

# School of Engineering

Research and Innovation Annual Report  
1 August 2023 - 31 July 2024

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# 1. FOREWORD

**Research Director**  
**Prof. John Anthony (Tony) Byrne**



In presenting the Annual Report for Engineering for the academic year 2023-2024, it is encouraging to report yet another successful year for our research activities.

Engineering Research involves a multi-disciplinary group of over 150 researchers. Our work is broadly conducted in two overarching themes relating to the Healthcare Technologies and Advanced Future Materials and Manufacturing (AFMM). Within these themes, and cross-cutting between themes, we have clusters of research in healthcare sensor systems, biomaterials and tissue engineering, environmental engineering, composites, advanced manufacturing, plasmas, and nanotechnology. We have a growing cluster in communications engineering. We aim to sustain our excellent performance in REF21 in which Engineering research at Ulster has continued to grow both in terms of scale and quality. We more than doubled the number of our staff submitted to REF since 2014 and our percentage of research deemed to be world-leading has more than tripled. Conducting impactful research in line with the Sustainable Development Goals, has always been key to our strategy and we were recognised amongst the top tier of Universities delivering exclusively 3\* and 4\* research impact in engineering. We have strived to create an environment that supports all our researchers in their ambition to realise the highest quality research and are delighted to also have the entirety of our research environment recognised as 3\*/4\*. The school has a strong EDI ethos as evidenced by our Silver Athena Swan Award.

This was another successful year for Engineering Research contributing to research income of £20 million, 16 PhD Researcher graduations, and the publication of 98 peer reviewed journal articles in the reporting period. It is particularly encouraging to secure a second EPSRC New Investigator Award, this time for Dr Calvin Ralph. Engineering's participation in the newly funded Artificial Intelligence Collaboration Centre is an exciting opportunity.

Engineering research at Ulster aligns with two major funding developments for research within Engineering funded under the Belfast Region City Deals. The £43M **Centre for Digital Healthcare Technology (CDHT)** led by Ulster will provide a world-class space for academia, industry, and clinicians to come together to innovate and boost the productivity of the Life and Health Sciences sector, as well as medical device and related sector activity in Northern Ireland. It will bring together internationally leading Computing-SERG (AI to IOT), Engineering-NIBEC (Digital Health Technology to diagnostic devices) and Biotechnology strengths (Molecular Diagnostics) from three Ulster schools leading to multidisciplinary research focused on many of the world's key challenges including rising healthcare costs and healthy ageing. Currently this initiative is operating in virtual mode with space allocated for hosting companies, which currently include Dell, BT, and PWC; a newly set-up Integrated Diagnostics Laboratory and the commissioning of a new Digital Twin, IOT, and Robotics Laboratory. The construction of a 5-storey building, based at the Northland House site, is currently being tendered for and the design of a clinical living-lab is underway at the BHSCT.

The £96M **Advanced Manufacturing Innovation Centre (AMIC)** is aimed at securing Northern Ireland’s manufacturing future and will be a springboard for manufacturing innovation in Northern Ireland. AMIC will operate at the interface between academia and industry, by creating new opportunities for innovative manufacturing in the Belfast City Region. The involvement of both Queen’s University Belfast and Ulster University will ensure that real-world industrial challenges based on market need are solved through cutting-edge research. AMIC builds on 50 years of sustained innovation and industry support through the Northern Ireland Technology Centre (NITC), the Polymers Processing Research Centre (PPRC) and the more recent university-industry partnership, NI Advanced Composites and Engineering (NIACE), and will consolidate and enhance these existing facilities.

Also of note was the recruitment for the first cohort of PhD researchers into the Centre for Doctoral Training in Digital Health Technologies. This is a collaboration between Ulster University & University College London with £11.7m funding from UKRI. Recruiting 75 researchers, the PhD programme will advance digital health technologies such as virtual hospital wards and hospital-at-home programmes that enable earlier diagnosis and personalised treatment strategies, alleviating pressure on the healthcare system.

**“We have strived to create an environment that supports all our researchers in their ambition to realise the highest quality research[.]”**

Professor Pilar Fernandez-Ibanez was admitted to the Royal Irish Academy which is an outstanding achievement. Engineering performed extremely well in the Ulster Research Excellence Awards with Dr Amir Farokh Payam Future receiving the Research Leader Faculty and Champion Award, Professor Alistair McIlhagger receiving the Senior Distinguished Research Faculty Award, Dr Gourav Bhattacharya receiving the Research Recognition Faculty Award, and Dr Edward Archer receiving the Excellence in PhD Research Supervision Faculty Award.

We continue to enhance our research environment. We host the Engineering Seminar Series with lectures from visiting researchers, academic staff, research staff, and PhD researchers. We hosted visiting researchers from countries including India, Brazil, and Israel. The School has also hosted a number of major research events including the 12<sup>th</sup> European Conference on Solar Chemistry and Photocatalysis: Energy and Environmental Applications in June 2024. We also actively engage in outreach and participate annually in the Northern Ireland Science Festival with Engineering Futures showcasing our research to primary school pupils.

Further details of our research, facilities, staff profiles and research expertise can be found at [Engineering Research](#) or by contacting **Charly Mifsud** (Academic Excellence Executive Assistant) at **Email:** [c.mifsud@ulster.ac.uk](mailto:c.mifsud@ulster.ac.uk); **Tel:** +44 28 9536 7635.



**Professor John Anthony (Tony) Byrne**  
Research Director, School of Engineering

## 2. RESEARCH STUDENTS

NAME	PROJECT TITLE
Akram, Muhammad Shakeel	Cardio-AI-ReAccel: Reconfigurable Accelerators for Artificial Intelligence in Cardiology
Anderson, Christopher	Development of Automated Multi-fibre Manipulation (AMM) Technology
Arshad, Waqas	Mapping and Analysis of Solid-Liquid Interfaces using 3D Scanning Force Microscopy
Aston, Will	Industrialised manufacturing processes for 3D printable biomedical sensor devices
Bradley, Zoe	Enabling low-cost multiplexing for rapid point of care diagnosis of sepsis
Clinton, Charlene	Meeting future global engineering challenges: Investigating how engineering skills and values can enable effective engagement with global responsibility and the UN Sustainable Development Goals
Daha, Muhammad Yunis	Edge Intelligence for 5G Networks and Beyond
Doggart, Peter	Artificial Intelligence Enhanced Electrocardiography in Emergency Departments
Fairooz, Towfeeq	A Study of the Role of Deep Learning in Image-Analysis of Biosensing Colorimetric Elements
Gallagher, Courtney	Morphology characterisation of additive manufacturing powder through automated image analysis algorithms
Gilpin, Victoria	Design of wearable electrochemical sensor systems for monitoring the wellbeing of ostomy patients
Hasson, Frances	3D printed Polymer/ Bioceramic Composites for Medical Devices
Islam, Kd M Raziul	Intelligent Electromagnetic Surface-Based Microwave Beamformers
Kashyap, Apoorva	Low energy plasma radiotherapy – could this be a route to gentle and effective treatment of cancer or antibiotic-resistant microbes?
Khalid, Hafiz Usman	Prevention of biofouling of polymer composites for application in the marine environment
Khalid, Hifza	Prevention of biofouling of polymer composites for application in the marine environment

<b>Khalil, Sameh</b>	Novel nanostructures for high efficiency solar energy harvesting
<b>Kirch, Brian</b>	Implementing Mechatronic Control and Analysis of Carbon Fibre Weaving
<b>Lawson, James</b>	Strengthening of 3D-printed parts using Advanced Manufacturing techniques
<b>Lionadi, Indrianita</b>	Visualization, characterization and treatment of cancer cells using nanoparticles
<b>McCartney, Ben</b>	An investigation into paediatric out of hospital cardiac arrest and resuscitation; role and optimisation of PADs
<b>McCausland, Christopher</b>	Automatic detection of sleep arousals using deep learning and a visual representation of time-frequency analysis of EEG signals
<b>McCrickard, Conor</b>	Dimensional stability of 3D printed medical devices
<b>McGreeghan, Aine</b>	Understanding the influences on the self-efficacy of female engineering students in Northern Ireland.
<b>McLarnon, Liam</b>	Development of Fibrous Ophthalmic Biomaterial Scaffolds for Wound Healing & Ophthalmic Tissue Engineering
<b>McMath, Regan</b>	Microneedle Array Patch for the continuous monitoring of diabetes in interstitial biofluid
<b>McMullan, Reshma</b>	Studying the 3D printing on PEKK with respect to different grades and suppliers
<b>Montgomery, Callum</b>	Advancing composite preforming technologies for complex loaded maritime structures
<b>Muldoon, Kirsty</b>	High Precision 3D Printing for Novel Biomedical Applications
<b>Nasr, Sara</b>	Advanced techniques for detection and removal of biofilm in marine vessels using electric sensors
<b>New, Sarah</b>	Novel multilayer porous structures with controllable nanoscale interactions for biomedical applications
<b>O'Boyle, Adam</b>	Development of an autonomous tufting machine for carbon laminate reinforcement
<b>O'Donnell, Eimear</b>	3D printing for manufacturing medical devices
<b>Pestano, Zamir</b>	Air-Dis Development of novel air disinfection systems

<b>Rooney, Karyn</b>	Analysis of Materials, Processes and Design of Continuous Multilayer Composite Pipe
<b>Rose, Cara</b>	Enhanced Obstacle Avoidance System for Parcelcopters in Dynamic Environments
<b>Scott, Cameron</b>	Laser-Induced Graphene: Novel Approaches for Sensing and Drug Delivery Applications
<b>Spence, Cody</b>	Development of advanced preforming technologies for use in complex marine structures
<b>Stinson, Harley</b>	Wire Arc Additive Manufacturing of Thin Walled Stiffening Features
<b>Wucherer, Stefanie</b>	Developing a hybrid model and supervised learning approach for automated handling tasks using tactile feedback

## GRADUATED DEC 2023

<b>NAME</b>	<b>PROJECT TITLE</b>
<b>Abdullah</b>	Artificial intelligence enabled rapid low-cost in-situ fluorescence sensor platform and excitation-emission matrices for faecal contamination detection in water
<b>Alkharabsheh, Salem</b>	UVA-Photoelectrocatalytic reactor for the treatment of wastewater effluents - emerging pollutants degradation and bacteria inactivation
<b>Cameron, Sarah</b>	Chronic wounds in the community: A smart device approach to detecting the early onset of infection
<b>Samy Antony, Anto</b>	Development of simulation models for additive manufacturing of semi-crystalline polymers

## GRADUATED JULY 2024

NAME	PROJECT TITLE
Davidson, Scot	Epileptic Seizure Classification using AI for Multi-Modal Classification and Real-Time Implementation
Dooley, Christopher	Peptide Functionalised Gold Nanoparticles for Cancer Treatment
Duffy, Sean	Development Of Multifunctional Polyether Ether Ketone (PEEK) Composites
Macartney, Robyn	Electrospun Polymer Biomaterials for Periodontal Regeneration in Type 1 Diabetes
McCallan, Niamh	Advancements In Epileptic Seizure Detection and Seizure Type Classification in Multidimensional Biomedical Signals
McFerran, Aoife	Multifunctional Nanocomposite Coatings Deposited Via Layer-By-Layer Assembly for Tissue Engineered Scaffolds
Moore, Michael	Development Of 3D Calcium Phosphate Scaffolds Produced Using Additive Manufacturing Technology with Solvent Free Inks
Nguyen, Chi	Deep Learning Models for Channel Estimation and Modelling in Wireless Networks
Rioja Cabanillas, Adriana	Photocatalytic And Photoelectrocatalytic Oxidation of Nitrogen Compounds in Wastewater
Kambley, Ankur	Novel Quantum Dots and Perovskites for Next-Generation Photovoltaics
Khalid, Hesan	Plasma Driven Exsolution from Perovskite Oxide for Catalytic Application
Zhang, Xushuo	Point-Of-Care Lateral Flow Analysis for Cystatin C Based Kidney Function Diagnostics

### 3. RESEARCH OUTPUTS

This section reports those outputs published and/or delivered over the period of this report and classified as either: journal articles, books/chapters in books, research reports, published conference papers, or live conference contributions. <https://pure.ulster.ac.uk/>.

#### 3.1. JOURNAL ARTICLES

**A Shirsath, M, O'Connor, JD, Boyle, R, Newman, L, Knight, SP, Hernandez, B, Whelan, R, Meaney, JF & Kenny, RA** 2024, 'Slower speed of blood pressure recovery after standing is associated with accelerated brain aging: Evidence from The Irish Longitudinal Study on Ageing (TILDA)', *Cerebral circulation - cognition and behavior*, vol. 6, 100212, pp. 1-7. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cccb.2024.100212>

**Abbasi, AB & Hadi, MU** 2023, 'Optimizing UAV computation offloading via MEC with deep deterministic policy gradient', *Transactions on Emerging Telecommunications Technologies*, vol. 35, no. 1, e4874, pp. 1-19. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ett.4874>

**Abdelrahim, SA, Mandour, OM, Okaz, A, Shehata, N & Kandas, I** 2024, 'Investigating Optical Up-conversion Process of Erbium-doped Ceria Nanoparticles in Photonic Bilayer Bragg structure', *Journal of Luminescence*, vol. 272, 120644, pp. 1-11. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jlumin.2024.120644>

**Afkhami, A, Brown, A, Sabogal-Paz, LP, Dixon, D, Ternan, NG & Dunlop, PSM** 2023, 'A comprehensive approach to simulation of cartridge filtration using CFD', *Journal of Environmental Chemical Engineering*, vol. 11, no. 5, 110756, pp. 1-14. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jece.2023.110756>

**Alessi, B, Kambley, AU, McDonald, C, Xu, Z, Matsui, T & Svrcek, V** 2024, 'Improvement in stability of perovskite solar cells by adlayer of laser treated FAPbI<sub>3</sub> quantum dots', *Nano Energy*, vol. 128, 109846. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.nanoen.2024.109846>

**Alkan, R, De Lazzari, B, Capoccia, M, De Lazzari, C & Bozkurt, S** 2023, 'Computational Evaluation of IABP, Impella 2.5, TandemHeart and Combined IABP and Impella 2.5 Support in Cardiogenic Shock', *Mathematics*, vol. 11, no. 16, pp. 1-17. <https://doi.org/10.3390/math11163606>

**Alkharabsheh, S, McMichael, S, Singhal, A, Rioja-Cabanillas, A, Zamora, P, Monsalvo, V, Rogalla, F, Byrne, JA & Fernández-Ibáñez, P** 2024, 'Bench-scale photoelectrocatalytic reactor utilizing rGO-TiO<sub>2</sub> photoanodes for the degradation of contaminants of emerging concern in water', *Process Safety and Environmental Protection*, vol. 182, pp. 833-844.  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.psep.2023.12.009>

**Allan, D, Tooby, J, Starling, L, Tucker, R, Falvey, É, Salmon, D, Brown, J, Hudson, S, Stokes, K & Jones, B et al.** 2024, 'The Incidence and Propensity of Head Acceleration Events in a Season of Men's and Women's English Elite-Level Club Rugby Union Matches', *Sports Medicine*, vol. 54, no. 10, pp. 2685-2696.  
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s40279-024-02064-7>

**Al-Nahhal, M, Al-Nahhal, I, Dobre, OA & Soman, SKO** 2023, 'Parallel Neural Network Structures for Signal-to-Noise Ratio Estimation in Optical Fiber Communication Systems', *Journal of Lightwave Technology*, vol. 42, no. 6, pp. 1941-1954.  
<https://doi.org/10.1109/jlt.2023.3332484>

**Arshad, MS, Ayub, A, Zafar, S, Rana, SJ, Muhammad, SA, Aleem, A, Onaiwu, E, Nazari, K, Chang, M-W & Ahmad, Z** 2024, 'Fabrication of miconazole nitrate solid lipid nanoparticle loaded microneedle patches for the treatment of *Candida albicans* biofilms', *RSC Pharmaceutics*, vol. 1, no. 3, pp. 458-471.  
<https://doi.org/10.1039/d4pm00042k>

**Asharindavida, F, Nibouche, O, Uhomobhi, J, Liu, J, Vincent, J & Wang, H** 2023, 'Miniature spectrometer data analytics for food fraud', *Journal of Consumer Protection and Food Safety*, vol. 18, no. 4, pp. 415-431.  
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s00003-023-01439-8>

**Baturalp, TB & Bozkurt, S** 2024, 'Design and Analysis of a Polymeric Left Ventricular Simulator via Computational Modelling', *Biomimetics*, vol. 9, no. 5, 269, pp. 1-16.  
<https://doi.org/10.3390/biomimetics9050269>

**Beckers, J, Berndt, J, Block, D, Bonitz, M, Bruggeman, PJ, Couëdel, L, Delzanno, GL, Feng, Y, Gopalakrishnan, R & Greiner, F et al.** 2023, 'Physics and applications of dusty plasmas: The Perspectives 2023', *Physics of Plasmas*, vol. 30, no. 12, 120601, pp. 1-52.  
<https://doi.org/10.1063/5.0168088>

**Benedet, M, Gallo, A, Maccato, C, Rizzi, GA, Barreca, D, Lebedev, OI, Modin, E, McGlynn, R, Mariotti, D & Gasparotto, A** 2023, 'Controllable Anchoring of Graphitic Carbon Nitride on MnO<sub>2</sub> Nanoarchitectures for Oxygen Evolution Electrocatalysis', *ACS Applied Materials and Interfaces*, vol. 15, no. 40, pp. 47368-47380.  
<https://doi.org/10.1021/acsami.3c09363>

**Benedet, M, Gasparotto, A, Rizzi, GA, Maccato, C, Mariotti, D, McGlynn, R & Barreca, D** 2023, 'XPS investigation of MnO<sub>2</sub> deposits functionalized with graphitic carbon nitride', *Surface Science Spectra*, vol. 30, no. 2, 024018, pp. 1-17.  
<https://doi.org/10.1116/6.0002827>

**Bhattacharya, G, Lionadi, I, Stevenson, A, Ward, J & Payam, AF** 2023, 'Tailored Microcantilever Optimization for Multifrequency Force Microscopy', *Advanced Science*, vol. 10, no. 33, 2303476, pp. 1-11.  
<https://doi.org/10.1002/advs.202303476>

**Bhattacharya, G, Lionadi, I, Ward, J & Payam, AF** 2024, 'Optimizing The Laser Spot Positioning on Tailored Microcantilevers Used in Atomic Force Microscopy', *IEEE Transactions on Instrumentation and Measurement*, vol. 73, pp. 1-10.  
<https://doi.org/10.1109/tim.2024.3406824>

**Botero, L, Galeano, L, Montoya-Jaramillo, LJ, Machado, A, Byrne, J, Fernandez-Ibanez, AP & Pérez, MH** 2023, 'Aeromonas hydrophila in surface water and their removal using a POU technology for drinking in rural communities', *Environmental Advances*, vol. 13, 100425, pp. 1-9.  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.envadv.2023.100425>

**Bozkurt, S & Bhalla, N** 2023, 'Sensor-Free Biosensing of Mitral and Aortic Valvular Function During Continuous Flow Left Ventricular Assist Device Support', *IEEE Sensors Journal*, vol. 23, no. 16, pp. 18515-18523.  
<https://doi.org/10.1109/JSEN.2023.3292803>

**Bozkurt, S & Bozkurt, S** 2023, 'Evaluation of Potential Effects of Increased Outdoor Temperatures Due to Global Warming on Cerebral Blood Flow Rate and Respiratory Function in Chronic Obstructive Disease and Anemia', *Global Challenges*, vol. 7, no. 10, 2300120, pp. 1-17.  
<https://doi.org/10.1002/gch2.202300120>

**Bozkurt, S** 2023, 'Computational evaluation of heart failure and continuous flow left ventricular assist device support in anaemia', *International Journal for Numerical Methods in Biomedical Engineering*, vol. 40, no. 1, pp. 1-18.  
<https://doi.org/10.1002/cnm.3781>

**Bozkurt, S** 2024, 'Use of instructional videos to teach mechanical systems analysis based on the finite element method in a class with local and overseas students', *Engineering Reports*, vol. 6, no. 10, e12880, pp. 1-13.  
<https://doi.org/10.1002/eng2.12880>

**Bradley, Z & Bhalla, N** 2024, 'Combating Prozone Effects and Predicting the Dynamic Range of Naked-Eye Nanoplasmonic Biosensors through Capture Bioentity Optimization', *ACS Measurement Science Au*, vol. 4, no. 4, pp. 452-458.  
<https://doi.org/10.1021/acsmesuresciau.4c00010>

**Bradley, Z, Cunningham, D & Bhalla, N** 2023, 'Refractive Index-Modulated LSPR Sensing in 20–120 nm Gold and Silver Nanoparticles: A Simulation Study', *ECS Sensors Plus*, vol. 2, no. 4, pp. 1-6.  
<https://doi.org/10.1149/2754-2726/ad08d8>

**Buerkle, M, Padmanaban, DB, McGlynn, R, Mariotti, D & Svrcek, V** 2024, 'Unexpected Electronic Features of NiO Quantum Dots Produced by Femtosecond Pulsed Laser Ablation in Water', *Journal of Physical Chemistry Letters*, vol. 15, no. 15, pp. 4185-4190.  
<https://doi.org/10.1021/acs.jpcclett.4c00458>

**Cafolla, C, Voitchovsky, K & Farokh Payam, A** 2023, 'Simultaneous quantification of Young's modulus and dispersion forces with nanoscale spatial resolution', *Nanotechnology*, vol. 34, no. 50. <https://doi.org/10.1088/1361-6528/acf8ce>

**Casimero, C, Smith, RB & Davis, J** 2023, 'Integration of Riboflavin-Modified Carbon Fiber Mesh Electrode Systems in a 3D-Printed Catheter Hub', *Micromachines*, vol. 15, no. 1, 79, pp. 1-13. <https://doi.org/10.3390/mi15010079>

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**Charlton, SGV, Jana, S & Chen, J** 2024, 'Yielding behaviour of chemically treated *Pseudomonas fluorescens* biofilms', *Biofilm*, vol. 8, 100209, pp. 1-8. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.bioflm.2024.100209>

**Choudhury, S, Deepak, D, Bhattacharya, G, McLaughlin, J & Roy, SS** 2023, 'MoS<sub>2</sub>-Polyaniline Based Flexible Electrochemical Biosensor: Toward pH Monitoring in Human Sweat', *Macromolecular Materials and Engineering*, vol. 308, no. 8, 2300007, pp. 1-12. <https://doi.org/10.1002/mame.202300007>

**Deepak, D, Vuruputuri, V, Bhattacharya, G, McLaughlin, JA & Roy, SS** 2023, 'Fabrication of Gold Nanoparticles Embedded Laser-Induced Graphene (LIG) Electrode for Hydrogen Evolution Reaction', *C- Journal of Carbon Research*, vol. 9, no. 4, 118, pp. 1-14. <https://doi.org/10.3390/c9040118>

**Dsouza, SD, Buerkle, M, Alessi, B, Brunet, P, Morelli, A, Farokh Payam, A, Maguire, P, Mariotti, D & Svrcek, V** 2023, 'Synthesis of water-stable and highly luminescent graphite quantum dots', *Nanotechnology*, vol. 34, no. 50. <https://doi.org/10.1088/1361-6528/acf7cc>

**Ekerete, I, Garcia-Constantino, M, McCullagh, P, Nugent, CD & McLaughlin, J** 2023, 'Data Mining and Fusion Framework for In-Home Monitoring Applications', *Sensors*, vol. 23, no. 21, 8661, pp. 1-16. <https://doi.org/10.3390/s23218661>

**Gamal, K, Gamal, M, Okaz, A, Shehata, N & Kandas, I** 2024, 'Comprehensive performance analysis of perovskite solar cells based on different crystalline structures of MAPbI<sub>3</sub>', *Optical and Quantum Electronics*, vol. 56, no. 5, 827, pp. 1-22. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11082-024-06655-6>

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<https://doi.org/10.1109/OJIM.2023.3327484>

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<https://doi.org/10.1109/ACCESS.2024.3360298>

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<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.eswa.2023.120023>

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<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.mssp.2023.107708>

**Huang, J-D, Wang, H, Power, U, McLaughlin, JA, Nugent, C, Rahman, E, Barabas, J & Maguire, P** 2024, 'Detecting Respiratory Viruses Using a Portable NIR Spectrometer—A Preliminary Exploration with a Data Driven Approach', *Sensors*, vol. 24, no. 1, 308.  
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<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.rineng.2023.101385>

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<https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0294879>

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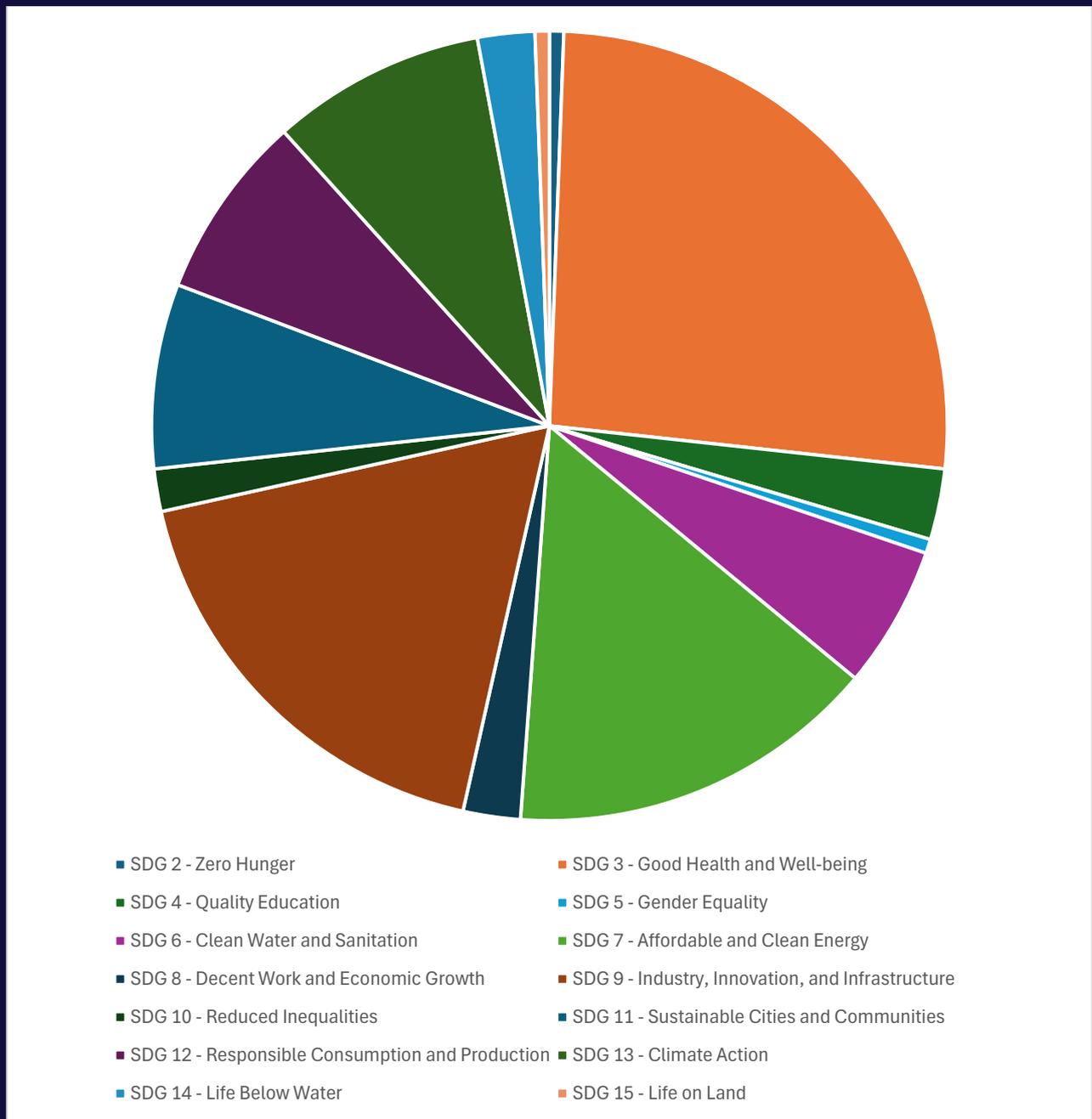
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# SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Universities and knowledge institutions have a critical role to play in the achievement of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Here is a breakdown of the Research Outputs for the School of Engineering, according to their SDGs.



## 4. RESEARCH FUNDING

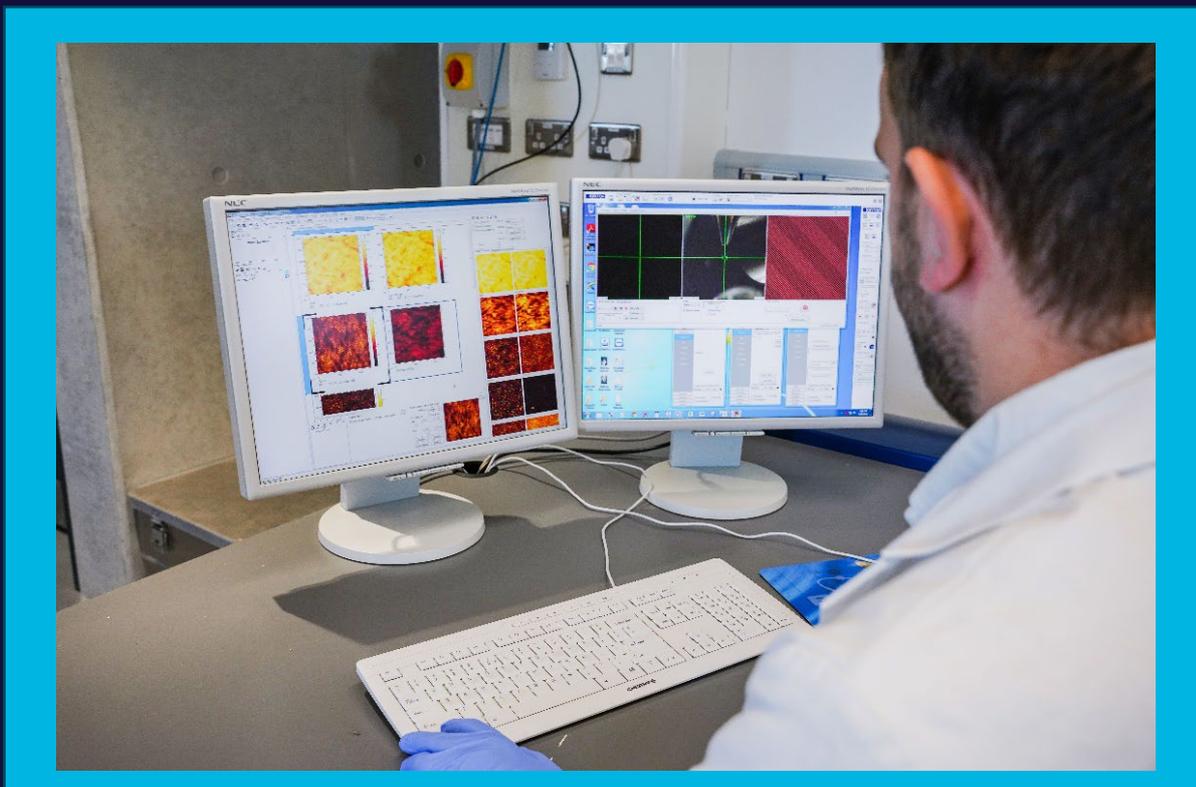
Portfolio of Research Grants awarded during period 1 August 2023 - 31 July 2024

UoA MEMBER(S)	PROJECT TITLE	FUNDER	VALUE	AWARD DATE
<b>Dr Calvin Ralph</b>	Novel 3D+ multi-axial preforms for complex loaded composite applications	Engineering & Physical Sciences Research Council	£403,795.00	23.08.2023
<b>Prof. Michaela Black</b> Prof. John Byrne Prof. Dewar Finlay Prof. James McLaughlin Prof. Brian Meenan	Artificial Intelligence Collaboration Centre (AICC)	Invest Northern Ireland	£13,830,161.00	24.08.2023
<b>Dr Christopher McHugh</b> Dr Adrian Boyd	States of Clay / Positions at Play: Squatting between Plasticity and Porosity	Arts & Humanities Research Council	£43,318.00	08.09.2024
<b>Dr Patrick Dunlop</b>	Gas-phase advanced oxidation for improved indoor air purification	EirChemicals	£14,421.49	11.09.2023
<b>Prof. Justin Magee</b> Professor John Byrne Dr Patrick Dunlop Professor Antonia Fernandez-Ibanez Professor Alistair McIlhagger	AHRC Green Transition Ecosystem: Future Island-Island	Arts & Humanities Research Council	£4,122,377.00	12.09.2023
<b>Dr Jonathan Acheson</b>	Ion release profiles from Calcium Phosphate coated resorbable Magnesium implants	The Royal Society	£46,298.42	30.10.2023
<b>Dr Patrick Dunlop</b>	Development of novel air disinfection systems (CAST)	Illimex	£32,400.00	02.11.2023

<b>Dr Nikhil Bhalla</b> Dr Saikat Jana	Ultrafast detection of foodborne bacteria with acoustics	Quadram Institute	£15,300.00	01.12.2023
<b>Professor Antonia Fernandez-Ibanez</b> Professor John Byrne Mr Stuart McMichael	Photoelectrocatalytic inactivation of the waterborne emerging parasite <i>Cryptosporidium</i> in peroxymonosulfate solutions	NI Department for the Economy	£4,500.00	08.01.2024
<b>Dr Saikat Jana</b>	Transport of nanoparticles and nano swimmers in cystic fibrosis biofilms	NI Department for the Economy	£9,950.00	08.01.2024
<b>Dr Juliana Gerard</b> Dr Muskaan Singh Dr Muhammad Usman Hadi	Adaptive Education: Harnessing AI for Academic Progress	NI Department for the Economy	£40,020.41	10.01.2024
<b>Dr Gabriel Goncalves Machado</b> Dr Adnan Ahmad Cheema Prof. Dewar Finlay Prof. Alistair McIlhagger Dr Ardavan Rahimian	Building Digital Future using Transformative Technologies: a joint initiative of Ulster University and Brazil	NI Department for the Economy	£13,156.00	10.01.2024
<b>Prof. Margaret Morgan</b> Ms Rosalind Henry	PROFESS 12 Mark II	NI Department for the Economy	£19,370.00	15.01.2024
<b>Prof. Pagona Papakonstantinou</b>	Early Career Fellowships in Research and Innovation 2023/24	British Council	£180,000.00	07.02.2024
<b>Dr Patrick McAllister</b> Prof. Dewar Finlay	Artificial Intelligence assisted echocardiography to facilitate accurate image capture and transmission for congenital heart defects diagnosis in Sub-Saharan Africa	National Institute of Health (US)	£93,281.31	26.02.2024

<b>Dr John O'Connor</b>	BANFA: Biomechanically adjusted neurovascular function assessment	The Royal Society	£18,093.08	28.02.2024
<b>Dr George Burke</b> Liam McLarnon	3D Medical Polymers for Cell Culture Technologies	Invest Northern Ireland	£129,114.00	14.03.2024
<b>Dr Morteza Tabatabaeipour</b>	Robotic Fusion: Integrating Machine Vision and Ultrasonic Inspection for Enhanced Composite Material Analysis	Engineering & Physical Sciences Research Council	£49,571.47	14.03.2024
<b>Prof. John Byrne</b> Prof. Antonia Fernandez-Ibanez	SAFEWATER POC	Invest Northern Ireland	£148,937.00	20.03.2024
<b>Prof. Alistair Mcilhagger</b> Dr Edward Archer	Interface strengthening and damage self-sensing mechanisms of basalt fibre reinforced polymer composites	The Royal Society	£12,000.00	29.03.2024
<b>Dr Kok Ng</b>	Empowering Green Futures: Developing Energy Mapping Digital Twin Technology for Sustainable Wind Turbine Energy in Northern Ireland	Engineering & Physical Sciences Research Council	£49,666.00	29.04.2024
<b>Prof. Frank Lyons</b> Dr Adnan Ahmad Cheema Prof. Dewar Finlay Dr Ardavan Rahimian	The Belfast 5G Innovation Region (5G Film Anywhere)	Department for Science, Innovation and Technology	£832,400.00	29.05.2024
<b>Prof. Dewar Finlay</b> Prof. James McLaughlin Prof. Brian Meenan	EPSRC Centre for Doctoral Training in Digital Health Technologies	Engineering & Physical Sciences Research Council	£4,122,678.73	06.06.2024
<b>Prof. John Byrne</b>	MP PoC Stage 1	Invest Northern Ireland	£14,818.00	10.07.2024

<b>Dr Amir Farokh Payam</b>	Quantifying the fluidity, mechanical and viscoelasticity properties of cancer cells using V23D multifrequency force microscopy V2	The Royal Society	£12,000.00	28.07.2024
<b>Dr Patrick McAllister</b> Prof. Dewar Finlay	Transforming Neonatal Cardiac Diagnostics with AI: Networking and Partnership Initiative in Sao Paulo	NI Department for the Economy	£20,651.97	29.07.2024
<b>Dr Nikhil Bhalla</b> Dr Amir Farokh Payam Dr Abhijit Ganguly Dr Saikat Jana Prof. James McLaughlin Prof. Pagona Papakonstantinou	UK-India collaborations on Semiconductor Healthcare Technologies	NI Department for the Economy	£39,913.94	29.07.2024



## 5. NOTE FROM THE ASSOCIATE DEAN

The 2023-24 Annual Research Report for the School of Engineering reflects Ulster University's ongoing commitment to delivering impactful research excellence in areas that actively contribute to the economy of Northern Ireland and to society more generally.

The scope and scale of the research undertaken by the School is reflected in the high quality of the various outputs reported here and the direct positive impact that it is having on society through our various partnerships with industry and other national and international institutions.

The University Strategy: 'People, Place and Partnership' seeks to deliver 'Sustainable Futures for All' with research and innovation central to its success ([People, Place and Partnership - People, Place and Partnership](#)). The associated University Research Strategy (2023-2028) focuses on how our core values of Collaboration, Enhancing Potential, Inclusion, and Integrity underpin a sector-leading environment for the continued development of talent and opportunity across our designated research themes ([Ulster University Research Strategy 2023-2028](#)).

**“[W]e are focused on further increasing our world-leading and internationally excellent research that impacts both locally and globally[.]”**

As we to plan our submissions to relevant subject areas in the 2029 UK Research Excellence Framework exercise (REF2029), we are focused on further increasing our world-leading and internationally excellent research that impacts both locally and globally with Open Research as a central tenet of our ambitions.



**Professor Brian J. Meenan**

Associate Dean for Research and Innovation

### REF 2021



**ULSTER UNIVERSITY**  
(REF 2021)



**ENGINEERING**  
(REF 2021)



**ULSTER UNIVERSITY**  
(REF 2021)

## Research Centres and Groups

Advanced Future Materials and Manufacturing (AFM2)

Nanotechnology and Integrated Bioengineering Centre (NIBEC)

