

In 2003 the Queen's Women graduates Association (QWGA) merged with the Queens Graduate Association (QGA). However each association has its own distinct identity and history. Since 1924 the QWGA has maintained links with our sister organisations across the world and in doing so assist in the education of young women globally.

QWGA is open to all women graduates of Queen's University Belfast and to women graduates of any other universities who presently live in Northern Ireland. We offer an annual programme of events, including social events, lectures and tours, and an annual dinner. Through the QWGA, our members gain an automatic membership of the Irish Federation of University Women, access to the Federation's newsletters, conferences and workshops, and social and professional networks throughout Ireland. Members also participate in the conferences and other activities of University Women of Europe and Graduate Women International. Both these bodies have important representational rights in respect of women's educational and social positions worldwide, at the UN and the Council of Europe. We participate fully in an all-Ireland public speaking competition for girls and maintain a scholarship fund for women undergraduates facing challenges in accessing third level education.

The following websites may help you get an understanding how our association ties in with our affiliated groups. The QWG and all affiliated groups including in Ireland, Europe and internationally have convenors who keep their members apprised of events and developments in our international networks .

Irish federation of University Women – Mission to promote understanding and friendship among the university women of the world, irrespective of their race, nationality, religion or political opinions ; to encourage international cooperation; to further the development of education; to represent university women in international organisations ;To encourage the full application of their knowledge and skills at all levels of public life, whether nationally, regionally or worldwide, and to participate in the solving of these problems.

QWG members attend the conferences of UCD, Trinity and Galway University's. We hold a joint public Speaking Competition for girls under 15. In 2016 a pupil from Friends School Lisburn was awarded the Joyce Craig Cup for Best Speaker at UCD, Dublin. This year the regional competition will be held in the Canada Room, QUB on 7th February 2017 with the final on 11th March 2017 at Trinity, Dublin

Members of the QWG committee sit on the council of this federation. The 2017 annual conference was organised by UCD in October 2016. The theme was 'How Far Can She Go: Class, Glass and Culture, The speakers were Sabina

Higgins, Senator Marie-Louise O'Donnell, Emer Smyth, Research Professor ESRI, Mary Daly, Principal of St Dominic's Secondary School, Ballyfermot and Anne Cleary, Executive Director, Aidlink. Each speaker outlined who inspired them, how they succeeded in their different fields and the challenges facing girls in breaking down class barriers to achieve their full potential. In October 2017 QWG will host the IrFUW conference in Belfast.

Website - <http://irfuw.org/>

University women of Europe (UWE) – Mission to enable European higher educated women to participate in the progressive development of European Society as such it has representatives at European Women's Lobby and participative status on the Council of Europe and a network of women graduates in 17 European countries.

The QWG send representatives to the annual conference. In June 2016 the annual conference was held in Winchester with 17 members of the Irish Federation attending. The theme was 'Aspiration, Advancement, Achievement, encouraging women into Leadership Roles'

This year the conference will be held in Graz, Austria, 24-27 August 2017.

Website - <https://uweboard.wordpress.com/>

Graduate Women International (GWI) – Mission to advocate for women's rights, equality and empowerment through access to quality secondary, tertiary and continuing education and training up to the highest levels. Its vision is for 100% of girls and women in the world to achieve education beyond primary school

In 2008 Project 100 was established as a one year fund raising project to mark and celebrate the Queens University Centenary. The QWG committee decided to establish a Fund which would support a number of disadvantaged young pupils in Rwanda to continue their education beyond primary level. Some of these Pupils were bereaved in the Genocide or through the death of a parent from HIV/AIDS. We were joined in our various methods of Fund raising by the QGA and other Friends. The year realised funds of £22,000. A Project Committee was formed and it was decided that we would aim to work with up to 20 Pupils and support them through their full six years of secondary education. We are a sister organisation, through GWI, to the Rwandan Association of University Women. The administration of the school links is managed through an organization called Benishyaka which is a not-for profit Trust who employs as many widows as possible in their work. The latest report

is that we have supported 22 pupils to receive 6 years of secondary education. In 2015 3 students completed their high school education and have been accepted for university places.

On Saturday 14th May 2016 a fund raising coffee morning was held by the QWGA in aid of the Graduate Women International project to train young women from rural Uganda to become qualified secondary school teachers.

As you will see below the theme running through many of our events this year is to highlight such projects. We are well aware what can be done when we all come together in our commitment to the education of young women.

In May 2016 the president of GWI addressed the IrFUW Triennial Meeting/International Day in Dublin and in June she attended the QWGA annual dinner held in the Great Hall, QUB.

In August 2016 members of the IrFUW attended the GWI Triennial Conference in South Africa.

Website -<http://www.graduatewomen.org/>

For details on becoming a member please contact Development and Alumni Office - 02890973135