



Nurturing *Sustainable* Graduate Futures

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UoN

**University of
Northampton**



**Hello
Waterside**

*Graduates as
Changemakers*

*Solving Social
Problems*

*Community Anchor
Institutions*

*21st Century
University*

*Community informs
teaching*



21st Century Higher Education

- **21st Century Higher Education Institutions** need to be more than just research & teaching focused institutions:
 - Support the **local economy**
 - **Influence policy** locally, nationally & globally
 - Contribute towards the 2030 **SDGs**
 - **Co-create** with communities, businesses & practitioners
- Our students are **our key resource**, & we should be looking to ensure that our teaching embeds our research & impact at its core.
- Critical that our courses reflect this & prepare our students for their future work to generate **sustainable growth**.



Graduate Attributes

- Employability is a **cornerstone** for graduate futures:
 - Bolster student's **entrepreneurship, self-efficacy & leadership, creativity & empathy**
 - Complex **problem-solving & analytical skills**
 - Social/environmental awareness (**hybrid thinking**)
- Future determined by **sustainable development challenges (SDGs)**:
 - Graduates need to be aware of these & skilled to **solve them**
 - Making students **Changemakers** for tomorrow
 - Role of **extracurricular activities** like volunteering
- Creating the **global citizens** of tomorrow, who think idealistically, but engage in global realities.



Place-based Curriculum

- Curricula needs to be **interdisciplinary & hybrid** focused (economic, social & environmental learning)
- Having curricula that can deliver **place-based** learning & the networks to enable this is critical (Alden-Rivers et al., 2015):
 - Students are enabled to achieve learning outcomes through **experiential work** in the community (ibid).
- **Embedding SDGs** within our teaching to promote sustainable development learning



Innovative teaching & assessment

- Key need to move students away from purely classroom learning:
 - **Bringing place** to the classroom/campus (e.g., guests)
 - Providing students with **experiential learning** opportunities
 - Solving **real-world problems** as part of analytical journey
 - Engage with global constructs (i.e., SDGs) applied locally (**Glocal**)
- Assessments should also reflect this innovation:
 - No **singular focus** on essays/exams
 - Students can produce **video/animation** presentations/outputs
 - Develop **digital solutions** to problems as part of coursework
 - Engage in **real-world problem-solving** as a means of assessment



Exemplar Courses...



- **MA Social Innovation**
 - Masters course that seeks to provide practical, accredited learning to social innovators
 - Coursework alongside business development

- **MSc Social Innovation**
 - Strong focus on sustainability & SDGs
 - Hybrid approach of theory/practice



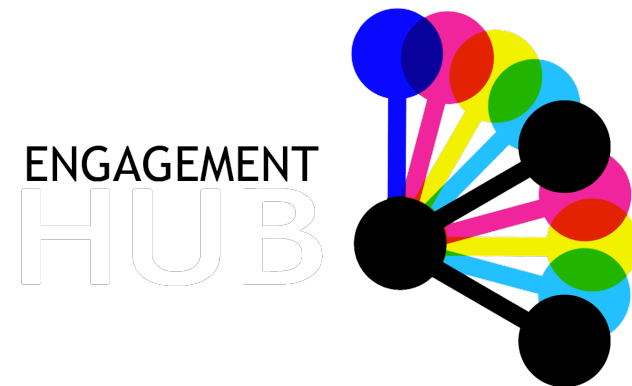
Trinity College Dublin
Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath
The University of Dublin

- **Exec MBA (Social Enterprise Programme)**
 - Collaborative work of students/SEs
 - Problem-solving approach

Faculty & Partners

- Faculty need to **be supported** to deliver this innovation:
 - **Upskilling** programmes to ensure they can teach beyond the classroom
 - **Time & resource** to promote networking with industries/communities
 - Faculty need to be:
 - **Entrepreneurial, flexible, hybrid & place-based**
- **Industry partners** are key:
 - Engaging with local/regional/national **business consortia**
 - Bringing **enterprise support** to classroom (i.e., incubators)
 - Supporting student/staff/industry **start-ups**

TRAINING



Summary

- Must think about our teaching **holistically**:
 - *Employability, impact & place-based*
- **Community-embedded** approaches offer:
 - Student learning through doing
 - Graduates ready to face sustainable global challenges
- Partnerships with industry can support our **21st century ambitions.**
- Developing socially aware, **empathetic**, Changemakers!





Thank you
for listening

Any questions?

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