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We hope this message finds you well and enjoying the summer. We are pleased to share with you the latest news and upcoming events in our Summer update newsletter.

New Cohort

We are thrilled to welcome our newest cohort of fellows who will join us this Summer. These fellows bring a diverse array of expertise and perspectives, and we are excited to see their contributions to the ICAT Programme and their respective fields.



ICAT Application Call



APPLICATION CALL for PhD fellowships

ICAT is open to higher specialist trainees in all medical, surgical, dental and veterinary specialties

info@icatprogramme.org www.icatprogramme.org [@ICATProgramme](https://twitter.com/ICATProgramme)

Eligibility criteria have changed - trainees at a later stage of training can now apply. Please visit the ICAT website for eligibility criteria and further details.

DEADLINE FOR APPLICATIONS - 27 SEPTEMBER

**OPENS
22 AUGUST
2024**



[Read more](#)

Research highlights

Extremely rare immune cells predict how well treatments work for recurrent hives

Posted on: 21 May 2024

The School of Medicine study examines treatment for chronic spontaneous urticaria which has far reaching and profound impacts on people affected by the condition.



A study which examines the common skin condition, *chronic spontaneous urticaria (CSU)*, characterised by recurrent hives, has been recently published by Trinity researchers in the journal *Allergy*. This study is the first of its kind to show a link between rare cell types and treatment response. **Professor Niall Conlon**, Clinical

Research by ICAT Fellow Dr Katie Ridge on the immunology underlying chronic spontaneous urticaria has recently been published in *Allergy*. You can read a press release on the publication [here](#).

Link to publication: Lin-CD117+CD34+FcεRI+ progenitor cells are increased in chronic spontaneous urticaria and predict clinical responsiveness to anti-IgE therapy

A recent research publication by ICAT Alumnus Dr Gerard Walls, emanating from his ICAT PhD research into cardiotoxicity following radiotherapy, has been highlighted by Queen's University Belfast in a [press release](#).

Radiotherapy discovery reduces side effects for patients with lung cancer

5 February 2024

Researchers from Queen's University Belfast have discovered a new method for improving the safety of radiotherapy for patients receiving treatment for lung cancer.



The research has been published in the journal *Radiotherapy & Oncology*, the leading European radiotherapy medical journal.

Link to publication: Pulmonary vein dose and risk of atrial fibrillation in patients with non-small cell lung cancer following definitive radiotherapy: An NI-HEART analysis

Awards



Dr Claire Potter, ICAT Fellow and trainee in General Adult and Old Age Psychiatry, has been awarded a prestigious Academic Clinical Lectureship (ACL) at QUB.

ACL post-holders finish their clinical training while continuing academic development at postdoctoral level with 50% research time.

Claire will start her ACL post in August 2024, and joins three other ICAT Alumni who have been awarded ACL posts following their PhDs, Dr David Mongan, Dr Gerard Walls and Dr Graeme Greenfield.

Dr Brendan Kelly, ICAT Alumnus and Radiology trainee, has been awarded a Dr Richard Steeven's Scholarship. The Scholarship is awarded annually to Specialist / Senior Registrars with strong records of accomplishment and excellence. The Scholarship supports doctors to train in centres of excellence overseas in novel areas of medicine and patient care.





Congratulations to **Dr Dearbhla Doherty**, who passed her PhD *viva* at RCSI in May 2024.

Dearbhla's PhD research focused on the biological mechanisms underlying Low Von Willebrand Factor (VWF) levels, and why there are variations in bleeding phenotypes in this cohort of patients. Dearbhla's PhD supervisors are Prof. James O'Donnell and Dr Michelle Lavin, RCSI.

Congratulations to **Dr Adam Dyer**, ICAT Fellow at TCD and trainee in Geriatric Medicine, who received a Dean's Research Initiatives Award in May 2024. The seed funding provides the foundation or pilot data necessary to secure extramural funding for cutting edge, innovative and transformative research. Adam is pictured with Prof. Brian O'Connell, Dean of Health Sciences at TCD.



Congratulations to **Dr Karen McCarthy** who has been awarded an [Evidence Synthesis Ireland fellowship](#).

Karen will conduct a systematic review and meta-analysis evaluating monoclonal antibodies for the prevention of respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) in infants and children.

O'Connor, ICAT Alumnus, who recently won the William Stokes award for his work on Assessing Sleep IN infants with early-onset atopic Dermatitis by Longitudinal Evaluation (The SPINDLE study). The William Stokes Award is awarded by the Trainees Committee in RCPI and recognises research of the highest standards carried out by trainees.



Congratulations to **Dr Ellen Walsh**, ICAT Fellow at TCD, and **Dr Liam Townsend**, ICAT Alumnus, and their collaborators, who received project funding from the [Building Engagements in Health Research Fund](#). The funding supports partnerships between clinicians and scientists for translational research.

Funded projects:



Dr Ellen Walsh and Professor Derek Doherty - *investigating cellular immune responses to respiratory viral vaccines.*

Dr Liam Townsend and Dr Sharee Basdeo - *exploring trained innate immunity and immunometabolism in individuals taking HIV PrEP.*

Anaesthesiology trainee, and **Dr Tim O'Brien** (right), Medical Oncology trainee, are ICAT Fellows at QUB.

Congratulations to Kiran and Tim for winning prizes at the QUB Postgraduate Research Forum.



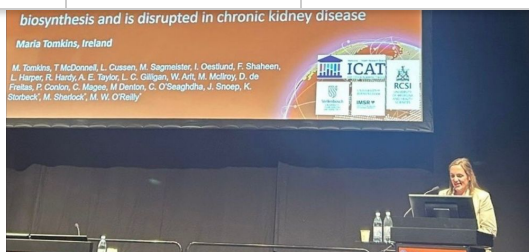
The ICAT Programme team would like to extend **our sincere congratulations to Dr Conor Judge and Dr Peter Barrett** as they embark on their Health Research Board (HRB) Clinician Scientist Postdoctoral Fellowships this year.

Peter and Conor were appointed to the [first cohort](#) of ICAT Fellows in 2017 and completed their PhDs in 2021.

Peter's [research](#) “An investigation of the long-term impact of hypertensive disorders of pregnancy on maternal health, and exploration of optimal models of follow-up care for affected women in Ireland” maintains his collaboration between UCC and Karolinska Institutet and will focus on whether the risk of developing age-related diseases such as stroke and dementia is higher in women who had high blood pressure during pregnancy.

Conor's [project](#) will focus on developing an AI clinical decision support system to personalise the management of hypertension with an “Artificial Intelligence approach to improving blood pressure treatment.” The project includes the development of the AI program as well as investigating the attitudes of doctors and patients towards using AI as a clinical tool, to improve the management of hypertension.

Events



Dr Maria Tomkins presented her research at the European Congress of Endocrinology 2024 in Stockholm.

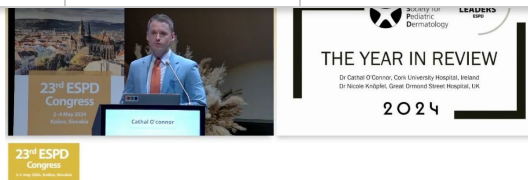
Dr Kiran Reddy delivered a talk at the Academy of Medical Sciences Clinical Academics in Training Annual Conference (CATAC) 2024 at Queen's University Belfast.



Dr Karen McCarthy presented her PhD research on the relationship between *S. aureus*, nasal colonisation and tissue resident memory T cell response at the 42nd Annual Meeting of the European Society for Paediatric Infectious Diseases.

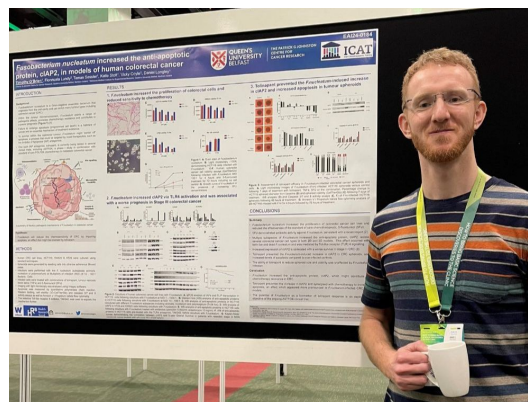
Dr Rachel MacCann presented her research on the interactions between the gut microbiome, diet, inflammation and cardiovascular profiles in people with HRV at the Infectious Diseases Society of Ireland 2024 Annual Meeting.





and trainee in Dermatology, delivered the closing talk at the 23rd European Society for Paediatric Dermatology Congress.

Dr Tim O'Brien, ICAT Fellow and Medical Oncology trainee, presented at the 2024 Northern Ireland and Royal College of Psychiatrists Old Age Faculty Joint Meeting, joint IACR and EACR conference in Dublin.



Dr Claire Potter presented her PhD research on the impact of the NI Troubles, stress and ageing outcomes at the 2024 Northern Ireland and Royal College of Psychiatrists Old Age Faculty Joint Meeting.

Dr Brendan Kelly delivered the keynote presentation at the All-Ireland Multiple Sclerosis (AIMS) Research Network Symposium 2024.



ICAT Summer School 2024



Pictured above: ICAT Summer School 2024 in Galway.

We were delighted to meet our new ICAT Fellows at our Induction Event in July, immediately followed by the ICAT Summer School 2024.

The Induction Event gives new ICAT fellows an introduction to ICAT, guidance on developing a research question and gives them the opportunity to discuss their research ideas and receive feedback.

The Summer School is a packed two-day event featuring workshops, guest lectures, and team-building activities. Themes included public and patient involvement, public engagement, innovation, statistics, research methods, programming and machine learning. Many thanks to our wonderful speakers for a fantastic event!

One Health Study Day



We had a fantastic Study Day on One Health in April. Prof. Dearbháile Morris introduced us to the Ryan Institute for One Health at the University of Galway and the concept and value of One Health research.

Speakers Prof. Máire Connolly, Prof. John Dalton, Dr Liam Burke, Dr Sinéad Duane and Dr Georgios Miliotis discussed emerging infectious diseases and pandemics, parasites and their impact on human and animal health, environmental pollution, using behavioural and systems approaches for One Health, and new frontiers - medicine and health in space travel.

ICAT Retreat

Retreat 2024: **28-29th November in Dublin.** It is always a great opportunity for fellows to present their research findings, network with peers, and receive support and mentorship. Registration will open online in the autumn.



A round-up of activities at the ICAT Retreat 2023 can be found on our website.



[Read More: ICAT Retreat 2023](#)

[Call for Feedback](#)

appreciate your insights. Please keep an eye out for an upcoming survey designed to gather your feedback on how we can better support both you and our fellows.

Thank you once again for your commitment to the ICAT programme. We look forward to your continued involvement and to the exciting developments ahead.



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