



Ollscoil Chathair
Bhaile Átha Cliath
Dublin City University



DCU in the Community Annual Report 2018-2019

DCU IN THE COMMUNITY
DCU SA PHOBAIL





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DCU in the Community

DCU in the Community acts as a bridge between the University - its staff, students and resources - and the local and regional community. Our mission is to promote social regeneration through education and enhance local community development and community resilience through the provision of flexible educational and lifelong learning opportunities.

We also aim to promote and embed civic engagement activities in DCU and in the higher education sector in Ireland through our work with Campus Engage. DCU in the Community staff are active members of the Campus Engage Student Volunteering Working Group, and Community-Based Learning/Community-Based Research Working Group, as well as DCU's Civic Engagement Forum.

DCU in the Community is the flagship and most tangible expression of DCU's commitment to civic engagement. Our activities include:

- Adult education and lifelong learning
- Widening access and participation
- Student volunteering
- Community-based learning and research
- Community engagement



2018-2019 in a Snapshot

- 200+ learners across all programmes
- 160+ hours of educational guidance, student support and mentoring
- Assistance with 20+ applications to higher and further education
- Eight courses delivered on site; additionally, hosted 11 courses for community partners
- Four public lectures delivered jointly with DCU Institute of Education for over 80 participants
- Six workshops delivered during Summer School 2019
- 50+ students registered on www.studentvolunteer.ie bringing the total number of DCU student volunteers registered on the system to 460
- 22 community-based organisations at weekly DCU Volunteer Helpdesk which reached approximately 650 students per week
- 4,500 DCU Student Volunteer Handbooks disseminated
- 15 Orientation Talks on volunteering delivered to approximately 4,000 incoming DCU students
- 300+ attendees across three flagship student volunteering events – International Volunteer Day, DCU Game Night and No Fear Volunteer
- DCU President's Awards for Engagement ceremony held in April 2019
- Partners on the Irish Aid-funded Vietnam-Ireland Bilateral Educational Exchange (VIBE) programme jointly with Ho Chi Minh City University of Science

Educational Programmes

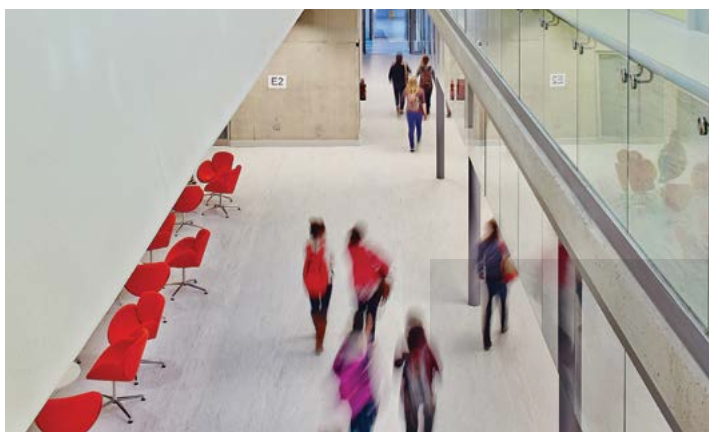
Overall, more than 200 learners participated in all courses and programmes delivered by DCU in the Community in the academic year 2018/2019, including the following:

- 64 students who completed QQI Level 5 and Level 6 Bridge to Education, Psychology and Community Organisation Management programmes
- 47 participants who took up almost 80 workshop places during Summer School in July 2019
- 86 participants across four Children's Lives and Learning public lectures delivered jointly with DCU Institute of Education on DCU St. Patrick's campus in November-December 2018
- 12 Boxing Clever programme students



In the 2018/2019 academic year, DCU in the Community also provided venue, equipment and administrative support for courses delivered by other community providers: Ballymun Job Centre Men's Group, An Cosan Virtual Community College and Dublin North West Area Partnership.

- Our courses are designed to build confidence and study skills to return to education; however, we welcome community learners with varied motivations - personal development, career preparation, enhancing CV, lifelong learners, CE participants, those who wish to progress to third level.
- We offer educational and career guidance, study supports and mentoring to students to encourage them to commit to learning and prepare for further education or future career.
- We start with where people are at – in their life stage, educational, professional and personal journey and offer stepping stones to progression.
- We teach in small classes and groups, in a friendly and welcoming environment. Our centre is a community-based centre and we especially welcome people from the local neighbourhoods.
- We recognise the individual talents of each learner and offer a flexible curriculum based on our learners' needs, motivations and ambitions.
- Jointly with our learners, we map out learning and career paths in simple steps, offering progression routes and timescales to suit their lifestyles and family commitments.
- We assess and review learners' goals against their progress and develop tailored learning supports for each student who wants to avail of these.



Bridge to Education (QQI Level 5)

Our Bridge to Education programme is aimed at mature students and adult learners who wish to prepare to return to further and higher education. The programme is accredited at QQI Level 5.

Areas of study include communications, academic reading and writing, numeracy and computer skills for college, research and study skills, as well as ongoing guidance.

The programme is linked with DCU Campus through tours, guest workshops, speakers and events.

In 2018/2019 the programme was delivered twice for 27 learners out of whom 25 completed the courses.

Bridge to Education course is delivered jointly with Community and Family Training Agency (CAFTA) and Sillogue Neighbourhood Centre.

Psychology (QQI Level 5)

Our Psychology course aims to equip participants with introductory understanding of psychology as a field of academic study.

The focus is on linking the theory of psychology to practical applications, such as therapies and interventions associated with the major psychological perspectives.

The programme has been designed with the assistance of experts from DCU BSc Psychology degree, and is linked with DCU Campus through guest speaker workshops and on campus events.

In 2018/2019 the programme was delivered twice with 21 learners completing the courses and achieving QQI Level 5 certification.

The course is delivered in partnership with Community and Family Training Agency (CAFTA) and Sillogue Neighbourhood Centre.

Community Organisation Management (QQI Level 6)

The Community Organisation Management course (new for 2017/2018) gives participants an insight into the theory and practice of management and leadership in community organisations with a strong focus on developing leadership capacity.

It is designed to support those currently employed or volunteering within the community sector and who are looking to progress to managerial roles.

A number of guest speakers have delivered talks on the programme from organisations such as Dublin North West Area Partnership, Northside Partnership, Rediscovery Centre, Sillogue Neighbourhood Centre, Ballymun Youth Action Project, Ballymun Child and Family resource Centre, Ballymun Law Centre, BRYR, Carmichael Centre, and Axis Ballymun.

In 2018/2019 the programme was delivered twice for 25 learners out of whom 18 completed the courses.

The course is delivered in partnership with Community and Family Training Agency (CAFTA) and Sillogue Neighbourhood Centre.

Children's Lives and Learning

DCU in the Community partnered with DCU Institute of Education on the delivery of 4 public lecture series with the theme of Children's Lives and Learning held on DCU St. Patrick's campus.

The four sessions were delivered in November – December 2019 attracting nearly 90 participants and covering topics of learning and development in early years, children and bullying, reading and literacy and children and technology.

These public sessions were open to parents, early childhood practitioners, teachers, youth and community workers, special needs assistants, and any members of the public with an interest in the complex world of children and childhood.

DCU in the Community would like to thank Prof Deirdre Butler, Dr Geraldine French, Dr Helena Murphy and Dr Eithne Kennedy who delivered the lectures, as well as Dr Ann Looney for her support.

Boxing Clever

Boxing Clever is a 20-week programme aimed to promote recovery and rehabilitation of marginalised and socially excluded groups through a framework of adult education, addiction awareness and education, counselling, guidance and physical activity (boxercise and boxing).

The programme is led by HSE RIS, Ballymun Local Drugs Task Force, Ballymun Youth Action Project and Urrús, and supported by DCC.

DCU in the Community has supported the delivery of the programme since 2012.

In 2019, DCU in the Community supported 12 programme participants through the provision of study skills and assignment preparation sessions and provided the venue for the QQI L4 Health-Related Fitness module.

Other Programmes and Venue Provision

- In the 2018/2019 academic year, DCU in the Community provided venue and equipment for 11 programmes held by our community partners as follows:
- Since 2018, DCU in the Community is partnered with An Cosán Virtual Community College and Dublin North West Area Partnership on the delivery of community development and leadership

programmes. In 2019 DCU in the Community hosted two programmes and provided IT equipment for classes: QQI L6 Community Leadership for 10 weeks in September - December 2018, and Introduction to Community Development for 6 weeks in May – June 2019.

- STEPS Programme delivered by Dublin North West Area Partnership in Ballymun over 4 weeks in June 2019.
- Digital Photography programmes – led and organised by Ballymun Job Centre Men's Group and held at DCU in the Community weekly throughout the academic year
- FIT Beginners Computer "Getting Citizens Online" programmes – led and organised by Ballymun Job Centre Men's Group: 7 5-week courses held at DCU in the Community in the 2018/2019 academic year.





Educational Guidance

DCU in the Community provides a range of pre-entry mentoring and support services for students enrolled on in-house courses as well as external clients through outreach talks, covering topics such as study support, educational guidance, application assistance, finance application assistance, interview preparation and more. In 2018/2019, over 160 hours of educational guidance, mentoring and study support were delivered.

In 2018/2019, DCU in the Community also provided one-to-one, hands-on assistance with completing over 20 further and higher education applications to in-house students and external clients and a similar number of applications for student financial supports, such as SUSI grants and Back to Education Allowance.

Campus events for our community students were also organised in 2018/2019 and have included:

- Mature students information sessions with DCU Mature Students Office
- DCU Campus Tours with DCU Student Recruitment Office
- DCU Library Tours and Workshops with DCU Library
- Academic writing skills workshops with DCU Student Learning
- BSc Psychology talks with academic staff and mature students from the programme
- Research ethics seminars

DCU in the Community would like to thank all staff from the offices and units for their assistance on the delivery of our programmes.

An annual Graduation Ceremony was held on 19th July 2019 in the Mentoring Suite at DCU Library.

Community Based Learning

In 2018, DCU in the Community continued work on the Irish Aid funded Vietnam Ireland Bilateral Education Exchange (VIBE) programme in partnership with Ho Chi Minh City University of Science (HCMUS). The two-year project, started in 2017, entitled Embedding Community-Based Learning (Service Learning) in STEM Education focuses on developing an innovative community based learning methodology for STEM subjects in Vietnam to support social and economic development.

In October 2018 and May 2019, DCU in the Community hosted visits from HCMUS delegates. During the visits, the Vietnamese colleagues had an opportunity to exchange learning with our community, university and national partners including colleagues from DCU President's Office, DCU School of STEM Education, Innovation and Global Studies, DCU School of Computing, DCU Ability programme, Campus Engage, NorDubCo, St. Michael's House and Development Studies Association. Our Vietnamese partners also visited TU Dublin, NUI Galway, University of Limerick and Maynooth University to learn about community-based learning and civic engagement activities at these HEIs. In December 2018, Prof Ronnie Munck and Joanna Ozarowska presented at the 1st International Symposium on Service Learning in STEM Education held at the University of Science, Ho Chi Minh City.



DCU Volunteer - Student Volunteering

2018/2019 academic year was another year of significant increase in student volunteering activity at DCU thanks to a number of initiatives managed by DCU Volunteer.

- **Orientation Talks:** 15 Orientation talks given to all incoming students to the university, including undergraduates, postgraduates and international students. Presentation given to almost 4,000 students by Student Volunteer Coordinator.
- **Volunteer Handbooks:** Annual DCU Volunteer Handbook production continued into the academic year including yearly updates with 4,500 handbooks being disseminated throughout the DCU student and staff population.
- **Volunteer Helpdesk:** Weekly initiative which sees one civil society organisation visiting campus to meet with students, staff and local people via our Volunteer Helpdesk which is to be found in the U of the Student's Union.
- This year between both semesters we hosted 22 organisations in DCU as a whole, offering a range of volunteering opportunities which reached approximately 650 students per week.
- **StudentVolunteer.ie:** At present there are 459 students from DCU registered on StudentVolunteer.ie, with over 47 of these registrations occurring in the academic year 2018/2019. Over 600 Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) signed up to the system.
- **International Volunteering Day:** Celebration held on the 5th of December in the Solas Room of the U. Over 70 attendees of the event, namely 'The Good Stuff Scoop' - a storytelling evening comprising of tales of volunteering from our Volunteer Working Group members.
- **Careers Talks:** 6 career talks delivered regarding the benefits of volunteering in line with career development and securing employment. Specific slot appointed to DCU Volunteer during the campus wide Careers Week.
- **Flagship Fundraiser :** Annual fundraiser run by the Volunteer Working Group took place again this year in the form of 'DCU Game Night' on the 27th of March 2019. The fundraiser was in aid of Inner City Helping Homeless, one of the partners of DCU Students Union this year. The event saw collaboration of 8 different societies and student groups. Over 130 people in attendance and a total of €618.53 was raised for the charity.

- **Social Media:** Social media reach has increased across all platforms; Twitter with an increase of 48%, Instagram with an increase of 87% and Facebook with an increase of 31%.
- **Once-Off Events:** Assisted with the organisation, planning and promotion of various events and projects across campuses e.g. DCU Enactus' screening of 'Rosie', a film written by Roddy Doyle centering around the homelessness crisis, which featured a Q&A with the writer himself. Other examples include information evenings for organisations AIESEC and DCU Volunteer Overseas.
- **CSO Liaison:** Collaborated and partnered with 58 different community organisations during the year including GiveBack.ie, The Hope Foundation, STAND, ChildVision, etc.
- **No Fear, Volunteer:** Once-off workshop and design thinking session held by DCU Volunteer in conjunction with the Raising & Giving Society. Aim of the event was to portray that all students are capable of volunteering in some shape or form, whether through smaller sporadic projects or long-term voluntary action. Afternoon session was attended by 52 people with a team of 10 coordinating volunteers to assist with the workshop.
- Worked alongside numerous projects throughout the year engaging student volunteers, DCU civic societies and community organisations including SpeakEasy, My Streets Ireland and Silver Thread.
- **Volunteer Profiles:** Series of blog posts and social media posts encapsulating the stories of past and present student volunteers of DCU. Over 12 Volunteer Profiles reported on this year, gaining huge traction on social media and within civic society.



DCU President's Awards for Engagement

The 2019 DCU President's Awards for Engagement were presented in April 2019 at the Helix by DCU President Professor Brian MacCraith.

The 2019 Award winners were:

- **Winner Staff Category:**
Dr Elizabeth Matthews, School of Inclusive and Special Education: Empowerment of the deaf community in Ireland; BEd Irish Sign Language and ISL STEM glossary
- **Special Merit Staff Category:**
Prof Barry McMullin, School of Electronic Engineering: An Taisce Climate Change Committee; sustainability engagement and climate change action
- **Winner Student Category:**
Austin Campbell, MSc PR and Strategic Communications: Founder of My Streets - social enterprise providing training and employment as Dublin tour guides to homeless persons
- **Special Merit Student Category:**
Jennifer Harrington, BEng Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering: Women in Engineering Community; Women in Engineering Open Day and outreach talks in local secondary schools

For details of the winning projects and a full list of nominees, please visit [here](#).





An Taoiseach Visits DCU in the Community

In January 2019, Prof. Brian MacCraith, President of Dublin City University welcomed An Taoiseach Leo Varadkar TD and DCU Alumnus Noel Rock TD to DCU in the Community outreach facility in Ballymun.

An Taoiseach met graduates of our 'Bridge to Education' Programme (a preparatory course designed to build capacity and confidence, as well as the necessary skills to return to education), student volunteers and student social enterprises (Raising & Giving Society, HeadstARTS), staff from DCU Recovery College and recent recipients of the President's Award for Engagement, Dr Briege Casey, Dr Mary Rose Sweeney, and Prof Deirdre Butler.

Our Team



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Angela Farrelly, Community Organisation Management QQI L6 tutor

Our Partners

Lynda Ward, Co-Manager, Sillogue Neighbourhood Centre

Valerie Keating, Co-Manager, Sillogue Neighbourhood Centre





DCU Volunteer





DCU in the Community graduation

Purposefully Different,
Consistently Excellent



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