



MIC Annual Report

Academic Year 2021-2022

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Foreword by Professor Eugene Wall, College President

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Foreword by Professor Eugene Wall, College President

As we reflect on the academic year 2021-2022, it is with immense pride that I present this annual report, highlighting the key achievements and milestones that have defined our journey at Mary Immaculate College. This year, we have demonstrated remarkable resilience and adaptability in the face of ongoing global challenges, particularly as we continued to navigate the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Our commitment to delivering high-quality education, fostering an inclusive and diverse community, and advancing our research and academic programs has remained unwavering. These efforts have positioned MIC as a leader in Higher Education, not only in Ireland but also on the international stage.

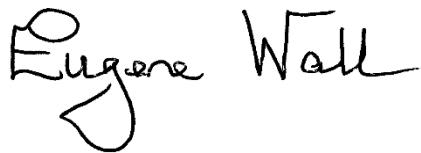
One of the most significant successes of this year has been the expansion of our academic offerings, including the launch of new programmes such as the Graduate Diploma in Academic Practice and M Ed in Religious Education. These programmes reflect our dedication to meeting the evolving needs of our students and the broader educational landscape. Additionally, the achievements of our faculty and students in research and scholarly contributions have been nothing short of exemplary, with notable publications and awards that underscore the academic excellence that is the hallmark of MIC.

Our commitment to equality, diversity, and inclusion has been further strengthened this year with the awarding of the Athena Swan Bronze Award to our Faculty of Arts. This recognition is a testament to the hard work and dedication of our staff in promoting gender equality and fostering an inclusive environment for all. Moreover, our ongoing community engagement initiatives, such as the Embracing Diversity, Nurturing Inclusion Project (EDNIP)

and our involvement in cultural events like the Limerick Bastille Day Wild Geese Festival, have reinforced our role as a vital and active participant in the local and wider community.

Looking ahead, we remain focused on our strategic priorities, including the continued development of our campus infrastructure through projects like the Library Project and preparing Masterplan 2042—an ambitious 20 year roadmap for campus development.

These initiatives are crucial as we strive to provide our students and staff with the resources and environment they need to excel. As we embark on the next chapter of our journey, I am confident that MIC will continue to thrive, driven by our shared commitment to excellence, innovation, and community.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Eugene Wall". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized 'E' and 'W'.

Professor Eugene Wall, President

1. Introduction

The Academic Year 2021-2022 was a transformative period for Mary Immaculate College (MIC). Amid global challenges, MIC not only adapted but thrived, reinforcing its commitment to providing high-quality education, fostering an inclusive community, and advancing innovative academic and research initiatives. This report reflects on the key developments, achievements, and strategic directions that defined the year, positioning the college for continued success in the future.

2. Governance

Trustees

The Trustees have provided overall guidance and oversight as regards the mission and ethos of the College throughout the year, ensuring that MIC remains aligned with its founding vision and traditions. Their leadership has been instrumental in navigating challenges and seizing opportunities in an ever-evolving Higher Education landscape.

The Trustees for this period were as follows:

- Most Rev. Brendan Leahy
- Dr Áine Lawlor
- Mr Richard Leonard
- Dr Marie Griffin
- Sr Frances Minahan RSM
- Sr Angela Hartigan RSM
- Most Rev. Kieran O'Reilly
- Most Rev. Raymond Browne
- Mr Seán Burke

The Trustees met on the following dates:

- 6 September 2021
- 2 November 2021
- 14 December 2021
- 28 January 2022

- 1 March 2022
- 3 May 2022
- 14 May 2022
- 30 June 2022

An tUdarás Rialaithe (MIC Governing Authority)

The role of the Governing Authority is to provide overall academic and institutional governance oversight (both through its own proceedings and through the proceedings of its key deliberative bodies including *an Chomhairle Acadúil* (the Academic Council), the Finance & Resource Committee, the Audit & Risk Committee, the Equality Committee, and the Quality Committee. On matters of day-to-day operations, the President and the Executive Team report to the Governing Authority.

Apart from ensuring that the highest level of corporate governance obtains at MIC, the Governing Authority is responsible for setting institutional strategy and for overseeing implementation of the College's strategic plan. Tied to this, the risk management environment is also, ultimately, the responsibility of *an tUdarás Rialaithe*.

Governing Authority – Term of 2018-2024

| N | Nomination | Nominating Requirement | Name of Incumbent 2018- 2024 Term |
|----------|-------------------|---|--|
| 1 | <i>Ex Officio</i> | Bishop of RC Diocese of Limerick | Bishop Brendan Leahy |
| 2 | Trustees | Trustee Member | Dr Áine Lawlor |
| 3 | Trustees | Trustee Member | Dr Marie Griffin |
| 4 | Trustees | Sisters of Mercy / External Trustees Nominee | Mary Considine |
| 5 | Trustees | Sisters of Mercy / External Trustees Nominee | Gerry Reeves |
| 6 | Trustees | Sisters of Mercy / External Trustees Nominee | Helen O'Donnell |
| 7 | Trustees | Sisters of Mercy / External Trustees Nominee | Maedhbh Uí Chiagháin |
| 8 | Trustees | Sisters of Mercy / External Trustees Nominee | Fachtna O'Driscoll |
| 9 | Trustees | Sisters of Mercy / External Trustees Nominee | Catherine Kelly |
| 10 | Trustees | Sisters of Mercy / External Trustees Nominee | Éamon Stack |

| | | | |
|----|--------------------|---|-------------------------|
| 11 | Trustees | Sisters of Mercy / External Trustees Nominee | Declan Madden |
| 12 | Trustees | Sisters of Mercy / External Trustees Nominee | Sr Coirle McCarthy |
| 13 | Trustees | Sisters of Mercy / External Trustees Nominee | Conn Murray |
| 14 | Trustees | Independent Director | Judge Tom O'Donnell |
| 15 | Trustees | Alumnus | Seán McMahon |
| 16 | Academic Staff | Academic Staff Member* | Vacant (no nominations) |
| 17 | Academic Staff | Academic Staff Member* | Vacant (no nominations) |
| 18 | Academic Staff | Academic Staff Member* | Vacant (no nominations) |
| 19 | Academic Staff | Academic Staff Member* | Vacant (no nominations) |
| 20 | Academic Staff | Academic Staff Member* | Vacant (no nominations) |
| 21 | Academic Staff | Academic Staff Member* | Vacant (no nominations) |
| 22 | Professional Staff | Professional Services Staff Member | Emma Barry |
| 23 | Professional Staff | Professional Services Staff Member | Áine Finucane |
| 24 | <i>Ex Officio</i> | College President | Prof. Eugene Wall |
| 25 | <i>Ex Officio</i> | UL President | Prof. Kerstin Mey |
| 26 | <i>Ex Officio</i> | VP Academic Affairs | Prof. Niamh Hourigan |
| 27 | <i>Ex Officio</i> | VP Administration & Finance | Michael Keane |

| | | | |
|----|-------------------|---------------------|----------------------------|
| 28 | <i>Ex Officio</i> | MISU President | Róisín Burke (AY 2021-22) |
| 29 | <i>Ex Officio</i> | MISU Vice President | Aoife Gleeson (AY 2021-22) |

The Governing Authority met on the following dates:

- 29 September 2021
- 24 November 2021
- 16 February 2022
- 30 March 2022
- 16 June 2022

Executive Team

The Executive Team, comprising senior management members, met regularly during AY 2021-2022 to address strategic and operational matters, ensuring the College's smooth functioning and alignment with its strategic goals. This team is responsible for implementing the decisions of the Governing Body and in driving forward key initiatives such as master-planning and new academic offerings.

3. External Landscape – Notable Events

The external landscape in 2021-2022 continued to be dominated by the COVID-19 pandemic. MIC remained engaged with national bodies, including the Department of Further & Higher Education, Research, Innovation, and Science (DFHERIS), to navigate these challenges. MIC's participation in the COVID-19 Steering Group, which included representatives from the HEA, Irish University Association, and other Higher Education institutions, was crucial in shaping the sector's response to the pandemic

Indeed, the year saw a number of transformative events within the external environment that had both direct and indirect effects on the College. Notable events included:

- **Engagement with DFHERIS:**

This relationship was essential in navigating the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly in adapting to changing government guidelines and ensuring the continuity of education. Minister Simon Harris visited the MIC Thurles campus just before the start of the 2021/22 term in August and met with senior management to discuss campus development in that location. On 25 January 2022, Minister Harris briefed the COVID-19 Steering Group, guiding the College's operations, especially the gradual increase of on-campus activities. He also visited the MIC Limerick campus in May 2022 to discuss the Library Project—meeting with senior management, Library staff and MISU sabbatical officers.

- **Visit of Minister Niall Collins to MIC Thurles:**

On 3 February 2022, Minister Niall Collins visited MIC Thurles to discuss the future of Home Economics education at the campus. The visit also explored potential

collaborations with Tipperary ETB, focusing on co-location opportunities and the expansion of academic offerings at Thurles. This visit highlighted the Government's support for MIC's role in regional education and the development of specialised programmes.

- **Response to the Ukraine Crisis:**

MIC pledged solidarity with the Ukrainian people following the outbreak of the Ukraine crisis in February 2022. The College took immediate action by raising the Ukrainian flag on its campuses and issuing a statement condemning the violence. MIC also engaged with the local Ukrainian community and explored ways to support Ukrainian students and families affected by the crisis.

- **Ashling Murphy Memorial:**

The tragic death of Ashling Murphy, an MIC graduate, deeply impacted the college community. On 24 January 2022, MIC, in partnership with Mary Immaculate Students' Union (MISU), organised a candlelit vigil that drew over 1,000 attendees, including Ashling's family, Minister for DFEHERIS Simon Harris, and local dignitaries. The event was a tribute to Ashling's memory and underscored MIC's commitment to raising awareness about gender-based violence. Additionally, the College announced the establishment of an annual Entrance Scholarship in Ashling's memory, in collaboration with the Irish National Teachers' Organisation (INTO).

- **International Federation of Catholic Universities (IFCU) General Assembly 2022:**

MIC participated in the 27th General Assembly of the IFCU, held at Boston College from 30 July to 3 August 2022. This assembly, themed 'Legacy and Transformation in a World of Change: Catholic Higher Education and the Future' brought together over 226 Catholic universities from around the world. MIC's involvement in this event

emphasised the College's commitment to international collaboration and its role in shaping the future of Catholic higher education.

4. Campus Development

- **Library Project:**

The Library Project remained a cornerstone of MIC's infrastructure development during the 2021-2022 academic year. Significant progress was made in the design phase, with the project set to provide state-of-the-art resources and spaces for study, research, and collaboration. Efforts to secure additional funding intensified, reflecting the College's commitment to creating a cutting-edge learning environment that meets the evolving needs of students and faculty. Minister Simon Harris visited the campus in May 2022 and toured the existing library, reaffirming his desire to progress the proposed plans.

During the academic year, several key initiatives were undertaken, including the development of new academic and residential buildings, enhancements to existing infrastructure, and the expansion of green spaces. These developments are aligned with MIC's vision of creating a sustainable, innovative, and student-centred campus that supports academic excellence and community engagement.

5. Programme Provision and Student Growth

Enrolment & New Entrants:

MIC's undergraduate programs saw strong performance in the 2022 CAO First Round Offers, particularly the B Ed in Education and Psychology program, which attracted top-tier applicants with a minimum entry requirement of 601 CAO points. This programme, unique in Ireland, continued to set the standard for teacher education. The Bachelor of Education - International also maintained its popularity, underscoring MIC's reputation for offering distinctive and high-quality educational programmes.

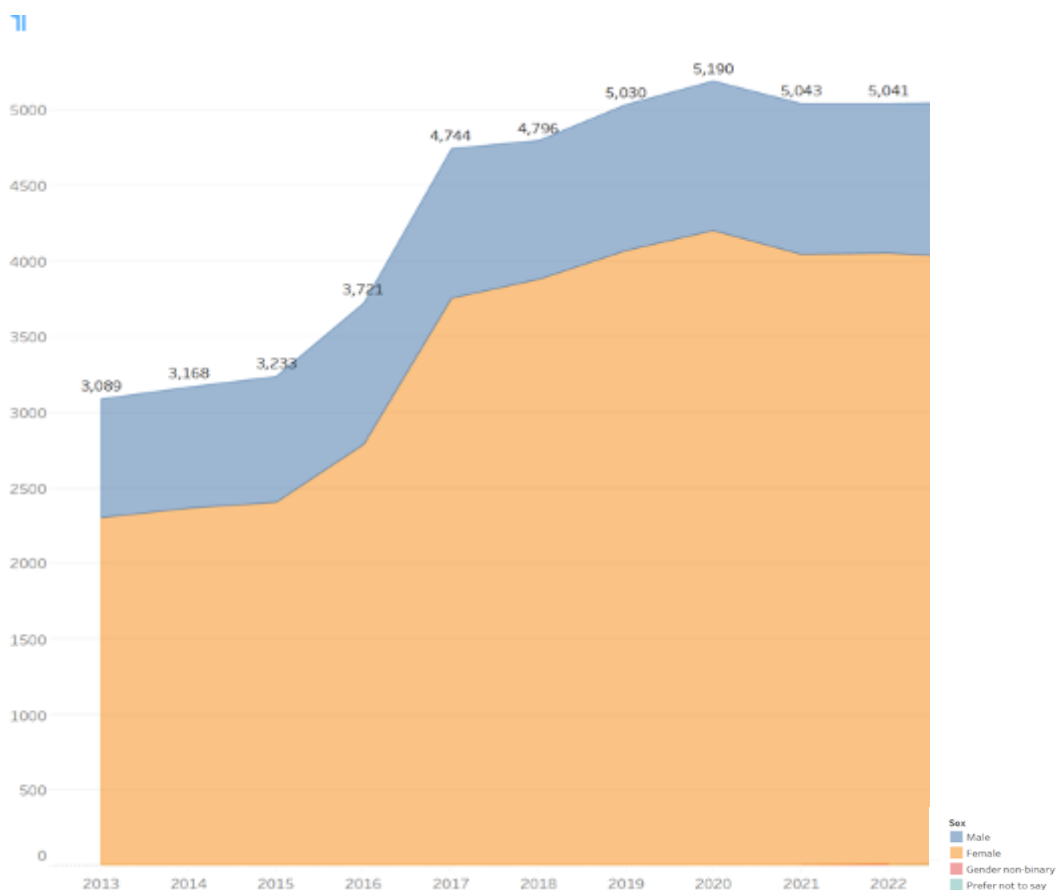
Admissions and Programme Diversity:

New programmes introduced during the year included the Graduate Certificate in Academic Practice and the M Ed in Religious Education.

The Graduate Certificate in Academic Practice was designed to meet the growing demand for professional development in higher education. This fully-online programme is designed to support higher education professionals in enhancing their teaching practices. The programme's flexible structure allows participants to tailor their learning to their specific professional contexts, making it a valuable resource for educators looking to adapt to the demands of digital and hybrid teaching environments. The programme also emphasises reflective practice, encouraging participants to critically evaluate their teaching and make evidence-based improvements.

The two-year, part-time M Ed in Religious Education recognised the gap in postgraduate religious education provision in Ireland. It was developed in response to the lack of available postgraduate programmes that seek to enhance and develop religious education as an academic discipline in Ireland. Recent global discourse on this matter in Ireland and elsewhere highlighted the urgent need to develop the religious literacy of educators at both primary and post-primary level, contribute to the professional and learning development of those involved in religious education in its various contexts and approaches, and encourage those who can contribute to research in the field.

Enrolment Trend 2013-2022



Source: MIC Online Analytics System (e-OLAS) and Student Record System

Enrolment trends at Mary Immaculate College (MIC) from 2013 to 2022 reflect a pattern of growth followed by stabilisation, extending into 2022. Initially, from 2013 to 2016, there was a gradual increase in student numbers, moving from 3,089 to 3,721. This steady rise suggests that the College was attracting more students more consistently during this period.

The significant jump in enrolment occurs between 2016 and 2017, where the number of students increased sharply from 3,721 to 4,744. This marks a period of rapid growth, continuing to peak in 2019 at 5,190 students. This surge might be attributed to successful recruitment strategies, expansion of academic programmes, or other factors that made MIC increasingly attractive to prospective students during these years.

From 2019 onwards, enrolment numbers begin to stabilise, hovering around 5,041 students through to 2022. This levelling off indicates that MIC has now reached a stable enrolment level after its period of rapid growth. The dip in 2020 is a result of external factors, possibly including the COVID-19 pandemic, but the numbers stabilised again – although not at the peak level of 2019.

Ongoing Programme Development:

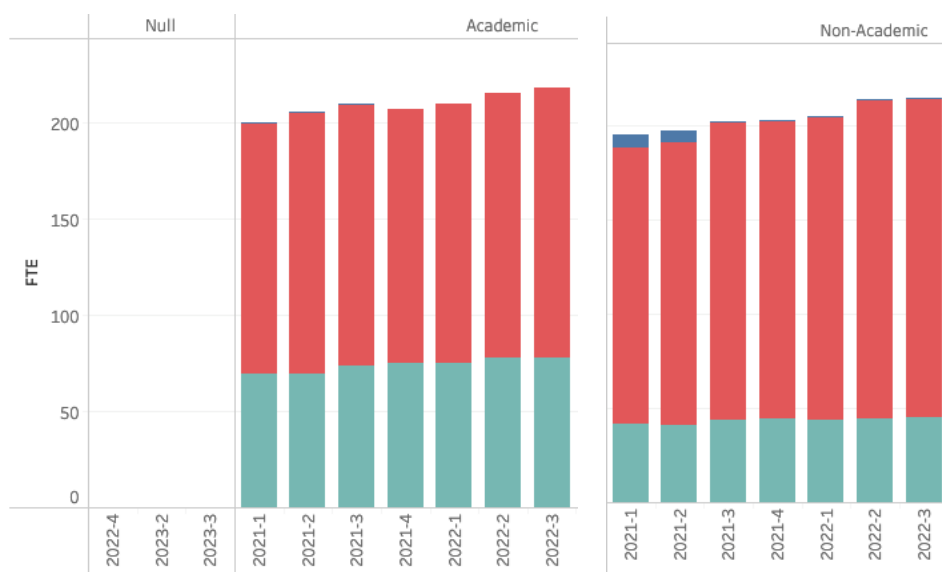
Continuous improvement of academic programmes remained a priority for MIC. The College undertook several initiatives to enhance existing programmes, including the reaccreditation of the Professional Doctorate in Educational and Child Psychology by the Psychological Society of Ireland. These efforts reflect MIC's commitment to maintaining the relevance and quality of its academic offerings in a rapidly changing educational landscape.

MIC's M Ed in Leadership of Wellbeing in Education (MEdLWE) was endorsed by the Centre for School Leadership (CSL) in recognition of the programme's innovation and relevance to the current Irish Education policy and practice.

Staffing & Support:

To support the expansion of programmes and maintain high educational standards, MIC invested in its faculty and staff. The College provided ongoing professional development opportunities, ensuring that staff remained at the forefront of their fields and could deliver cutting-edge education to students.

Staff FTEs Q1 2021-Q3 2022



Source: HEA Quarterly Staff Returns / MIC Online Analytics System (e-OLAS)

In general, academic staff levels show a steady presence leading up to 2022-Q3. Beginning in 2021 with approximately 220 FTEs, the academic category reflects a slight but consistent upward trend. Female staff consistently make up about 65-70% of the total, indicating a

stable gender distribution. By 2022-Q3, the academic staff numbers have increased by approximately 5%, maintaining the slight numerical advantage over non-academic staff.

Non-academic staff levels are closely aligned with academic staff, demonstrating a nearly even distribution. Starting in 2021 with around 190 to 200 FTEs, non-academic staff levels show a modest increase over time. Female staff representation is significantly greater than in the academic category. By 2022-Q3, non-academic staff numbers had also increased, albeit at a slightly slower rate, reflecting a growth of approximately 3% to 4%.

Year-on-Year Changes:

Examining the period up to 2022-3, the year-on-year changes highlight a relatively balanced ratio between non-academic and academic staff, though academic staff numbers consistently hold a slight edge. From 2021 to 2022-3, academic staff levels increase by about 4% to 5%, whereas non-academic staff levels rise by around 2% to 3%. Despite the close ratio, academic staff consistently maintain a slight numerical lead. Analysis reveals that while the ratio of non-academic to academic staff is quite balanced, it consistently favours academic staff. Both categories show steady growth, with female staff maintaining a majority presence. The data up to 2022-3 indicates a stable workforce with a slight but consistent numerical advantage for academic staff over non-academic staff.

Equality, Diversity, Inclusion & Interculturalism (EDII):

The appointment of Professor Lorraine McIlrath as Director of EDII in December 2021 marked a significant step forward in MIC's efforts to promote equality, diversity, and inclusion across the College. In this role, Professor McIlrath is responsible for leading the

College's EDII strategies, including overseeing Athena Swan activities and coordinating initiatives to address gender-based violence and sexual harassment. The establishment of this role reflects MIC's commitment to fostering a diverse and inclusive community where all students and staff feel valued and supported.

Graduate Outcomes:

MIC graduates continued to demonstrate high levels of employability and success in further studies. The College's focus on practical, real-world applications in its programmes ensured that graduates were well-prepared to meet the demands of the workforce and pursue advanced degrees. The success of MIC graduates is a testament to the quality of the College's educational offerings and its commitment to student success.

6. Projects and Activities

MIC undertook several key projects and activities during the 2020-2021 academic year, many of which were designed to enhance the College's teaching, research, and community engagement efforts.

City Connects and the North East Inner City of Dublin

MIC continued to lead the City Connects project in Dublin's North East Inner City (NEIC), a comprehensive initiative aimed at addressing educational inequalities in DEIS primary schools. Now in its third year, the project has proven successful in providing targeted support to students, helping to close the achievement gap. MIC's advocacy for expanding the project to schools in Limerick and other urban centres underscores the College's commitment to social justice and educational equity. City Connects was awarded €400,000 in funding from the Department of Education in November 2021.

ReCap 4.0

Academics from Thailand spent a week studying at MIC in July as part of an ongoing project aimed at enhancing the level of teaching and learning at universities in the Asian country. Last year, MIC joined with two European and five Thai university partners to form the ReCap 4.0 programme, led by the Asian Institute of Technology in Bangkok, and which is specifically geared towards the professional development of teachers of engineering and technology. As part of the project, MIC developed a suite of professional development programmes which focus on innovative teaching methods and active learning. Director of Continuing Professional Development at MIC, Dr Cathal de Paor, is the project lead. A number of professional development courses have already been delivered related to both innovative teaching methods and engineering such as data analytics and product design.

These teachers then share the knowledge gained with the newly-established universities, thereby supporting the reforms of tertiary education in Thailand.

The Wonder Project

The Wonder Project, part of the Baboró International Arts Festival for Children, continued to create sensory experiences for children with additional needs. This innovative project was showcased at the International Drama/Theatre and Education Association (IDEA) 9th World Congress in Iceland, where MIC's Dr Dorothy Morrissey presented research on the project's impact. The Wonder Project is a prime example of MIC's commitment to inclusivity and its leadership in developing accessible arts education programmes.

MISU/MIC Period Poverty Initiative

In an innovative and extremely well-received initiative by the Students' Union to join in partnership with the College, MISU and MIC teamed up to provide students with free sanitary products to help address the issue of period poverty.

The initiative follows on from the success of MISU's Period Poverty Awareness Week in October which aimed to raise awareness of period poverty and remove the stigma around periods. According to 'Any Time of the Month', a student-led social enterprise working to achieve period justice in Ireland, one in three students reported their experience of period poverty.

7. Awards and Achievements

Staff Impact and Recognition

MIC faculty and staff were recognised for their contributions to research, teaching, and community service throughout the academic year. Dr Anne Dolan, a member of the Faculty

of Education, was awarded the Mid-West Regional Teaching Excellence Award in recognition of her innovative teaching practices and dedication to student learning. This award highlights the impact of MIC's faculty on both the college community and the broader field of education.

New Foundations

Two MIC academics were awarded Irish Research Council (IRC) funding for projects they are leading which have a tangible impact on societal issues under the IRC's *New Foundations* award.

Dr Liam Chambers, Head of the Department of History at MIC and Dr Déirdre Ní Chróinín, Head of the Department of Arts Education & Physical Education at MIC were among 77 researchers nationwide to receive funding.

Dr Liam Chambers is leading a project to investigate Irish migration to Europe between the 1500s and early 1800s. Dr Déirdre Ní Chróinín's project sees her leading *Children's Voices in Primary Physical Education* (VOICE PE), a collaboration with the Irish Primary Physical Education Association (IPPEA).

STEAM Research Tender

The Department of STEM Education at Mary Immaculate College (MIC) was awarded a tender by the Department of Education to fund research into effectively incorporating STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts & Mathematics) in early years, primary and post-primary education settings further strengthening MIC's role as a lead educator in STEM education. The research will identify effective approaches that contribute to all learners having access to high quality STEAM education and will draw on the expertise of leading

STEM Education researchers at MIC who have demonstrated experience and have an established track record of working together to implement and disseminate STEM-related research.

NCSE Tender on Special Education System in Ireland

The National Council for Special Education awarded Professor Emer Ring, Dean of Education, the tender to investigate and document the Special Education System in Ireland over the century between 1922 and 2022.

The awarding follows on from the work and research by Professor Ring in the area of special education, particularly publishing widely in the area of special education policy and practice. Welcoming the opportunity to lead this timely project, Professor Ring said: “While clearly influenced by international developments, the evolution of the special education system in Ireland over the last 100 years is characterised by historical, cultural, social, legal and political factors distinctively related to the Irish context. As we prepare to mark the centenary of the foundation of the state, it’s timely that we remember all of those who contributed to understanding that all children learn differently and that meaningfully including all children in our education system must continue to be our priority. As we all emerge from the grip of the global pandemic, never has prioritising the creation of an education system where all children are enabled to flourish been more critical.”

DELTA Appointment

Director of Taught Postgraduate Studies in Education at MIC, Dr TJ Ó Ceallaigh, was appointed to the European Commission Working Group on Digital Education: Learning, Teaching and Assessment (DELTA). During his five-year term of office, Dr Ó Ceallaigh will assist the Commission in the preparation of policy initiatives and guide policy reform in the

field of digital education to fuel both vision and strategy leading to educational transformation at all levels across Europe.

MIC and AsIAm Report on Autism-Friendly Schools Programme

A report by MIC academics examining the effectiveness of the AsIAm charity's Autism-Friendly Schools Programme was launched virtually in March 2022 by Minister for Special Education and Inclusion, Josepha Madigan. The programme, launched in 2019, has involved over 200 primary and post-primary schools from around the country that reflected on their practices, identified challenges and solutions and created whole-school inclusive cultures to build and understanding of autism among the school community. The research was conducted by academics from MIC's Faculty of Education who specialise in both primary and post-primary teaching. The research team consisted of Dr Johanna Fitzgerald, Dr Laura Ambrose, Dr Finn Ó Murchú and Elaine O'Keeffe.

Notable Publications

The 2021-2022 academic year was a landmark period for scholarly contributions at MIC, with faculty and doctoral candidates producing a range of notable publications across various disciplines. These publications not only reflect the academic strength of the College but also contribute to important debates and developments in their respective fields.

Studying Revolution: Accounts of Mary Immaculate College 1918–1923

Published by Dr Brian Hughes, Dr Úna Ní Bhroiméil, and Benjamin Ragan in collaboration with Limerick City and County Council, this book brings together a collection of documents related to staff and students of MIC during the Irish Revolution. The publication provides a unique historical perspective on the College's role during a pivotal period in Irish history. The research was funded by Limerick City and County Council's Decade of Centenaries fund,

highlighting the importance of historical scholarship in understanding the legacy of educational institutions.

The Palgrave Encyclopaedia of Urban Literary Studies

Dr Christiane Schönfeld contributed an article on ‘Women in the City: Berlin (1900-1933)’ to this evolving online project. Her work explores the representation of women in urban spaces during a transformative period in German history, providing insights into the intersection of gender, literature, and urban studies. This contribution is part of a broader effort to document and analyse the cultural dynamics of cities, with a print version of the encyclopaedia set to be published later in 2022.

Teaching Climate Change in Primary Schools: An Interdisciplinary Approach

This new resource for teaching climate change and for instilling in children the love of place, nature and geographical adventures is the result of collaboration between 21 academics, 19 of whom are researching or lecturing at MIC. The book is edited by Dr Anne Dolan and features contributions from Dr Deirdre Breatnach, Dr Richard Bowles, Tanya de Paor, Dr Anne M. Dolan, Dr Brigid Golden, Dr Kathleen Horgan, Dr Patricia Kiernan, Dr Miriam Hamilton, Dr Maurice Harmon, Dr Maeve Liston, Dr Mary Moloney, Anne Marie Morrin, Siobhán Ní Mhurchú, Dr Anne O’Dwyer, Margaret O’Keeffe, Dr Eileen O’Sullivan, Joanna Parkes, Dr Jennifer Pope, Dr Mary Roche, Dr Fionnuala Tynan, and Dr Margaret Nohilly. The publication was launched by leading Irish environmentalist and media personality, Duncan Stewart.

Contemporary Irish Poetry and the Climate Crisis

Edited by Andrew J. Auge and Eugene O’Brien from the Department of English Language and

Literature, this volume addresses the critical intersection of poetry and environmental concerns in contemporary Irish literature. Dr Eoin Flannery, also from the Department of English Language and Literature, authored a chapter entitled 'When Species Meet': Scale and Form in the Poetry of Ciaran Berry and Moya Cannon. This publication is part of the Routledge Studies in Irish Literature Series and contributes to ongoing discussions about the role of literature in addressing global environmental challenges.

The Golden Thread: Irish Women Playwrights, 1716 – 2016

An essay collection co-edited by two Mary Immaculate College (MIC) lecturers told the previously untold story of Irish female playwrights over three centuries, bringing much deserved attention to scripts and writers that continue to be under-represented in theatre criticism and performance.

The two-book collection, entitled *The Golden Thread: Irish Women Playwrights, 1716 – 2016*, was co-edited by Dr David Clare and Dr Fiona McDonagh from MIC's Department of Drama & Theatre Studies, and also by Dr Justine Nakase of Portland State University, USA, and represents the most comprehensive study ever undertaken of plays written by Irish women to date.

Parents in Partnership: Mapping the Way for Family, School and Community Engagement

The importance of family involvement in a child's education was the focus of a new book from MIC academics, Dr Sandra Ryan and Carol Lannin. *Parents in Partnership: Mapping the Way for Family, School and Community Engagement* explores the links between homes and schools, the role a parent can play in the school community and how partnership between schools and families gives students the support they need to reach their full potential.

Perspectives on Childhood

Published by Cambridge Scholars Publishing and edited by Dr Aisling Leavy and Dr Margaret Nohilly, *Perspectives on Childhood* brings together various cutting-edge and accessible perspectives and insights into childhood. It draws on the expertise of a range of academics from MIC's Faculties of Education and the Arts. The book follows on from work conducted by Dr Leavy and Dr Nohilly at the Institute for Education and Social Policy Studies (PRISEM) at MIC, which aims to give effect to the advancement of research and the fostering of knowledge and best practice in line with the provision and values of the College's strategic plan.

Irish Anglican Literature and Drama: Hybridity and Discord

This publication by Dr David Clare, of the Department of Drama & Theatre Studies, discusses key works by important writers from Church of Ireland backgrounds, such as George Farquhar, Jonathan Swift, Samuel Beckett and Leland Bardwell, in order to demonstrate that writers from this Irish subculture have a unique socio-political viewpoint which is imperfectly understood.

Critical Themes in Drama: Social, Cultural and Political Analysis

Critical Themes in Drama was published by Dr Michael Finneran, Head of the Department of Drama & Theatre Studies and Kelly Freebody (University of Sydney). The book is concerned with the relationship between drama and the current socio-cultural context in the world. It builds on and contributes to ongoing scholarly conversations regarding the use, benefit, challenges and opportunities for drama and theatre as a social cultural, educational and political act. It also provides a theoretical base for this conversation and explores the work

of drama practitioners across the world to provide a map of how the field is shaped and how we might understand drama practice in theatres, studios, streets and classrooms.

Beyond Concordance Lines: Corpora in Language Education

Co-edited by MIC Doctoral Scholar, Geraldine Mark and Prof. Pascual Pérez-Paredes, this book is published by John Benjamins in the prestigious Studies in Corpus Linguistics series.

The volume brings together 10 chapters by leaders in the field of Corpus Linguistics and language teaching, offering new insights into the use of corpora in language education.

Geraldine Mark's involvement in this publication highlights the contributions of MIC's doctoral candidates to cutting-edge research in linguistics.

Irish Lives in America

This special collection, published by the Royal Irish Academy and edited by Liz Evers and Niamh Gallagher, spans over 300 years of American history and comprises 50 biographical essays of notable Irish emigrants to America. The publication includes a biography on Richard Kyle Fox, an Irish-born publisher and pioneering sports promoter, contributed by MIC PhD student Liam Barry-Hayes. This entry reflects the significant impact of Irish immigrants on American society, culture, and politics.

The Synodal Pathway: When Rhetoric meets Reality

A new book co-edited by MIC academics explored the Irish Catholic Church's Synodal Pathway as it reflects on the place of the 'Church of the third millennium'. Edited by Professor Eamonn Conway, Head of the Department of Theology & Religious Studies, Dr Eugene Duffy (emeritus, MIC) and Dr Mary McDaid (St Patrick's Sanctuary), the publication is a collection of 15 essays from leading scholars from Ireland and wider Europe,

as well as Australia and the USA. The book analyses the ongoing self-reflection of the Irish Church and the opportunities and stakes of finding a place in the modern world.

Form, Affect and Debt in Post-Celtic Tiger Irish Fiction

This book from MIC's Dr Eóin Flannery, Department of English Language & Literature, explores how leading literary voices in contemporary Irish writing engaged with the events of Ireland's turn-of-the-century economic 'boom' and the demise of the Celtic Tiger, and how they have portrayed the widespread and contrasting aftermaths. It analyses the work of writers such as Donal Ryan, Anne Haverty, Claire Kilroy, Dermot Bolger, Deirdre Madden, Chris Binchy, Peter Cunningham, Justin Quinn, and Paul Murray. The publication investigates how contemporary literary fiction reflected upon and influenced the Irish perception of the 'boom' and crash, of associated shame and guilt, and the philosophy of debt to offer an entirely original suite of perspectives on both established and emerging authors.

Journal Articles and Book Chapters

Publications of particular note included:

- Majeed Mohammed Midhin, David Clare, and Noor Aziz Abed, "Memory, National Identity Formation, and (Neo)Colonialism in Hannah Khalil's *A Museum in Baghdad* (2019)," *Journal of Contemporary Drama in English*, 9.2 (2021): 304-319.
- David Clare, "Cosmopolitan versus Parochial Irishness in Bernard Shaw's *Music Journalism* (1877-1894)," *SHAW: The Journal of Bernard Shaw Studies*, 42.1 (2021): 385-399.

- Morrissey, John. "Coastal communities, blue economy, and the climate crisis: Framing just disruptions," *The Geographical Journal* (2021).

These publications collectively represent the breadth and depth of scholarly activity at MIC, contributing to academic discourse in the humanities, social sciences, and beyond. The College remains committed to supporting research excellence and fostering a vibrant academic community.

Student Achievements:

MIC students continued to achieve notable success in various areas during the academic year. Laura Phelan was highly commended at the Global Undergraduate Awards for her thesis on sports injury-related growth in GAA athletes, and Shona Cassidy won First Prize in the Council of Heads of Music in Higher Education (CHMHE) Undergraduate Musicology Competition for her thesis on 'The Phantom of the Opera: High Art or High-Pop?' These accomplishments demonstrate the high calibre of MIC students and the supportive academic environment that fosters their success.

Global Undergraduate Awards: Keith Ó Riain

Keith Ó Riain, an exceptional student in the Faculty of Arts, was named the Global Winner in the History category of the 2020 Global Undergraduate Awards. His groundbreaking research on Gaelic Irish mentalité in the 18th century was recognised for its originality and scholarly rigor. This prestigious international award places Keith among the top undergraduate scholars globally, underscoring the high calibre of research conducted by MIC students.

INTO Bursary: Nicola Greensmyth

Nicola Greensmyth, a student in the Department of Reflective Pedagogy and Early Childhood Studies, was awarded the INTO Bursary for her outstanding research on selective mutism in children. Her work has important implications for educational practice, particularly in developing strategies to support children with communication difficulties. The bursary recognises Nicola's contributions to the field of special education and her potential as a future leader in this area.

Irish Research Council Scholarship: Louise Curtin

PhD candidate, Louise Curtin, was awarded an Irish Research Council Scholarship for her innovative research in the social sciences. Her work focuses on critical issues related to social policy and community development, with a particular emphasis on marginalised groups. This prestigious scholarship supports her ongoing research and highlights the impact of her contributions to social science research.

In addition, several PhD candidates from MIC successfully defended their theses and contributed to the academic community through publications and conference presentations.

Gold Gaisce Award: Sarah Ryan Purcell

Second year Bachelor of Education in Education & Psychology student Sarah Ryan Purcell was one of 79 people from across Ireland to be presented with a prestigious Gaisce award in recognition of their commitment to volunteering and personal development by President Michael D. Higgins at a special event in Áras an Uachtaráin.

To achieve the award, Sarah, who is from Blackrock in Cork, completed 52 weeks of piano, 52 weeks of the role of cantor in her local church, 78 weeks of tennis, a four-day hike along the Ballyhoura Way and a summer internship at the University of California Santa Cruz, where she participated in research in child psychology.

Scholarships

Forty-seven first year MIC students were awarded almost €100,000 in recognition of their impressive Leaving Certificate results. They received entrance scholarships, valued at €2,000 each, on the basis of their CAO points. Typically, these awards are presented at the MIC College Awards but this ceremony did not take place in-person in 2021 due to COVID-19.

MIC students, Pádraig de Brún and Caoimhe Costelloe (Limerick Football and Camogie respectively) were named as the inaugural MIC Gaelic Player's Association (GPA) Scholarship recipients. The newly established MIC GPA Scholarship Scheme is open to GPA members who have applied for and are successful in securing a place on MIC's postgraduate programmes in education and the liberal arts. Two scholarships are offered on an annual basis. Pádraig is studying on the M Ed in Middle Leadership and Mentoring programme and Caoimhe is pursuing a research Master's in Education.

MIC Elite Sports Scholarships for 2021/22, valued at €4,000 each, were awarded to Róisín Howard, Tipperary Senior camogie and football player, and Dessie Hutchinson, Waterford Senior Hurler. Róisín is studying on the PME programme and Dessie is studying for a BA in Education, Business Studies and Religious Studies.

An MIC postgraduate student and a recent graduate were awarded a scholarship from the Fulbright Commission to study in America in recognition of their excellence in

academia. Eilís Ní Iarlaithe, from Baile Mhúirne, and Eimear Millane, from Kildare, were officially awarded Fulbright Foreign Language Teaching Assistantship (FLTA) scholarships at a special ceremony at Iveagh House in Dublin in June.

Rachel Kenneally Memorial Award

In memory of Rachel Kenneally, an MIC graduate who passed away in 2018, the College continued to honour her legacy through the Rachel Kenneally Memorial Award. This award recognises outstanding Kerry Senior Ladies Footballers who demonstrate exceptional commitment to and success in Ladies Gaelic Football. The 2022 recipients, Ciara O'Brien and Rachel Dwyer, embody the values of dedication, teamwork, and excellence that Rachel exemplified during her life. The award, sponsored jointly by MIC and the Ladies Gaelic Football Association, serves as a lasting tribute to Rachel's impact on the sport and the MIC community.

8. Development of International Work

Work of the International Office

The International Office also successfully organised virtual summer school sessions, attracting over 400 participants from around the world. These sessions provided international students with a taste of the academic and cultural life at MIC, helping to strengthen the College's global network.

In addition to student recruitment and mobility, the International Office has been active in securing funding for faculty exchanges and research collaborations. This has included successful applications for Erasmus+ grants, which have enabled MIC faculty to engage in teaching and research exchanges with partner institutions across Europe. The Office has also supported the development of new international partnerships, further enhancing the College's global engagement.

In 2019, MIC welcomed 100 student teachers from Mexico to campus for a 3-week academic programme, which was a huge success and saw MIC develop strong links with Mexico. Nine of these students returned to Limerick academic year to study on the Master of Education programme. All nine students successfully completed the programme, further enhancing their knowledge and skills as educators, and graduated on Friday 22 October, 2021.

The International Office has also been involved in organising international conferences and events, bringing together scholars and students from around the world to discuss key issues in education, social justice, and global development. These events have not only enhanced

MIC's international profile but have also contributed to the global exchange of ideas and best practices.

Global Outreach and Impact

MIC's commitment to global engagement extends beyond its partnerships with international institutions. The College has also been involved in various global initiatives aimed at addressing pressing social issues. For example, MIC has been a key participant in the global Santa Marta Group's efforts to combat human trafficking, contributing research and expertise to this important cause.

Additionally, MIC's involvement in the City Connects programme has provided a model for other countries looking to implement similar holistic support systems for students. The success of the programme in Ireland has led to interest from educational institutions in Europe and North America, further demonstrating MIC's leadership in this area.

Latin America Engagement

MIC maintained its focus on expanding its presence in Latin America, a key region for the College's international strategy. The College engaged with partners in the region to explore opportunities for collaboration in areas such as teacher education, language studies, and cultural exchange. These efforts are part of MIC's broader strategy to diversify its international partnerships and create opportunities for students and staff to engage with new and emerging markets.

9. Conferences and Seminars

Throughout the year, MIC has hosted a number of other important conferences and seminars, covering a wide range of topics from education to social justice to the arts. These events have attracted participants from across Ireland and internationally, contributing to the intellectual vibrancy of the College.

Teaching and Language Corpora (TaLC) Conference

MIC co-hosted the 15th Teaching and Language Corpora (TaLC) Conference with the University of Limerick from 13-16 July 2022. This major international conference attracted delegates from 32 countries and featured presentations by MIC colleagues and PhD students, highlighting the College's expertise in the field of language and education. The conference provided a platform for discussing the latest research and developments in language corpora, with a focus on their application in teaching and learning.

Immersion Education Conference

The third All-Ireland Research Conference on Immersion Education, held on 5-6 May 2022, brought together over 200 delegates from 11 countries. The conference, themed 'Immersion Education: Taking Stock and Moving Forward' provided a platform for academics, practitioners, and policy-makers to exchange ideas and best practices in immersion education. MIC's leadership in organising this conference reflects its commitment to advancing research and practice in language immersion, an area of growing importance in global education.

Research Week 2022

Research Week at MIC, held from 11-18 February 2022, was a highlight of the academic

year, showcasing the research work of MIC staff and postgraduate students. The week featured keynote presentations from distinguished scholars, workshops on research skills, and discussions on evolving practices in doctoral supervision and research integrity. This event underscored MIC's dedication to fostering a vibrant research culture and supporting the professional development of early career researchers.

IRMSS

The ninth International Research Methods Summer School took place this week, making a welcome return after a two-year absence due to the pandemic. The impact of COVID-19 on academia was the focus, with a theme of 'Evolutions in Research in Unprecedented Times'.

The two-day event in May was organised by colleagues from MIC's Faculty of Arts and Faculty of Education, the International Office and the Research and Graduate School.

Sessions covered topics including identifying the outcomes of online learning, leadership in a pedagogical environment, children as active participants in research, educating during the pandemic, identifying deliverables in education, and collaboration and critical analysis.

Fourth International Finn Cycle Conference

MIC hosted this prestigious event in June—marking the first time the conference has visited Ireland. Held over three days, the event attracted Fíanaíocht scholars from all over Ireland, Scotland, Europe and the United States of America. Twenty-eight expert speakers delivered papers on virtually every aspect of the long Fiannaíocht tradition (the tradition concerning Fionn Mac Cumhaill and Fianna Éireann) from the earliest times down to almost the present day, including plenary speeches from Dr Natasha Sumner (Harvard University) and Dr Kevin Murray (University College Cork).

The conference was organised by: Dr Breandán Ó Cróinín, Roinn na Gaeilge, MIC; Dr Geraldine Parsons (University of Glasgow); Dr Sharon Arbuthnot, (Sabhal Mòr Ostaig/University of Cambridge) and Dr Síle Ní Mhurchú (Department of Modern Irish, University College, Cork).

MIC Thurles Summer School 2022

Supporting diverse children and youth in education in a collaborative way was the focus of a two-day conference at MIC Thurles in mid-June. Organised by MIC in collaboration with the MidWest Migrant Community Network (MMCN), the event brought together educators, researchers, academics and multi-agency practitioners from Ireland alongside international educators who are interested in exploring how interagency collaboration can contribute to better support diverse learners and their families in schools.

The two keynote speeches were delivered by Professor Marie Parker-Jenkins (Emeritus UL), and Mischeck Munthali, Director of Education in the Minister of Education in Malawi, with further engaging discussions led by Dr Niall Muldoon, Ombudsman for Children; Professor Michael Healy, Vice-President Research at MIC; Dr Becca Lowenhaupt, Boston College; Santhi Corcoran, MMCN; Dr Finn Ó Murchú, Head of School at MIC Thurles, and Prof. Lorraine McIlrath, Director of EDII. Four workshops focused on the issues of discrimination & racism in Irish education, Traveller education, Refugees, asylum seekers & displaced communities, and Minority group education.

10. Community Engagement and Culture

Mary Immaculate College (MIC) has long held a deep and unwavering commitment to community engagement, viewing it as a fundamental aspect of its mission to serve both the local and wider communities. This dedication is reflected in the College's proactive efforts to connect with, support, and enrich the lives of those around it. Whether through educational outreach, cultural promotion, or social responsibility initiatives, MIC consistently demonstrates its belief in the power of education and collaboration to bring about positive change. Even in the face of unprecedented challenges, such as those presented by the COVID-19 pandemic, the College's resolve to engage with and contribute to the community remained as strong as ever, adapting and evolving to meet new needs and ensuring that its impact was felt far beyond the confines of the campus. These efforts reflect MIC's broader mission to promote social inclusion, celebrate cultural diversity, and support the holistic development of its students and the wider community.

EDNIP

The Embracing Diversity, Nurturing Integration Project (EDNIP) remains a flagship initiative at MIC, focusing on reducing isolation and promoting integration among socially excluded migrants. Working closely with five DEIS Band 1 primary schools in Limerick City, EDNIP has successfully supported over 1,020 children from 46 different countries. The programme, funded by the National Integration Fund, Rethink Ireland Education Innovation Fund, and a philanthropic trust, offers a range of activities that promote cultural exchange and community building. During the summer of 2022, EDNIP organised family trips and STEAM camps, providing enriching experiences that not only support the academic growth of participants but also foster a sense of belonging and community among migrant families.

League of Legends

Held for the 12th time in 2022, the League of Legends soccer blitz saw over 130 fifth and sixth class students from numerous local primary schools tog out for a highly competitive day of soccer. The annual tournament is a joint venture between the Transforming Education through Dialogue (TED) project and the PLUS schools network comprising representatives from 14 local schools. Participating schools included: St Anne's Girls Primary School; Le Chéile NS; Scoil Iosagáin CBS Primary School; Corpus Christi National School; Our Lady of Lourdes National School; Our Lady Queen of Peace National School; Presentation Girl's School; St John's Girl's and Infant Boy's School; St John the Baptist Boy's School; St Joseph's Boy's School, St Mary's National School and Thomond Primary School.

Limerick Bastille Day Wild Geese Festival

In 2022, MIC played a pivotal role in the Limerick Bastille Day Wild Geese Festival, an event that celebrates the historical ties between Ireland and France. The festival featured a series of cultural activities, including historical re-enactments, music performances, and public lectures. As part of the festival, MIC hosted a free conference that brought together leading experts to discuss the history of the Wild Geese—Irish soldiers who served in European armies in the 17th and 18th centuries—and the broader history of Irish migration to Europe. This event attracted a wide audience and underscored MIC's dedication to preserving and promoting cultural heritage while fostering international understanding.

Seachtain na Gaeilge 2022

Seachtain na Gaeilge, an annual celebration of the Irish language and culture, was a highlight of the academic year at MIC. The college organised a variety of events from 2-10 March 2022, showcasing indigenous arts, literature, and wellness. The week featured

collaborations with FemFest and the Healthy Campus initiative, promoting both cultural awareness and student well-being. A key event was the showcase at the Lime Tree Theatre, which included performances by students and local artists, celebrating the richness of Irish language and cultural expression.

FemFest 2022

The achievements of women across a broad spectrum of Irish life were celebrated at Mary Immaculate College during FemFest, which made a welcome return in March for the first time since the COVID-19 pandemic. The week-long event, held at MIC's Limerick campus, showcased and celebrate the works of Irish women at a national, regional, local and institutional level. Events include a memorial walk/run, music and theatre performances and a range of workshops, lectures and other activities.

Tipperary Festival of Science

The Tipperary Festival of Science returned for a sixth year in November 2021 as part of Science Week. Led by MIC and run in collaboration with TUS Thurles, the theme was 'Creating Our Future'. It remained online with a schedule of free STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) and STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Mathematics) activities taking place throughout the week for people of all ages.

Partnership with Microsoft

MIC worked with digital skills specialists from Microsoft Dream Space to empower early year educators with the skills to inspire and engage children with technology, coding and robotics in a fun and interactive way. This important Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Mathematics (STEAM) education collaboration has been established under the Creative Arts

and Future Technology (CRAFT) Maker Space with MIC's Office of Enterprise & Community Engagement. Students from MIC's BA in Early Childhood Care & Education (ECCE) programme engaged with experienced Microsoft Dream Space educators over two weeks to celebrate Tech Week 2022. The lessons, co-designed by James O'Reilly, Lecturer on programme and Dr Maeve Liston, Director of Enterprise & Community Engagement aimed to ensure that all content and teaching pedagogies explored during the sessions complement the Aistear curriculum.

Engagement with Local Schools and Communities

MIC's commitment to community engagement extends beyond special programmes to include ongoing partnerships with local schools and community organisations. Throughout the year, the College facilitated workshops, seminars, and outreach activities aimed at enhancing educational opportunities and supporting community development. These initiatives include the Maths Outreach Programme at MIC Thurles, which provided interactive workshops to local primary and secondary students, fostering a love for mathematics and encouraging critical thinking skills. EMPOWER, a free programme for post-primary student, designed and developed by MIC and TUS, ran for a sixth year in 2022. Students were tasked with finding innovative solutions to some of the mobility challenges facing society and the programme partnered with Jaguar Land Rover to give a practical hands-on approach to the task.

Cultural Collaborations and Partnerships

MIC also strengthened its partnerships with cultural institutions and organisations across Limerick and the wider region. Collaborations with entities such as the Lime Tree Theatre, the Irish Chamber Orchestra, and various local arts festivals have enriched the cultural life of

both the College and the surrounding community. These partnerships not only provided platforms for students and faculty to showcase their talents but also helped to bring world-class cultural events to Limerick, enhancing the city's cultural landscape.

Notable events and exhibitions hosted at MIC included:

- Part of the *Belonging* exhibition, which was launched in Limerick in February 2022, by the European Investment Bank (EIB). *Belonging* featured 82 artworks by European artists, from all 27 countries of the EU, plus the UK, and is on loan from the EIB Art Collection. The exhibition is curated by the EIB and the Hunt Museum and was displayed across eight locations in Limerick City until April. *Belonging* was a part of the European Expo, a series of exhibitions, seminars, events, and celebrations over the course of 2022 that communicated national and European culture and cooperation in art and creativity, education, environment, and economics.
- *We Are Here, HEAR* exhibition visited the MIC Limerick campus in April 2022. The open-air photovoice exhibition aimed to raise awareness of the presence of refugees in Ireland and to bring their voices into public spaces in order to call attention to the challenges they face. Curated by *College Connect* – an initiative combining academics drawn from four Higher Education Institutions around Ireland – the exhibition is the culmination of peer-to-peer research with over 100 refugees on their own stories and experiences.
- Africa Day was marked at MIC in June with the theme 'The Way We Left'. The event was organised by PhD student in Applied Linguistics, Lylian Fotabong; PhD student in Early Childhood Care & Education, Florence Ajala and social worker, Linda Kirwasa, in association with MIC's International and EDII Offices.

Sustainability and Cultural Preservation

As part of its broader sustainability initiatives, MIC focused on the preservation of cultural heritage through sustainable practices. The College has integrated sustainability principles into its cultural programming, ensuring that events and initiatives are environmentally conscious and contribute to the long-term preservation of cultural resources. This approach aligns with MIC's commitment to promoting both environmental stewardship and cultural sustainability.

Limerick Student City

A new multi-faceted campaign was launched in January 2022 showcasing how Limerick can give students the edge when it comes to college and degree choice, lifestyle and future opportunities as they embrace student life.

Limerick Student City is a collaboration between Limerick City and County Council, Mary Immaculate College (MIC), University of Limerick and Technological University of the Shannon that creates awareness of Limerick as a leading university city. The campaign positions Limerick as a top choice for higher and further education study, offering a complete experience and the only location outside of Dublin that can boast three university-level educational institutes.

11. Sports

Student Participation

MIC students continued to engage actively in sports, achieving significant milestones throughout the academic year. The College supported a range of athletic programmes and events, fostering a vibrant sports culture on campus. These activities not only promoted physical well-being but also contributed to the development of teamwork, leadership, and resilience among students.

Giles Cup Victory

The MIC Limerick Ladies Footballers won the Giles Cup on 12 March 2022, defeating Technological University Dublin. The team, captained by Áine Keane and managed by Dr Richard Bowles, brought the cup back to MIC for the first time since 2014. This victory was a testament to the dedication and skill of the players and coaching staff, as well as the strong support from the MIC community. The win was celebrated across the campus and highlighted the College's commitment to excellence in both academics and athletics.

Sports Facilities and Development

Throughout the year, MIC continued to invest in its sports facilities, ensuring that students have access to high-quality resources for training and competition. The College's commitment to sports development was further demonstrated by its support for various intervarsity competitions, where MIC teams performed admirably. These investments in sports infrastructure are part of MIC's broader strategy to promote health and wellness across the college community.

12. Graduation Numbers 2021

The 2021 graduation at MIC was a momentous occasion, with a return to live conferring for the majority of students following the disruption caused by COVID-19 providing an opportunity to celebrate the achievements of a diverse cohort of students across various disciplines. A total of 1,903 graduates received their awards, reflecting the College's strong academic performance and the success of its programmes in preparing students for professional and academic careers. The graduation numbers underscore MIC's role as a leader in teacher education, liberal arts, and early childhood care and education, among other fields. Graduation 2021 was also momentous because it saw the highest number of research degrees being awarded to MIC students with 25 graduates receiving doctorates and ceremony also included a celebration of the graduation of 21 members of the class of 2020, who were unable to be conferred in person in that year due to public health constraints. Minister Simon Harris and a selection of MIC alumni sent video messages of congratulations to graduates.

The Leadership for Inclusion in the Early Years (LINC) programme held a Virtual Graduation Ceremony in November, which celebrated the graduation of close to 600 students from 26 counties and 22 countries. They were conferred in absentia with a Level 6 Special Purpose Award. They joined a community of 3,504 graduates conferred since 2016.

Schedule of Conferring 2021

| <i>Programme</i> | <i>No. of Graduates</i> |
|---|-------------------------|
| Bachelor of Arts | 233 |
| Bachelor of Arts in Contemporary and Applied Theatre Studies | 10 |
| Bachelor of Arts in Early Childhood Care and Education | 81 |
| Bachelor of Arts in Education Studies | 3 |
| Bachelor of Arts in Education, Business Studies and Religious Studies | 18 |
| Bachelor of Arts in Education, Business Studies and Accounting | 24 |
| Bachelor of Arts in Education, Gaeilge and Business Studies | 30 |
| Bachelor of Arts in Education, Gaeilge and Religious Studies | 7 |
| Bachelor of Education | 421 |
| Bachelor of Education in Education and Psychology | 34 |
| Certificate in Christian Leadership in Education | 22 |
| Certificate in Education Studies | 1 |
| Certificate in Leadership for INClusion in the Early Years | 582 |
| Certificate in Pastoral Ministry | 25 |
| Dioplóma Iarchéime san Oideachas san Oideachas | 1 |
| Lán-Ghaeilge agus Gaeltachta | |
| Doctor of Philosophy (Arts) 2020 | 6 |
| Doctor of Philosophy (Arts) 2021 | 13 |
| Doctor of Philosophy (Education) 2020 | 3 |

| | |
|--|----|
| Doctor of Philosophy (Education) 2021 | 2 |
| Graduate Certificate in Academic Practice | 12 |
| Graduate Certificate in Autism Studies | 56 |
| Graduate Certificate in Christian Leadership in Education | 1 |
| Graduate Certificate in Middle Leadership and Mentoring in Primary and Post-Primary Settings. | 21 |
| Graduate Diploma in Adult and Further Education | 17 |
| Graduate Diploma in Applied Linguistics | 9 |
| Graduate Diploma in Educational Leadership and Management | 2 |
| Graduate Diploma in Leadership of Well-being in Education | 3 |
| Graduate Diploma in Special Education | 49 |
| Máistir sna Dána sa Ghaeilge | 2 |
| Máistreacht san Oideachas san Oideachas Lán-Ghaeilge agus Gaeltachta | 24 |
| Master in Education in Educational Leadership and Management | 8 |
| Master of Arts (Research & Thesis) | 1 |
| Master of Arts (Research & Thesis) 2020 | 1 |
| Master of Arts in Applied Linguistics | 14 |
| Master of Arts in Christian Leadership in Education | 7 |
| Master of Arts in Education (Research and Thesis) | 1 |
| Master of Arts in Education (Research and Thesis) 2020 | 1 |
| Master of Arts in Education Studies | 1 |
| Master of Arts in Media Studies | 5 |

| | |
|---|-------------|
| Master of Arts in Modern English Literature | 11 |
| Master of Arts in STEM Education (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) | 6 |
| Master of Education | 19 |
| Master of Education in Adult and Further Education | 1 |
| Master of Education in Leadership of Well-being in Education | 6 |
| Master of Education in Literacy Education | 6 |
| Master of Education in Mentoring and Leadership in Schools (International) | 5 |
| Master of Education in Middle Leadership and Mentoring in Primary and Post-Primary Settings. | 5 |
| Master of Education in Professional Studies in Education | 1 |
| Master of Education in Special Education | 10 |
| Posthumous Award - Master of Arts (Research & Thesis) | 1 |
| Professional Doctorate in Educational and Child Psychology 2020 | 10 |
| Professional Doctorate in Educational and Child Psychology 2021 | 10 |
| Professional Master of Education (Primary Teaching) | 61 |
| Total graduating numbers | 1903 |

Graduate Profiles

Graduates from the B Ed in Education and Psychology, Bachelor of Education, and Bachelor of Arts programs continued to excel in the job market, with many securing positions in education, public service, and the private sector. Additionally, a significant number of graduates pursued further studies, enrolling in postgraduate programs at MIC and other leading institutions. These outcomes highlight the effectiveness of MIC's academic programmes in equipping students with the skills and knowledge necessary for success in their chosen careers.

13. Energy Usage

Sustainability Initiatives

MIC remained committed to sustainability, implementing several initiatives aimed at reducing energy usage and promoting environmental stewardship. The college adopted energy-efficient technologies, such as LED lighting and advanced heating systems, which contributed to a reduction in overall energy consumption. These efforts were complemented by the expansion of green spaces on campus, which not only enhanced the aesthetic appeal of the college but also supported biodiversity and provided outdoor spaces for study and recreation.

Energy Management Strategy and Consumption Analysis

From 2009 to 2021, Mary Immaculate College’s Energy Performance Indicator (EnPI) reflects a gradual decline in energy consumption, though with some fluctuations over the years. The EnPI started just over 300 units in 2009 and reduced to approximately 230-240 units by 2021, representing a 20-25% reduction over the 12-year period.

MIC EnPI Performance 2009 – 2021



Source: MIC EnPI Dashboard

Between 2009 and 2015, the EnPI fluctuated but generally trended downwards, falling from just above 300 units in 2009 to around 260-270 units by 2015. This period shows a reduction of about 10-15% from the baseline, indicating consistent, though modest, progress in reducing energy consumption. The subsequent years, from 2016 to 2019, continued this trend with further fluctuations, particularly noticeable dips in 2016 and 2019, where the EnPI was around 250 units. By 2019, the College had achieved an approximate 15-20% reduction from the 2009 baseline.

In 2020, there was a significant reduction in the EnPI, likely due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, which led to decreased campus activities and energy demands. However, by 2021, the EnPI slightly increased but remained well below the earlier years, sitting at around 230-240 units. This still represents a 20-25% reduction from the 2009 baseline, reflecting the College's ability to maintain some of the energy-saving practices introduced during the pandemic.

Despite the fluctuations, Mary Immaculate College has made steady progress in reducing its energy consumption over the years. By 2021, the College had achieved a 20-25% reduction from the 2009 baseline, demonstrating ongoing commitment to energy efficiency. While the drop in 2020 was significant, the subsequent rise in 2021 still leaves the College in a better position than in earlier years, suggesting that some of the pandemic-related energy savings have been sustained. Mary Immaculate College remains on a consistent path toward its long-term energy goals, with substantial progress already evident by 2021.

14. Financial Overview

Income

The College's total income rose to €58.6 million, a 6.6% increase from the previous year.

This growth was largely driven by a substantial rise in State grants, which increased by nearly €2 million. This evidences strong Government support for the College, even as some of the extraordinary measures taken during the pandemic have tapered off. Additionally, the College received a significant boost in deferred funding for pensions, with an increase of over €3 million, reflecting efforts to secure future pension obligations.

However, some income streams did not perform as well. Academic fees, a core revenue source, saw a slight decrease of around €900,000, due partly to reduced enrolment in the post-pandemic market. Income from research and self-funded programs also declined by almost 19%, indicating potential difficulties in maintaining research activity and participation in these programmes under Covid restrictions.

Other programme grants fell sharply by nearly 24%, which, as noted, can partly be attributed to the winding down of temporary Covid-related state grants that had been available in 2021. These grants had provided a significant boost to income during the height of the pandemic, and their reduction in 2022 contributed to the lower overall surplus.

Expenditure Overview

The College faced rising costs, which outpaced the growth in income. Total expenditure rose by over €5.9 million, or 11.3%, reaching €58.2 million. A major factor in this increase was staff costs, which grew by over €2 million. This rise is due to a combination of salary

adjustments, additional staffing, and increased benefit costs as the College continued to navigate the post-pandemic landscape.


Mary Immaculate College
Coláiste Mhuire gan Smál

Statement of Comprehensive Income
Year ended 31 August 2022

| | Note | Year ended 31 August 2022 €'000 | Year ended 31 August 2021 €'000 |
|---|------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Income | | | |
| State Grants | 3 | 18,837 | 16,853 |
| Other Programme Grants | 4 | 1,537 | 2,021 |
| Academic fees | 5 | 24,309 | 25,205 |
| Research and Self-Funded Programmes | 6 | 2,900 | 3,571 |
| Other income | 7 | 1,415 | 776 |
| Interest and Investment income | 8 | 17 | 28 |
| Deferred funding for pensions | 22 | <u>9,566</u> | <u>6,502</u> |
| Total income | | 58,581 | 54,956 |
| Amortisation of state capital grants | 18 | <u>1,244</u> | <u>1,413</u> |
| | | 59,825 | 56,369 |
| Expenditure | | | |
| Staff costs | 9 | 30,770 | 28,699 |
| Other operating expenses | 10 | 13,428 | 12,615 |
| Depreciation | 12 | 1,809 | 1,835 |
| Pension cost | 22 | <u>12,185</u> | <u>9,142</u> |
| Total expenditure | | 58,192 | 52,291 |
| Surplus for the year | | 1,633 | 4,078 |
| Actuarial gain/(loss) in respect of pension schemes | 22 | 69,411 | (29,395) |
| Movement on pension receivable | 22 | (69,411) | 29,395 |
| (Loss)/Gain on Investment | 13 | <u>(174)</u> | <u>515</u> |
| Total comprehensive income for the year | | <u>1,459</u> | <u>4,593</u> |
| Represented by: | | | |
| Unrestricted Reserve | | 1,789 | 4,275 |
| Restricted St Patrick's Reserve | 25 | <u>(330)</u> | <u>318</u> |
| Total comprehensive income for the year | | <u>1,459</u> | <u>4,593</u> |

All items of income and expenditure relate to continuing activities.

The financial statements on pages 24-55 were approved by the Governing Body on the 30th November, 2022 and were signed on its behalf by:


Bishop Brendan Leahy
Cathaoirleach

Date: 23rd May, 2023


Mr. Michael Keane
Vice-President Administration & Finance

Date: 23rd May, 2023

Pension costs also saw a substantial increase, up by more than €3 million, or 33.3%. This sharp rise highlights the growing financial burden of pension obligations, an area that the College will need to carefully manage in the future.

Other operating expenses increased by approximately €813,000, which reflect inflationary pressures, expanded operations, and investments in new initiatives as the College adapted to the 'new normal' post-Covid. Depreciation costs, however, remained relatively stable, with only a slight decrease.

Surplus and Comprehensive Income

Despite the overall increase in income, the College's surplus for the year declined significantly, from €4.1 million in 2021 to €1.6 million in 2022, a reduction of 60%. As stated, this decline can be partly attributed to the phasing out of temporary Covid-related state grants that had boosted the surplus in the previous year. Without these temporary grants, the financial cushion was reduced, particularly in the face of rising costs.

The total comprehensive income, which includes factors like actuarial gains or losses on pensions, also fell dramatically from €4.6 million to €1.5 million, a decrease of over 68%. This decline was influenced by the volatility in pension valuations and the absence of the extraordinary grants that had been present in 2021.

Conclusion

In summary, while Mary Immaculate College saw moderate growth in total income in 2022, the winding down of temporary pandemic-related grants and the rise in costs, especially for

staff and pensions, led to a significant reduction in the surplus and comprehensive income. As the College moves forward, it will need to focus on stabilizing its revenue streams and managing expenses carefully to maintain financial stability in the post-pandemic era.

Capital Investments

Significant investments were made in campus development projects, including the ongoing Library Project and the implementation of the Masterplan 2042. These projects are critical to MIC's long-term vision of providing state-of-the-art facilities that support student learning and research. Additionally, MIC invested in upgrading its IT infrastructure, ensuring that the College remains at the forefront of digital education.

Cost Management and Efficiency Initiatives

To maintain financial stability, MIC implemented a range of cost management and efficiency initiatives. These included streamlining administrative processes, renegotiating supplier contracts, and adopting energy-saving technologies. These measures not only reduced costs but also enhanced the efficiency of the College's operations, allowing MIC to allocate more resources to academic programmes and student support services.

Fundraising and External Funding

External funding played a crucial role in supporting MIC's research and academic programmes during the year. The College submitted a record number of research funding applications, totalling over €12.9 million, with significant contributions from the Irish Research Council and Horizon Europe. Additionally, MIC continued to engage in fundraising efforts, building relationships with alumni, donors, and corporate partners to secure

additional support for key initiatives. These efforts are essential to MIC's long-term financial sustainability and its ability to invest in future growth.