

Social Sciences Research Centre Joint Secretaries' Report 2017

Over a period of more than fifty years the Social Sciences Research Centre (SSRC) has provided a focus for interdisciplinary research between economists, geographers, political scientists, psychologists, and sociologists at NUI, Galway. 2016 has seen further significant progress recorded in the effort to revive the SSRC as a centre for interdisciplinary research inside and outside the university. The SSRC, which has 78 members at present, is now home to three distinguishable strands of research: Smart and Liveable Cities and Towns; Equality and Diversity; and Rural Communities and their Development.

Specific research projects, and a selection of recent publications, within each of the centre's three research strands can be found listed in the SSRC's webpage (<http://ssrc.ie>). The SSRC continues to be recognised as a dedicated research cluster within the Moore and Whitaker Institutes.

During 2017 three new members were co-opted on to the SSRC board. These are Dr Su-Ming Khoo, Dr Simon Warren and Prof Niamh Reilly.

The new SSRC webpage, designed and maintained by Dr Mike Hynes, has continued to be developed in 2017. Since January 2017 3,599 'unique' or different visitors have visited the webpage and 23,055 pages were examined. In all, the webpage attracted 54,542 'hits'. Dr Hynes also maintains the SSRC's active twitter account that currently has 1,027 followers.

The five desks available in the SSRC's rooms in St. Declan's, Distillery Road are in full use. Among the visiting scholars to use the SSRC's facilities in St. Declan's during the 2016-7 academic year were Dr Declan Coogan and Dr John Cunningham. SSRC members interested in using the St. Declan's facilities should get in touch with Dr Mike Hynes.

The SSRC actively supported the 'Architects at the Edge' festival that was held on campus on 29-30 September. Prof Kevin Leyden co-organised and moderated the 'Place-makers' symposium and workshop that constituted one strand of the 'Architects at the Edge' festival.

Two members of the SSRC board – Dr Su-Ming Khoo and Dr Simon Warren – were instrumental in convening 'The Civic University Symposium: Re-imagining the University for Public Purpose' that was held on campus on 2 December 2017.

Dr Mike Hynes is leading an ongoing research project (explicitly identified with the SSRC) on the topic of spatial mobility within Galway City. Prof Kevin Leyden and Dr Hynes have been active in beginning the process of identifying a programme of SSRC-based social science research to be carried out in the city in the near future, some of which should be of special relevance to Galway's 'City of Culture 2020' project.

Dr Mike Hynes and Dr Tony Varley (Joint secretaries, SSRC)
11 December 2017