**IRISH FEDERATION OF UNIVERSITY WOMEN**

***Cónascadh Banchéimite na hÉireann***

***IrFUW***

**IrFUW Report January 2021.**

Greetings for 2021 to all our IrFUW members. Let us hope that the current vaccination programme is successful and life for us all will soon return to normal.

The COVID-19 Pandemic restrictions caused some IrFUW events to be cancelled during 2020. The Public Speaking Competition and Council Meeting took place in March before ‘Lockdown’ but the ***Meet and Greet*** scheduled for May and the annual ***October Conference*** were both cancelled. The October Council Meeting was postponed and held on the 5th December by Zoom.

The UWE AGM was also held by Zoom from Paris in September 2020. GWI and Graduate Women Ireland Scotland Britain (GWISB) also organised a number of Zoom Meetings during this period.

The ***Meet and Greet*** has beenrebooked in UCD University Club for May ‘21 but it is uncertain now whether it will take place. **Fáilte Ireland** will allow €30 per visitor attending the ***Meet and Greet*** if the number of European visitors, including Northern Ireland visitors, is between 50 and 150.

The IrFUW has been party to a ‘Collective Complaint’ on Gender Pay Gap made by UWE to the European Committee on Social Rights (ECSR). All Oireachtas female Senators and TDs were contacted by email and I’m pleased to say that the ***Gender Pay Gap Information Bill*** is now in the fourth stage and will be before the Dáil early this year. (Report by Dr. Máire O’Connell available)

The Public Speaking Competition, due to be hosted by QWG in March this year 2021, has been cancelled. GWGA suggested that costings should be invoiced in advance to the IrFUW Treasurer and Carolyn Forster (QWG) suggested that paid Professional Adjudicators are necessary.

On a Positive note I’m happy to report that:

\* there are plans to update and revamp the IrFUW Website and we hope this will be completed in a few month’s time.

\* Aoife Price (TWG) has taken over as Editor of the IrFUW Newsletter and despite many difficulties published an Issue in Autumn 2020.

\* Nuala Ryan (UCD WGA) who represents IrFUW on the National Women’s Council of Ireland (NWCI) has been re-elected to the Board.

\* Carolyn Forster (QWG) has been elected as Chairperson of the Women’s Forum NI.

\* Work is in progress on updating the IrFUW Handbook.

\* A Zoom GWISB Meeting is planned for April, hosted by the Irish Federation.

Finally, the affiliation fees were discussed at the recent Council Meeting in December. These have been €26 for some time and this includes 25CHF (Swiss Francs) for GWI and €1 for UWE per member. The balance of around 73cent per member goes to IrFUW and this obviously doesn’t cover running expenses. Following a lengthy discussion the Council voted to increase the affiliation fees by €9 per member, to be implemented in 2022.

As there was no Fundraising Event in 2020 the Council also agreed that Fundraising Events could be held by Zoom - each Association choosing a Season and mounting an event with information to be circulated at a later date.

Sponsorship opportunities will also be explored.

Frances Patton

IrFUW President

January 2021