

Research Environment (REF5)

UoA 28A: Modern Languages & Linguistics (Celtic Studies)

Overview

The Irish and Celtic Studies Research Institute (ICSRI), in terms of quality output, research income and research environment is regarded as one of the leading centres for the study of Celtic languages and literatures in Ireland and the UK (see RAE 2008 report). The University of Ulster has ensured the future health and sustainability of the discipline by affording Celtic Studies high priority status within the University's strategic plans and investing accordingly in this subject area. The Irish and Celtic Studies Research Institute has been established as one of 15 Research Institutes within the University; it has a core staff of 14 researchers and it is provided with an annual recurrent budget managed by the RI Director. The Institute carries out research in all the core areas of the discipline, including Early and Modern Irish, Scottish Gaelic, Welsh, Cornish, Breton, Folklore and Ethnology. The Institute has, furthermore, developed an extensive network of international collaborations and its members play an important role in the development of the discipline both nationally and internationally.

Research strategy

Central to the ICSRI strategy is our mission statement which aims *'to develop and maintain a world-leading Irish and Celtic Studies Research Institute at the University of Ulster producing cutting-edge research, with demonstrable impact, in an environment that unlocks creativity and will significantly advance the discipline'*.

- *Research Outputs*
Our Key Strategic Objective is the completion of world-leading outputs, published in internationally recognised outlets, reflecting the REF criteria of originality, rigour and significance.
- *Research Impact*
While impact is embedded across the range of our activities, we have concentrated our collaborative energies on three key areas which we feel have the potential to generate significant economic, social and cultural impact, locally, nationally and internationally:
 - Language Policy and Planning
 - The Irish Language in an Urban Setting
 - Language Learning Tools (the first two being chosen as REF case studies, see attached summaries).
- *Environment*
Strategic objectives in relation to Environment include maintaining our current level of staffing, increasing the numbers of research students and maintaining our record in attracting significant levels of research income. Other strategic objectives that we have achieved include the development of international research networks, the establishment of collaborative projects with industry and commerce, the setting up of research projects with senior colleagues from Ireland, the UK and Europe, the organisation of major conferences and the development of a series of lectures given by key scholars within the field.

People, including i. Staffing strategy ii. Research students

Staffing strategy

Our staffing policy is designed to ensure the production of international quality research and the provision of excellent research training. Our strategy also entails recruiting and sustaining sufficient researchers to ensure critical mass within the discipline and to cover as much as possible of the broad scope of Celtic Studies. To this end, over the past number of years we have recruited staff with expertise in the areas of Scottish Gaelic (MacPherson), Welsh, Breton and Cornish (Wmffre), and European Folklore and Ethnology (Kockel). In addition to this, two RCUK Fellows (MacPherson and Ó Domagáin) have been appointed to permanent positions within the Institute and are included in our REF submission.

Research students

Our policy is to ensure that we have the requisite expertise to provide the highest levels of supervision to our research students. Between August 2008 and July 2012, staff supervised a total of 7 M.Res and 14 PhD students to successful completion, with a further 7 PhD students currently enrolled. Links with Institutions in the Republic of Ireland have, furthermore, led to collaboration in specialist research training and this has resulted in our partnership with TCD, NUIM, UCG, UCC and QUB in a Digital Arts and Humanities Structured PhD Programme (with overall funding of €6.2 million from the Irish Higher Education Authority). In addition, during the cycle the Research Institute worked as a partner to establish a consortium of Universities collaborating in postgraduate provision in Celtic Studies. The consortium has since been awarded £1.8 million by the Art and Humanities Research Council to establish the Centre for Doctoral Training in Celtic Languages.

Income, infrastructure and facilities

Income

The Institute has been successful in attracting substantial amounts of research income. During the period of the REF cycle our total spend was £1,221,220. Of this over £1 million came from Research Councils and £133,097 came from government sources. AHRC funding was secured for the electronic dictionary of the Irish language (eDIL) and RCUK funding was secured for the Concise English-Irish and Irish-English Dictionary. Substantial funding was awarded by the Department of Education and Learning (DEL) for research studentships and the Department of Education (DENI) funded the development of the Northern Ireland Languages Strategy (£200,000 plus). Income to the ICSRI over the past two years includes £165,000 from the AHRC for our Maritime Memorates project, €48,000 from PRTL15 (Higher Education Authority, Republic of Ireland) for the Digital Arts and Humanities Programme and €60,000 from the EU Education, Audio-visual and Culture Executive Agency as a partner in the 'TOOLS' (CLIL) project (January 2012- June 2015). Two small grants of £5,250 and £4,750 have been secured from Colmcille/Foras na Gaeilge for the establishment of a joint project involving ICSRI and UHI/Sabhal Mòr Ostaig 'Guthanna na nOileán'.

Infrastructure and Facilities

Irish and Celtic Studies is a distinct Research Institute within the University of Ulster, with a Director responsible for strategic planning and the overall running of the Institute. Within the Institute, there are a number of research clusters, including Celtic Philology, Irish and Scottish Gaelic Literature, Brythonic Languages and Literatures and Irish and European Folklore and Ethnology, each cluster having a leader who is tasked with coordinating research activities in that area of the discipline. The RI has a dedicated secretary who works to the RI Director and provides secretarial assistance for RI members. The ICSRI brings together staff from three campuses of the University (Magee, Belfast and Coleraine). Each campus has extensive research holdings, with special collections of Irish material, including rare books and pamphlets, being available on the Magee and Coleraine campuses.

Collaboration and contribution to the discipline

Collaborative research is currently organised around a number of key research themes. These include lexicography, language policy and planning, applied language research and religion, cosmology and magic. Collaborative research within the institute is also promoted by a number of international networks which are detailed in the ICSRI annual report 2013-14. Major collaborative research networks include the following:

Societas Celtologica Nordica

The ICSRI collaborates with various Nordic universities on Celto-Nordic research matters. Ó Corráin is a founding member of Societas Celtologica Nordica and is Vice-President of the Society and has published many of the conference proceedings. He has acted as Visiting Professor at Uppsala University and edits *Studia Celtica Upsaliensia*; MacMathúna is Consultant Editor; Smith has acted as Visiting Professor at Oslo.

Societas Celto-Slavica

Work on connections between Celtic and Slavic has developed significantly since the establishment by ICSRI staff of Societas Celto-Slavica (2004) and there is close collaboration with research centres in Russia including Moscow State University and the Russian Academy of Sciences (Institute for Linguistic Research) and in Poland including the University of Łódź, the Catholic University of Lublin and Adam Mickiewicz University of Poznan. The President of the Society (Mac Mathúna) and the Secretary (Fomin) edit, with Mikhailova (Moscow) and Stalmaszczyk (Łódź), the series *Studia Celto-Slavica* and proceedings have been published from conferences held in Coleraine (2005),

Moscow (2006), Dubrovnik (2008), Łódź (2009, 2 vols.), Pibram (2010), and St Petersburg (2012) is currently at press.

Celto-Indica

Staff have been engaged since 2007 in a collaborative research project with colleagues from Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), New Delhi, India preparing for publication an Irish-Indian interdisciplinary anthology of writing from the earliest times to the present. This work is currently with the publishers and is due for publication in the spring of 2014. A further collaborative research project – *Sacred Places in Early India and Early Ireland* – consisted of an international network of three teams from Ulster, the Russian Academy of Sciences and JNU. It was supported by the British Academy and the Russian Academy of Sciences and the results were published as *Sacred landscape and Water Mythology in Early Ireland and Ancient India* (2010) in the *Journal of Indo-European Studies* monograph series. Staff also collaborated with international colleagues in establishing The Indo-Irish Literary and Philological Society in 2007.

Digital Arts and Humanities

A collaborative project with TCD, UCG, UCC, NUI Maynooth and QUB in the provision of a Digital Arts and Humanities Structured PhD Programme which received funding (€48,000 to the ICSRI) from the Higher Education Authority of Ireland (PRTL15) (Ulster PI Ó Corráin). The Third DAH Institute was held at the University of Ulster, Magee on the 11-14 September 2013 with more than 80 international delegates attending from the other partner institutions and with guest speakers from a broad range of Universities.

Maritime Memorates

A collaborative project (established with c. £165K from the AHRC) with Fomin as Principle Investigator and Mac Mathúna as Co Principle Investigator, along with the National Folklore Collection, UCD and the School of Scottish Studies Archives, University of Edinburgh to collect and analyse material held in the archives relating to the relationship between Irish and Scottish coastal communities and the sea. The project group has convened sessions at major international conferences including the 10th SIEF International Congress (Lisbon, April 2011), 14th International Celtic Congress (Maynooth, August 2011), 3rd AASE Congress (Yerevan, Armenia, October 2011, and organised roadshows in Ireland (Inishowen Maritime Museum, May 2011) and Scotland (Ionad Chalm Cille, Islay, May 2013).

Tools Project

Ó Dónaill is Ulster's representative on the 'TOOLS for CLIL teachers' project which began in January 2012 (www.languages.dk/tools). This consortium won the European Award for Innovation and Creativity in Lifelong Learning in 2009. For Ulster, this Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EU) funded project (with a total of €48,100 for ICSRI) follows on from the foundation established by CEMLL and aims to assist the international community of language learners and teachers through the development of an online service which facilitates the creation and sharing of multimedia language learning materials. The most unique aspect of this service is its bespoke online dictionary interface which supports bilingual combinations of 100+ languages including Arabic and Chinese. In addition, the ICSRI has received €76,827 in funding from the European Community *Leonard De Vinci Programme* as a member of the Pools-3 consortium (Producing Open Online Learning Systems) which will run between 2013 and 2015.

Religion, Cosmology, and Magic

This cluster includes the *Power of Words in Traditional European Cultures* project, an international research network led by Borsje who has received substantial funding from the Netherlands Research Council. The team, including Mac Mathúna and Fomin, is investigating medieval European magical texts using the Celtic languages as a principal source. Meetings and conferences have been held in The Netherlands, England, and Ireland. Partner institutions include UU, Cork, Amsterdam, Helsinki, Lampeter, Moscow State, St Petersburg, and Russian Academy of Sciences.

History of Celtic Studies

In cooperation with colleagues from Scandinavia, Germany, France, Spain, the Netherlands, Ireland and the UK, the Irish and Celtic Studies Research Institute has established a project to develop a history of the discipline. Seed-funding of £10,000 was secured from the University of Ulster's Strategic Fund and Ó Corráin, Mac Mathúna, Borsje and Fomin are members of the Editorial Board. We have collaborated successfully with the private sector, in particular with HarperCollins International in the construction and publication of a range of lexicographical

products and learning aids (Ó Corraín and Mac Mathúna). The television documentary *Scéal na Fadgíes* (de Brún) was commissioned by TG4 and N. Ireland Screen's Irish Language Broadcast Fund and the BBC commissioned three documentaries on aspects of Scottish Gaelic (MacPherson). The permanent exhibition was commissioned by Cultúrlann MacAdam-Ó Fiaich and was funded by the N. Ireland Tourist Board. Our collaboration with Government has led in particular to our participation in the Review of Irish Medium Education (de Brún) and the development of the Northern Ireland Languages Strategy (Ó Corraín). We also collaborate extensively with our research colleagues within the University of Ulster. In particular, we have close links with the Arts and Humanities Research Institute and have jointly established a Centre for Irish and Scottish Studies (including Ó Corraín, Smith and MacPherson) which aims to create synergies between researchers in Celtic Studies, English and History. Colleagues in Irish, English and History collaborate on the landmark five-volume AHRC-funded project *Oxford History of the Irish Book*. Sewell is coeditor of Volume 2 while Hughes, Mac Mathúna, Ó Corraín and Smith are contributors.

Conferences

Conferences organised within the ICSRI during the REF cycle include: *Celtic Cosmology* (2008); *The Second Ulster Cycle Conference* (2009); *Bho Chuan go Cuan 1* (2010); *Teangeolaíocht na Gaeilge* (Irish Linguistics Conference) (2011); *The Sixth International Colloquium of Societas Celto-Slavica* (2012); *Bho Chuan go Cuan 2* (2013); The Third Digital Arts and Humanities Institute Conference (2013); *Éigse Cholm Cille* (annually 2002 - 2013); *Éigse Lao Lao* (annually 2010 - 2013). Staff have also been centrally involved in organising the Eleventh International Symposium of Societas Celtologica Nordica (Uppsala 2010), 3rd Colloquium of *Societas Celto-Slavica* (Dubrovnik, September 2008), 4th Colloquium (Łódź, September 2009), 5th Colloquium (Brno, August 2010) and 6th Colloquium (St. Petersburg, June 2012).

The Irish and Celtic Studies Research Institute also hosts a Research Seminar Series at which internationally respected scholars present lectures. Recent visiting lecturers include Professor Robert Dunbar, University of Edinburgh; Dr. Elena Parina, Moscow State University and Philipps-Universität Marburg (November 2012); Professor George Huxley, formerly Professor of Greek at QUB (March 2012); Dr. Alvard Jivanyan, Yerevan State University, Armenia (September 2010); Críostóir Mac Carthaigh, National Folklore Collection, UCD; Professor Helmut Birkhan, University of Vienna; Professor Pádraig Breathnach, Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies; Gearóid Mac Eoin, Professor Emeritus, University College Galway and Professor Piotr Stalmaszczyk, University of Łódź.

Membership of National and International Boards and Prestigious Scholarly Bodies

ICSRI staff are currently members of the Council of the Royal Irish Academy; the Austrian Academy, the Royal Society of Arts; the International Committee of the Congress of Celtic Studies; the Management Board of the School of Celtic Studies, Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies; Humanities Serving Irish Society; *Coiste Náisiúnta na Gaeilge* (Royal Irish Academy) Digital Humanities Observatory (RIA); the Irish Board of *Atlas Linguarum Europae*; the Editorial and Management Boards of *Foclóir na Nua-Ghaeilge* (Royal Irish Academy); Academy of Social Sciences; International Society for Ethnology and Folklore; European Association of Social Anthropologists Forum; UNESCO-University & Heritage; American Anthropological Association; Anthropological Association of Ireland; Association of Social Anthropologists; Deutsche Gesellschaft für Volkskunde; Society for Folk Life Studies; International Society for Folk Narrative Research.

Editorships of Major Journals/Book Series

Staff are on the editorial boards of the following journals: *Studia Celtica Upsaliensia*; *Studia Celto-Slavica*; *Journal of Celtic Linguistics*; *Seanchas Ard Mhacha*; *European Studies in Culture and Policy*; *Anthropological Journal of European Cultures*; *European Studies in Culture and Policy*; *Irish Journal of Anthropology*; *Journal of South Derry Historical Association*; *Ethnologia Europaea*; *Folk Life – Journal of Ethnological Studies*; *Anthropological Journal of European Cultures*; *Studia Anthropologica*; *European Studies in Culture and Policy*; *Progress in European Ethnology*; *Studeyrns Manninagh – Manx Studies* (e-journal); *Studies in European Regional Cultures*; *New Approaches to Celtic Religion and Mythology* and the Consultative Committee for *Peritia*.