in Mary Immaculate College, Limerick. An enthusiastic educator, Anne is passionate about primary geography and she is keen to share this passion with her students. She is particularly interested in creative approaches to geography, inter-disciplinary collaboration and the use of the arts in geographical explorations. As a researcher, Anne focuses on outdoor learning, geoliteracy, children's concepts of place and creative approaches to geography. She is the course director of the recently launched M.Ed. in Education for Sustainability and Global Citizenship. Anne is the editor of the forthcoming publication: *Teaching the Sustainable Development Goals to Young Citizens (10-16 years): A focus on Teaching Hope, Respect, Empathy and Advocacy in schools*. Recent publications include *Teaching Climate Change in Primary Schools: An Interdisciplinary Approach*. Routledge (2022) and *Powerful Primary Geography: a toolkit for 21st Century Learning* London: Routledge (2020).

## **Úna FitzGerald**

After completing a Bachelor in Industrial Engineering and MSc in Biotechnology at the National University of Ireland, Galway, Dr FitzGerald worked in the pharmaceutical sector for five years in France and the UK, before embarking on a PhD in Molecular Biology at the University of Strathclyde, Glasgow. Following a brief spell in cancer research, since 1997 Dr FitzGerald has been researching neurodegenerative disease, with a particular focus on multiple sclerosis.

Dr FitzGerald has built a track record in research on multiple sclerosis; she is a funded investigator in CÚRAM, the SFI Centre for Research on Medical Devices and is ex-director of the Galway Neuroscience Centre (2019-2020). Her primary research area is Multiple Sclerosis and other neurodegenerative disorders.

Una's 'eco-epiphany' in 2018 was initially sparked on discovering that life science labs (and members of her research group!) discard huge quantities of single-use plastics. A lack of awareness amongst lab works of the negative impact that their work has on the environment, prompted the development of a postgraduate 'Green Lab Principles and Practice' module, which has been taken by ~120 graduates since 2020. Putting learnings into action, in 2019 Una led the CÚRAM lab to be the first in Europe to gain Green Lab Certification from My Green Lab (see <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9QuQ6XoEMKs>). This led to an invitation to chair a national working group on sustainable public sector labs and the launch on Earth Day 2022 of Irish Green Labs (see <https://irishgreenlabs.org/>). Dr FitzGerald has also led an SFI- and has been a Co-Lead on a CirculÉire-funded project focused on reducing and circularising single-use lab plastics.

## **Eileen Leahy**

Eileen Leahy is an Assistant Principal Officer in the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth. She works in the area of youth participation, with responsibility for including the voice of children and young people in local and national decision-making on public policy, programmes and services. She leads on oversight and governance of Irish child and youth participation structures such as Comhairle na nÓg (local youth councils), Dáil na nÓg (national youth parliament) and the National Youth Assembly of Ireland. She also leads on delivery of the supports and resources available to Government Departments and Agencies to include children and young people's views in their policy decision-making processes.



## **The B!g Idea**

The B!g Idea equips students and learners with the creative mindset to tackle the biggest problems society faces, in other words, to change their world. They work collaboratively with schools and students to create, experiment, invent, take risks, make mistakes, and have fun. The inclusively designed programme empowers students with creative tools that will expand their capabilities, building confidence and knowledge base connecting them with their communities and bridging the gap with Industry.

## **Lord David Puttnam**

Lord David Puttnam is CEO of Atticus Education, an online education company that delivers audio-visual seminars to students around the world from his home in west Cork.

A British film producer, educator and environmentalist, Puttnam spent twenty-four years in the House of Lords, where he worked tirelessly agitating in public policy for the creative industries, education, and climate change. In 2007, he was appointed Chairman of the Joint Parliamentary Committee on the Draft Climate Change Bill, which established fixed carbon limits for the next forty years, and is now seen as the world's first climate change legislation. In 2019, he chaired the Lords's Select Committee on Democracy and Digital Technologies, which published its Digital Technology & the Resurrection of Trust report in June 2020. In 2021, he became a member of the Environment and Climate Change Committee before retiring from the House of Lords in October of the same year.

He has previously been an International Ambassador for the World Wildlife Fund and President of UNICEF UK. He was Ireland's 'Digital Champion' from 2012 – 2017 and was granted Irish citizenship in 2022.

His films include *The Mission*, *The Killing Fields*, *Chariots of Fire*, *Midnight Express*, *Bugsy Malone* and *Local Hero*. Together these films have won ten Oscars, thirteen Golden Globes, nine Emmys, thirty-one BAFTAs, and the Palme D'Or at Cannes.

He is a Commander of the Order of Arts and Letters in France, and has more than 50 honorary degrees from universities worldwide.

## **Jennifer Boyer**

Jennifer Boyer is the inaugural Vice President of Sustainability at Ireland's first Technological University, TU Dublin, providing leadership, strategic direction and oversight for the coordination and management of the University's activities in relation to sustainability, across both professional services and academic domains. Jennifer is responsible for positioning the University as a leader and voice for sustainability, a way of living and working in a new, more balanced way, a way that protects our planet for future generations.

Most recently in her role as Assistant Head of School, responsible for the professional programmes in Architecture at TU Dublin, she enjoyed working with students and colleagues to develop the new Master of Architecture and implementing major curriculum revision to the Bachelor of Architecture to embed the *UN Sustainable Development Goals 2030* and address the challenges of climate change. As Practice Director at Murray O'Laoire Architects, Jennifer managed the Central European office and directed large multi-disciplinary design teams to deliver sustainable mixed-use urban design projects for commercial clients and government agencies around the world.

Jennifer is a graduate from Cornell University's Bachelor of Architecture programme in 2001, sitting her Professional Registration exams in Ireland at University College Dublin in 2007. She completed her MBA as an Aspire Scholar at the Michael Smurfit School of Business, UCD in 2014.

### **Aoibhinn Ní Shúilleabháin**

Dr Aoibhinn Ní Shúilleabháin is Associate Professor in the UCD School of Mathematics & Statistics, where she directs the undergraduate STEM initial teacher education programme. A former teacher in a DEIS school, she is committed to making the subjects of mathematics and science more accessible. In 2022, she was invited by an Taoiseach Mícheál Martin to Chair Ireland's Citizens' Assembly on Biodiversity Loss and these recommendations are currently under consideration by the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Environment & Climate Action.

### **Frank Geary**

Frank Geary is Director of IDEA, the Irish Development Education Association. He leads the IDEA network, which has engaged with national & international policy processes, created the award-winning IDEA Code of Good Practice, and developed Vision 2025, a shared vision for Global Citizenship Education in Ireland. Frank is a member of the National Steering Group on Education for Sustainable Development and the ESD Advisory Group for Schools. He has advocated for education & civil society with the UN, EU, African Union and Irish government.

### **Tania Banotti**

Tania Banotti is the Director of the Creative Ireland Programme, an all-of-government programme with the ambition of putting creativity at the centre of public policy. The programme's work covers:

- Creative Youth
- Creative Communities
- Creative Industries
- Creative Health and Wellbeing
- Creative Climate Action and Sustainability

Creative Youth Plan 2023- 2027 has the ambition of enabling the creative potential of every child and young person in Ireland.

One of the initiatives of the programme is the €5.8 million Creative Climate Action Fund. It harnesses the talents of artists and the wider creative sector to engage the public on climate action.

Before becoming a public servant she had a long career leading different creative organisations including Screen Producers Ireland, Theatre Forum and the Institute of Advertising Practitioners.

[www.creativeireland.gov.ie](http://www.creativeireland.gov.ie)

### **Aisha Ojuolape**

Aisha Ojuolape is studying for a Bachelor of Engineering in Electrical Services Engineering within the School of Electrical and Electronic Engineering in TU Dublin and is an N-TUTORR Student Champion.

The N-TUTORR national project is an innovative collaboration across the Technological Higher Education sector to transform the student experience.