The concept of an eVoting system was first started in 2011 when the Students’ Union began to investigate electronic voting systems for use in general election and referenda. A system was contracted but ran into data protection issues, compatibility issues with existing DCU infrastructure and incurred an annual charge. The electronic voting system was subsequently abandoned.

In 2014 the idea was resurrected for the re-run of the 2014 affiliation referendum to the Union of Students in Ireland. This was a simple YES/NO question that was created in a module titled ‘SU’ and all students were enrolled in this. A second referendum was held in week 12 via Loop on the topic of the Labyrinth.

It was then decided that electronic voting was to be advanced to a general election scenario.

Project development

- Nov 2014: Investigation of external Gmail compatible Systems
- Dec 2014: Meeting between DCUSU, ISS and Dr. Mark Glynn on external options
- Jan 2015: Rejection of external systems, Project brief drawn for Loop Programmer
- Feb 2015: Extensive Coding and testing of Bespoke eVoting module for Loop

System benefits

- 24 hour polling available, all you need is Loop access
- Facilitate Alternative Vote
- Secure, vote could not be changed or viewed once cast
- Totaly anonymity for voter
- Constituency logic driven - Faculty vote for faculty convenor
- Instant result, with breakdown of counts, no spoilt votes

Engagement results

- 2989 highest valid poll
- Turnout 19% increase on last year
- Erasmus study-abroad able to vote for first time
- Nursing students off campus able to vote
- Evening students able to vote

Sustainability results

- 191kg of carbon saved
- 33,000 A4 pages saved
- 150 hours of man power saved previously spent on polling stations & ballot count

Future upgrades

- Extension to facilitate Class Rep nominations and elections
- University can use to run staff ballots; academic council etc
- SIPTU can use for elections and other member ballots if they wish
- DCUSU nomination of candidates will be online going forward
- Class Rep Council chamber voting system to be introduced next year
- eCanvass - a virtual space for voters to interact with candidates