Differentiating TU Dublin through Practice-Based Learning and Employer Engagement

June 2025 (updated in September 2025 with additional exemplars)

1. Introduction

At its core, practice-based education involves learning by doing, with students engaging directly in work/professional placement or in activities that mirror the requirements of professional environments where they encounter real-life challenges and tasks. These experiences are then reflected upon and analysed as part of their overall learning process. This fosters deeper disciplinary understanding and reinforces the connection between theory and practice. Even when students don't go into actual workplaces, they can still engage in realistic, practice-oriented activities that build the same kinds of knowledge and skills. These include laboratory work, case studies, industry-based projects, problem-based learning, and community engaged research and learning.

A practice-based approach can be supported by a strong interface with, and engagement with, employers. This includes:

- Partnerships with employers, industry and the professions
- Professional accreditation
- Employer advisory boards
- Industry/professional experience of academic staff
- External involvement in quality assurance processes

Fundamentally, practice-based education fosters deeper disciplinary understanding and reinforces the connection between theory and practice.

Since Dr Lillis took up her position as President, she has emphasised the importance of TU Dublin differentiating itself in the competitive higher education landscape. Staff throughout the university have consistently suggested that our strongest differentiators lie in our practice-based learning and our depth of employer engagement. In order to surface real-world exemplars of this across all our faculties, campuses, and other areas, a workshop was convened on 26 May 2025.

All Faculty Deans and relevant Vice Presidents were invited to nominate representatives to attend the workshop, with over sixty people attending. In advance of the workshop, all attendees were invited to submit exemplars of practice-based learning and employer engagement from their areas. Over 200 submissions were received, summarised in the Appendix to this document.

Based on the analysis of the exemplars submitted and the discussion at the workshop, this document presents an overview of the ways in which Practice-Based Learning and Employer Engagement are enacted in TU Dublin and an analysis of how this differentiates us as an institution.

2. Differentiating TU Dublin

The roots of our differentiation as an institution lies in our **heritage**. Our predecessor institutions made a substantial contribution to the social and economic development of Dublin and Ireland by offering high quality, applied education in close consultation with relevant industries and

professions, with a regional remit to address the complex demands of industry and the long term educational needs of students. The use of marketing in the past to highlight that we are "A Step Closer to the Real World" reinforced for the public a view that education in TU Dublin prepared students for their careers through practical experience.

Our **relationships with industry and the professions** are developed and maintained by lecturers and professional service staff throughout the University, through strong and long-lasting interpersonal relationships that forms part of the culture of the University.

Our record of providing "job-ready graduates" to meet the needs of industry and the professions is well-established. A very high proportion of our graduates are recruited straight into employment, whether graduating at level 6, 7, 8, 9, or 10. Our **graduates are job-ready** because of the ways in which we enact practice-based education and the ways in which we engage with employers, as set out in section 3. Our students get substantial and repeated opportunities throughout their time in TU Dublin to engage in practical skills development and to engage with industry, employers and the professions, and this takes place from the commencement of their time in TU Dublin.

Our approach is enabled and supported by a commitment to **excellence in teaching and learning** with TU Dublin being the only university in Ireland in which new academic staff are required to undertake training leading to a qualification in this area.

Our relationships with our students are central to our approach to teaching and learning. Our smaller class sizes and tutorial / laboratory groups provide students with greater opportunities to build supportive **student-lecturer relationships and student-student relationships**. This provides students with greater opportunities to develop the skillset needed for personal and professional development. This takes place from year one onwards and is not something that could be easily replicated by other Universities that are structured and resourced differently.

Our programmes offer carefully designed, tailored, appropriate placement for programmes, where required. Our curricula are industry-aligned, with active involvement from practitioners in the design, implementation and monitoring of our programmes. Our students have access to industry standard equipment, and learn in real world facilities, clinics, restaurants, and laboratories. Many of our students receive accreditation from professional, regulatory and statutory bodies as part of their programmes, enabling them to practice immediately upon graduation. Our University offers a rich co-curriculum to students through which they can further develop their personal network, their connection to the University and their professional skills.

Our University offers an inclusive approach to education, where students who may not have achieved the same level of academic excellence as others prior to third level, are supported to achieve well respected qualifications and progress into employment – and progress from there within their area of employment. Our students get a higher proportion of time on career development support and have a greater focus on employability from year one relative to students in other Universities.

Our strengths in **practice-based education** and **employer engagement**, are key differentiators for TU Dublin. These strengths, based on exemplars from across the University (provided in Appendix), are detailed in section 3.

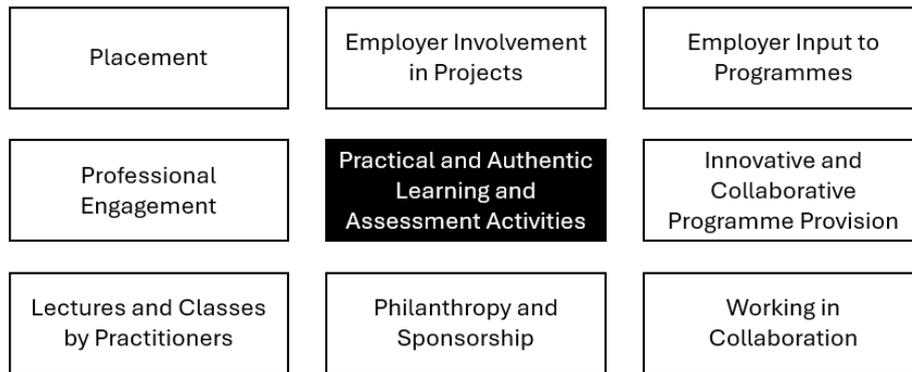# 3. Practice-Based Learning and Employer Engagement in TU Dublin

Placement	Employer Involvement in Projects	Employer Input to Programmes
Professional Engagement	**Practical and Authentic Learning and Assessment Activities**	Innovative and Collaborative Programme Provision
Lectures and Classes by Practitioners	Philanthropy and Sponsorship	Working in Collaboration

Figure 1 How Practice-Based Education and Employer Engagement is Enacted in TU Dublin

Practical and Authentic Learning and Assessment Activities are central to the student learning experience in TU Dublin. TU Dublin students spend a substantial proportion of their learning hours in practical settings on campus, including in laboratories, kitchens, and studios. In these environments, students are faced with authentic, realistic tasks and challenges through which they can develop their knowledge and skills. Learning activities often involve a variety of active learning methods that require students to engage with each other and to consider real-world issues. The incorporation of authentic assessment into programmes, whereby students are assessed while undertaking real-world-aligned activities, is a requirement of the University Education Model and is in widespread use across the University. Innovative pedagogical approaches such as Problem-Based Learning, Case-Based Learning and Simulation-Based Learning are employed on programmes to focus students on real-world scenarios. Students undertake Practice-Based Research for projects, in many cases. Students become directly involved in competitions (such as WorldSkills) and hackathons external to TU Dublin, and students engage in "live" environments such as in the production of a newspaper or in running a restaurant.

This learning experience is supported and enhanced through TU Dublin's distinctive strengths in eight identified supporting areas, shown in figure 1.

Placement is widely offered on programmes across TU Dublin. Placement involves students becoming embedded in a workplace for an extended period of time, with supervision both in the workplace and from their TU Dublin school. There is a wide variety of placement models in use in TU Dublin, each tailored to the needs of the specific programme. While the most common model is an extended placement in third year of a four-year degree programme, placements happen on many different types of programmes. Certain programmes have a regulatory requirement to provide a practice placement to students, while other programmes provide industry-based placement as a fixed or optional component of the programme. In some cases, placements are designed for a specific objective, such as to develop or implement a research project as part of the student's programme, while other placements address a more general requirement for students to acquire professional experience to enhance their skillset. Schools develop and make extensive use of their networks with employers to support and implement placement, while also often engaging with alumni and professional bodies to identify appropriate placement opportunities for students. Schools have also implemented creative alternatives to industry placement involving on-campus activities and community-based

placements. The assessment of placements involves reflection by the student on their learning while on placement and usually takes input from the placement provider as well as the TU Dublin School. Students are often prepared for placement with CV writing workshops, mock interviews, talks from employers and engagement with later years of their programme.

Employer involvement in projects, and the involvement more generally of "real-world" practitioners and industry partners in projects, provides an authentic environment within which students can develop their work-ready skillsets. Such projects are undertaken either within the student's programme or as part of a co-curricular activity (e.g. competition) for students in a sectoral area. Employers may be involved as judges of the final output of the student's work or may be more directly involved in projects as they are being developed and implemented. Employers may provide real-world datasets for student projects or help students to define the requirements for their project. Sometimes, project requirements are provided to students based on a real, live project. Employers and others external to TU Dublin can serve as real-world clients for consultancy projects undertaken by students in their programmes, or where TU Dublin students provide a professional service to the public in an on-campus setting - such as through a clinic or restaurant. Projects can involve multi-disciplinary teams working collaboratively with partners external to TU Dublin on challenges. The showcasing of project outputs for invited industry representatives or guests provides a networking opportunity for students.

Employer input to programmes, for each of design, implementation and review, ensures the currency and relevance of our programmes and the alignment of our programmes with industry needs. Industry advisory boards are implemented by many programmes and schools in the University to provide input and advice related to the activities of the School and the design of its programmes. The University's Quality Assurance system requires that industry representatives are directly involved in programme review panels and are usually involved in programme validation panels. Direct engagement with employers throughout the design process for programmes is a requirement of the quality framework. Programmes have external examiners that are industry-based or from the relevant profession. Certain programmes provide a supplementary student transcript that highlights how students have acquired transferable skills through their engagement with employers – and through other high impact activities – in their studies.

TU Dublin has a strong record in **innovative and collaborative programme provision** in partnership with employers, with the University developing programmes that respond to the needs of industry and the professions through close engagement with external stakeholders. This includes the development of innovative programmes through which students are based for a substantial proportion of their time with employers, using an "earn-and-learn", "learn-and-work" or apprenticeship model. Executive education provision and the provision of bespoke programmes for industry partners feature as part of the overall suite of part-time programmes offered by the University. Linked and collaborative provision, through which the University accredits a third party provider in the implementation of a programme, enables the University to support large scale upskilling or professional development programmes for various professions, and to support industry partners in upskilling their staff.

Lecturers in TU Dublin are involved in **professional engagement** as members and leaders of a multitude of professional bodies. Lecturers are directly involved in activities led by those bodies including accreditations, development of standards, and professional development. Programmes in TU Dublin are accredited and regulated through Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRB), where required. Many graduates of TU Dublin acquire membership of professional bodies based on completion of their programme, often required to practice in their

field. Lecturers and students engage with the profession to support project work and placement. Students on certain programmes may acquire certification related to their future profession throughout their studies.

Students in TU Dublin are taught in their **lectures and classes by practitioners**. Many TU Dublin lecturers have extensive experience in industry or their profession. Part-time lecturers are often actively practicing in their profession. Guest lecturing is widely used in the University to bring practitioners from the profession into the University to meet with and engage with students. Field trips and master classes serve a similar purpose by bringing students closer to their future profession and engaging with practitioners.

Industry and the professions have been generous with **philanthropy and sponsorship** in their support of TU Dublin programmes, often through the provision of industry-standard equipment for use by students throughout their studies, or through the sponsorship of prizes, awards or scholarships.

TU Dublin has an excellent record of **working in collaboration** with employers, industry and the professions on the support of undergraduate and postgraduate taught programmes, on Research and Innovation projects, on Community-Based Learning projects, consultancy projects and other collaborative partnerships through which TU Dublin provides support for a sector, an organisation or a community. These collaborations can involve undergraduate students, postgraduate student, researchers, lecturers and other staff, as required for a project.

4. Action Plan

The following actions will be taken to progress TU Dublin's differentiation initiative.

1. **Circulation to Staff**: A summary of the work to date on differentiating TU Dublin, including the list of exemplars compiled, will be circulated to staff prior to the end of the academic year.
2. **Conference, Semester 1 2025-26**: An internal conference for staff will be held in semester 1 of 2025-26, at which the enactment of practice-based education in TU Dublin, and the engagement with employers by TU Dublin as part of our programmes, will be explored with staff from across the University.
3. **Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy**: The development of this strategy will commence in the 2025-26 academic year. The strategy development will lead to actions that will enhance programmes and the student learning experience across the University by, *inter alia*, further embedding practice-based education and employer engagement in our programmes and activities.
4. **Communication of Exemplars**: Opportunities will be sought to publicise exemplars of practice-based education and employer engagement in the marketing and communications activities of the University.

Appendix: Summary of Exemplar Submissions

Note that many exemplars could be included in more than one category but are only listed in one category below.

Placement

Advanced Architectural Elective (School of Architecture, Building and Environment): Students do formal 'research placements' and develop in partnership with the practice a clear research agenda relevant to a current live project in the practice.

Aircraft Maintenance Engineering Apprenticeship (School of Transport and Civil Engineering): Students spend ~half their time in a simulated practical maintenance environment; the university works closely with employers to structure maintenance tasks in their live workplace.

Alumni (School of Social Sciences, Law, and Education): Engagement of graduates with school as practice-based supervisors and in providing placement opportunities for students.

Archive Studies and Real-world Engagement (School of Art & Design): These modules facilitate research on and placements with employers.

Brewing and Distilling Programme development through University-Industry Collaboration -(School of Food Science and Environmental Health): Co-created with industrial sector partners. Work placements and research projects strengthened industry ties through partnerships with employers and industry, and staff background.

Clinical Placement (School of Physics, Clinical and Optometric Sciences): External placement is undertaken by all students in final year of Optometry and Dispensing programmes

Computer Science Internships (School of Computer Science): 100+ internships in year 3 of 3 undergraduate programmes in computer science.

Design + Construct at TU Dublin Broombridge (Faculty of Engineering & Built Environment): Direct industry (employer) engagement with project since inception including partnership workshops, expert lecturers, brief development, industry networking, work placements/ internships, apprenticeship development and programme and module development.

Engagement with practice-based supervisors. (School of Social Sciences, Law, and Education): Engagement with practice-based supervisors.

Enhancing Work Placements Through University-Industry Collaboration (School of Food Science and Environmental Health): Faced with diverse career pathways and industry requirements, the university partnered with employers to co-design tailored placement experiences.

Event Experience (School of Tourism and Hospitality Management): Students complete 150 hours of practical event experience during their first year at University.

Event Planning and Production (School of Tourism and Hospitality Management): Students develop a Live Event plan and then operationalise the Live Event in a real-world setting, such as nightclub, gallery etc

Hospital Placement (School of Biological, Health and Sports Sciences): Medical Science student spend all of year 3 on hospital placement rotating through all of the medical science disciplines before they select their specialist discipline in year 4.

Hospital Placement for Clinical Measurement Science (School of Physics, Clinical and Optometric Sciences): 20 hospitals - 24 weeks (8 weeks per discipline) of practice education in Stage 3 and 13 weeks in stage 4. Each year approximately 140 clinical placements are completed.

Hotel Placement (School of Tourism and Hospitality Management): Students complete 150 hours of practical work experience in a hotel/restaurant setting

Industry Work Placement (School of Architecture, Building and Environment): The placement delivers huge value creating a positive Industry-University collaboration confirming the course content is relevant and that quality teaching has been delivered.

International Professional Placement (School of Tourism and Hospitality Management): Students complete a 6-month industry placement in a hotel abroad.

National Optometry Centre (School of Physics, Clinical and Optometric Sciences): Students undertake internal clinical placement in the university's purpose built clinical educational and training facility, the National Optometry Centre (NOC).

Part-Time Programme (School of Media): The BA (Hons) in Screen Industry Practice is an 18-month part-time programme, developed in partnership with Screen Ireland aimed at experienced professionals.

Physics Work Placement Module (School of Physics, Clinical and Optometric Sciences): 40 to 50 students in hospitals, research institutions, and high-tech companies gaining exposure to sectors such as medical physics, spectroscopy, nanotechnology, quality assurance, and data science.

Placement (School of Biological, Health and Sports Sciences): Biomedical & Molecular Diagnostic year 3 students spend 14 weeks full time on a placement in a diagnostic setting in either industry, hospital or research centre.

Practical Sports Placement (School of Tourism and Hospitality Management): Students complete 75 hours of practical sports/leisure work experience.

Practice placement in undergraduate programmes. (School of Social Sciences, Law, and Education): Practice placement in undergraduate programmes.

Practicum (School of Global Business): Undertake a practicum in event management where they organise a live event from start to finish while also gathering sponsorship for a charity

Pre placement workshops (Student Success - Careers): Working with students to support them with the application process for placement role. In addition running interview skills workshops - informed by industry requirements.

Private Sector Environmental Health Professional Practice (School of Food Science and Environmental Health): Placement experience at the cutting edge of real-world challenges and operations. Employers have access to potential graduate interns and future employees. Alumni contribute to placement assessment.

Professional Placement with the National Environmental Health Service (School of Food Science and Environmental Health): This educational platform facilitates the NEHS to be in direct collaboration with and communication with TU Dublin along with other national programme stakeholders.

Professional Work Placement (School of Tourism and Hospitality Management): Students complete a 6 month industry placement in the Sports & Leisure industry or Events sector.

Research Project Showcase (School of Biological, Health and Sports Sciences): All year 4 students in the school undertake a 12 week research project in year 4 The results are showcased in a poster presentation open to both internal and external project supervisors.

Resources (Student Success - Careers): There is scope to develop some resources and workshops around transition into the workplace.

Start Up Lab (GROWTHhub): Alternative to work placement that puts into practice the underlying theories of entrepreneurship.

Sustainable culinary workshops (School of Culinary Arts and Food Technology): 12 week alternative placement module was developed where students created and led workshops for DEIS primary and secondary school within the local community of Grangegorman.

Work Placement (School of Architecture, Building & Environment): The final year schedule is structured to permit students to continue in their placements in suitable circumstances. Many students find graduate positions resulting from their placement.

Work Placement (School of Business Technology, Retail, and Supply Chain): Third year students in both TU924 BSc eCommerce in Retailing and TU925 BSc Retail and Services Mgmt. undertake 12 weeks placements in Sem 2.

Work placement (School of Marketing & Entrepreneurship): Almost all full-time students have a work placement.

Work Placement (School of Mathematics and Statistics): In third year of our undergraduate degree in mathematics and statistics students go on work placement (it is mandatory). Our competitors do not offer work placement.

Work Placement Modules (School of Electrical and Electronic Engineering): Students become employees, gaining firsthand experience with workplace practices, procedures, and structures.

Work Placement opportunities (School of Surveying and Construction Innovation): Work placement in the programmes provides students with practical, real-world experience in the construction/property industry.

Work Placement (School of Enterprise Computing and Digital Transformation): Industry partners, including leading organisations within the ICT sector such as Amazon AWS, IBM, Fidelity, Ericsson, Microsoft, CISCO, SAP, Ergo, Mastercard, Work Human, and Workday.

Work Placements (School of Art & Design): In the third year, students engage in work placements with various retailers across Ireland, focusing on window displays and shop floor arrangements.

Y2-3 Placement (School of Art & Design): 2nd year students went on a two-week Sem 1 placement. In 3rd year they were on placement for two days a week and were marked on their design installations within their placement.

Employer Involvement in Projects

Irish Hospitality Industry (School of Hospitality Management and Tourism): Co-design of real-life cross-cultural industry challenge for first year Intercultural Competence students, including a "Dragon's Den" style activity with guest speakers from IHI.

Global Citizenship in the Workplace Module (School of Hospitality Management and Tourism): Collaboration with AIB, ESB, Workhuman and other organisations to develop design thinking Equality, Diversity and Inclusion challenges for students.

LinkedIn Chief HR Officer (Enterprise Academy): Following a visit to TU Dublin for the Enterprise Academy's Future Talent Forum, LinkedIn Chief HR Officer Steve Cadigan wrote about how TU Dublin is "showing what's possible when education, industry, and curiosity collide".

Be A TrailblazHER (Enterprise Engagement & TrailblazHER): Through direct interaction with professionals from leading companies like intel, ESB, Jones Engineering, Fidelity Investments, Workday and many more, students build valuable networks, strengthen their confidence.

Business Case Study (School of Mathematics & Statistics): Real-world data is analysed and modelled to draw realistic conclusions and insights.

Business Simulations (School of Management, People and Organisation): Students run their own companies, and compete in dynamic business environments building skills for real life business scenarios - connect theory to practice within a digital simulated business.

Competitions (School of Culinary Arts and Food Technology): Culinary Arts and Baking and Pastry Management students are mentored to take part in real world competition environments.

Consultancy Projects (Graduate Business School): Consultancy Projects: we do a significant number of consultancy projects on both a full time and part time basis.

Culinary Kitchens (School of Culinary Arts and Food Technology): Culinary students learn culinary skills in practice kitchens which they use in the real-world environments of the culinary restaurants on the Grangegorman and Tallaght campuses.

Culinary Shop (School of Culinary Arts and Food Technology): Baking and pastry arts management students produce baking and pastry products which are used in the restaurant or sold in the culinary shop.

Design Project (School of Transport and Civil Engineering): Employers set a project brief (usually based on a real life project they are working on) and students design a solution.

Digital Health Transformation with Tallaght University Hospital and Amazon (School of Enterprise Computing and Digital Transformation): Students collaborate directly with clinicians and healthcare professionals to address real-world challenges faced by the hospital, gaining valuable experience in applying technology to improve healthcare delivery.

Educating 21st Century Horticulturists in an integrated education programme (Societal Engagement): Through this collaboration, Fourth Year Horticulture (TU884) students taking a Social and Therapeutic Horticulture module join learners from AVISTA in an integrated class setting.

ENFUSE (School of Management, People and Organisations): Run by Dublin City Council and the Local Enterprise Office, the initiative connects students with local enterprises and social enterprises.

Enterprise Challenge (School of Media): Students work in multi-disciplinary teams to tackle a challenge or problem posed by an enterprise or civic partner

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Enterprise Faculty (Enterprise Academy @Convene): Close collaboration with Huawei to co-create the Business Sustainability Enterprise Challenge, 175 students participating from three different programmes as well as exchange students.

Extensive use of real clients on programmes (School of Marketing & Entrepreneurship): There were more than 500 students in the School this year who undertook a live brief. Real world learning that transforms them as people and practitioners.

Final Year Poster Competition (School of Transport and Civil Engineering): Judges from industry (from four different employers).

Game Jam (School of Global Business): Multidisciplinary teams where students from international business, creative digital media and game design come together to develop education learning games online.

Graduate Exhibition (School of Art & Design): Graduate Exhibition showcases the work of our final year students to potential employers and the general public.

Independent Credits Module (School of Art & Design): An Independent Credits Module can be proposed by students in summertime between years 2 and 3 to further develop employee engagement.

Industry Judging Panels (School of Culinary Arts and Food Technology): Masters students create food products from scratch, puts them through consumer testing, create marketing materials and present them in a showcase with judges from industry.

International Company Hackathons (School of Management, People and Organisation): Students work in integrated groups with an international partner University on a real life industry problem presented by client companies.

ivenTUre (GROWTHhub): Summer programme for entrepreneurial and business development skills, culminating in a pitch to an industry panel.

ivenTUre Student Accelerator (Enterprise Engagement & TrailblazHER): Hands-on experience in entrepreneurship, students develop critical skills in problem-solving, innovation, teamwork, and pitching, all while building their own ventures. Mentorship from industry experts.

Living thesis (School of Culinary Arts and Food Technology): Planning and creating an immersive dining experience is undertaken by Botanical Cuisine students in place of a written thesis. This is attended by chefs and industry partners.

Market Research Project (School of Management, People and Organisations): Team project that culminates in a Boardroom Battle where the top three teams present their ideas senior management from industry.

MentorHER Programme with TrailblazHER (Enterprise Engagement & TrailblazHER): Engaging with mentors who share real-world knowledge and guidance, students gain valuable insights into industry expectations and opportunities.

On-site careers fairs (Student Success - Careers): On-site careers fairs.

Presentations to Industry Partners (School of Business Technology, Retail, and Supply Chain): Industry partners such as Primark and Brown Thomas/Arnotts present themes to students who choose a themes to research - they present this work to the industry partners who provide feedback.

Professional Development and Practical Mathematics (School of Mathematics and Statistics): Prior to third year work placement which students take in the second semester, students take modules such as Professional Development and Practical Mathematics.

Professional Orchestra (Conservatoire): RTE Concert Orchestra: MOU that enables MMus orchestral conducting students to conduct this professional orchestra either in the Conservatoire Concert Hall or in RTE for their final practical assignment.

Professional Project (School of Media): Flagship module on the Creative Digital Media degree, providing students with a unique opportunity to engage in real-world, practice-based learning through collaboration with external clients.

Professional Skills modules (School of Physics, Clinical and Optometric Sciences): Students meet health care user representatives from different cohorts of the community to enhance their patient interaction skills and develop empathy.

Talking Points Module (School of Art & Design): In final year, students have a collaborative Talking Points module and a Cultural Project option which are both public-facing event-based modules.

Team Project (School of Computer Science): Industry partner collaboration on a design and build module for year 3 undergraduate students in a team project setting.

Employer Input to Programmes

Executive Education (Graduate Business School): Multiple programmes offered, including Workday Design Thinking Enterprise Challenge.

Advisory Board (Graduate Business School): We have an industry advisory board for our School.

External Examiners and Accreditation Panels (School of Transport and Civil Engineering): For programmes in other Colleges, for Engineers Ireland etc.

Financial Sector (School of Mathematics & Statistics): Work with employers from the financial sector (Aviva, Davy, New Ireland, Zurich, etc.), climate (Met Éireann), technology (Meta, SAP), science (Johnson & Johnson) as well as schools and community groups.

Industrial Liaison (School of Electrical and Electronic Engineering): To ensure a relevant and authentic curriculum, the school collaborates with industrial liaison panels, focusing on embedding sustainability in electrical energy engineering.

Industry and Professional Liaison board (School of Surveying and Construction Innovation): Industry and Professional Liaison board (IPLB) was established within all disciplines within the school. Membership of the IPLB includes leading professionals across the industry.

Programme Development and QA (School of Mathematics & Statistics): QA events have exploited the wide range of sectors which our graduates serve, with external panel members coming from financial, technology and sustainability backgrounds.

Student Transformative Learning record (School of Global Business): Students to gain a transcript of how they can demonstrate development of transversal skills through their curriculum, extra-curricular activities and volunteering.

TU Dublin Enterprise Academy (Convene): Working with enterprise partners to understand their talent development needs and to broker collaboration with TU Dublin schools to co-design educational solutions.

Practical and Authentic Learning and Assessment Activities

Automotive Sales Video (School of Transport and Civil Engineering): Students create a sales video highlighting a vehicle's features, performance, unique selling points (USPs), and customer benefits, preparing students for actual real world working methods.

Case Study Questions (School of Physics, Clinical and Optometric Sciences): Examination papers of TU868 and TU155 include examples of authentic assessment by including case study type questions.

Case-Based Learning (CBL) (School of Physics, Clinical and Optometric Sciences): Presenting real clinical cases for students to analyse helps them apply theoretical knowledge to real-world situations. This approach encourages critical thinking and problem-solving.

Cross Campus Events (School of Enterprise Computing and Digital Transformation): Amazon Game Days, NVidia Deep Learning workshops and World Skills Cloud Computing where student develop their cloud computing skills and AI in real-world simulated business contexts in supporting business process in the cloud

Design Project Module (School of Transport and Civil Engineering): TU Dublin and Rochester Institute of Technology - NY - students are paired in teams to collaborate in the completion of four civil projects, designed to directly emulate professional practice.

Designing Practice (School of Architecture, Building and Environment): Module examines the role of the professional architect from economic, societal, and environmental perspectives.

Drama and Advocacy Workshops (Societal Engagement): Through this unique collaboration, participants use drama and hypothetical scenarios to practice self-advocacy in a range of real-life situations.

Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) (Sustainability Education): Through a small SATLE grant, student societies are also supported to do real-world sustainability projects and have engaged with St Vincent De Paul, Foodcloud and many other NGOs and social enterprises.

Elevating Pharmacy Technician Development Through Real-World Learning and Stakeholder Engagement (School of Food Science and Environmental Health): The Pharmacy Technician Studies Programme exemplifies practice-based education through strong stakeholder partnerships and real-world learning, with many examples of excellent practice.

Employability Guides and Resources (Library Services): LibGuides available here.

Escape rooms (School of Global Business): Gamification of management principles in year 1 of BBS programmes.

Green-Campus (Societal Engagement): 50+ external partners - local authorities, community groups, NGOs, government bodies, and industry partners - on initiatives such as tree planting, recycling, workshops, and public campaigns.

Horticulture (School of Culinary Arts and Food Technology): Modules on the horticulture programme take a hands on approach to developing the horticultural skills to students.

Integrative Case Study Method (School of Management, People and Organisation): The process is an integrative case approach which combines practice based learning, problem based learning and case study teaching.

Kitchen (School of Tourism and Hospitality Management): Live Kitchen and Restaurant practice modules on campus.

Lean Manufacturing (School of Architecture, Building and Environment): Gamification is used to create a production line assembling electrical 3pin plugs in 10minute round intervals. After each round, a kaizen event is undertaken.

Learner Assembly (Student Services): Learner Assembly(LA) – Autumn 2025 will focus specifically on the theme of Belonging.

Natural Environment Project (School of Architecture, Building & Environment): Range of modules across Stages 2-3 undertake a multi-day field trip in a sensitive natural environment setting, meeting with key local experts to discuss contemporary environmental challenges.

Open Days (Admissions): Seeing practical demonstrations and taking part in tours during an open day is highly effective for prospective students, brings the university experience to life in a way that brochures and presentations cannot.

Partnership with Vision Ireland (Sustainability): The initiative sets out to: learn how to make transport more accessible to people with disabilities; support the upskilling of professionals working to develop sustainable mobility and active travel infrastructure.

Practice-based research (PBR) (Faculty of Arts and Humanities): The aim of PBR is to foster researcher identity and skills at UG level.

Problem-Based Learning (PBL) (School of Physics, Clinical and Optometric Sciences): Students work in groups to solve complex clinical physiology problems, fostering teamwork, research skills, and the application of theoretical concepts to clinical practice.

Problem-Based Learning (School of Transport and Civil Engineering): Students are given a developing country and have to research, design and construct a pedestrian bridge to cross a river after a flood event using local materials.

Projects (Conservatoire): Stages of Memory Project (collaboration with Grangegorman Histories): Online Presentations; Play Commission and performance; Documentary (screened as part of Dublin Festival of History); Podcast

Real world Problems (Sustainability Education): Examples include the Huawei Sustainability Challenge, the PGCert in Sustainability leadership consultancy project with enterprise or NGOs, the MBA do Hacking for Sustainability consultancy projects

School Visits (Admissions): Showcasing real-world, hands-on opportunities available to students across disciplines during school visits. Strong links with industry, applied projects, and state-of-the-art facilities

Simulation-based Learning (School of Physics, Clinical and Optometric Sciences): Using medical simulation tools to recreate clinical scenarios, such as monitoring patient vitals or diagnosing conditions, allows students to practice in a controlled, risk-free environment.

Site Visits (School of Mechanical Engineering): Students visit factories as part of their development and complete assignments on what they see in the specific factories.

Speaking Up! (Societal Engagement): Through collaboration students prepared an advocacy presentation about a human rights issue.

Studio teaching model (School of Architecture, Building and Environment): Programmes are structured around a studio teaching model, with over half the ECTS in each programme attributed to design studio modules.

Supporting National and International Excellence in Computing (School of Enterprise Computing and Digital Transformation): These competitions are supported by Amazon Ireland who lend expertise and platforms for two to three competitions and jams every year.

SuSTECHTOUR (Societal Engagement): Students developed a multi-media output and a report including recommendations around the use of technologies to develop awareness and knowledge of sustainable and regenerative tourism

Talking Points Seminar (Faculty of Arts and Humanities): Students develop the theme, produce papers and coordinate the semi-public presentation of their research - engaging with community and society to discuss real world issues.

The Liberty Newspaper (School of Media): Simulating a real-world newsroom, students work as journalists with lectures adopting senior editorial roles.

TU Dublin Graduate Attributes (Office of the Registrar): The TU Dublin Graduate Attributes articulate the skills, qualities and capabilities developed and enriched through all our academic programmes and extracurricular activities, learning and work experiences.

TU Dublin Sustainability Graduate Spotlight series (Sustainability): This campaign runs during key student recruitment periods for all prospective students. The campaign aims to: Develop Strong Industry Links; Applied Learning Approach; Innovative Programmes.

TY events and courses (Admissions): TY students get a valuable opportunity to experience practice-based learning in a university setting, allowing them to explore different disciplines through hands-on activities and real-world applications.

University Education Model (Academic Affairs): The UEM and the Academic Regulatory Framework are designed to both recognize and value learning achieved in diverse settings including the classroom (real or virtual), the workplace, or in wider society.

University Education Model (Academic Affairs): The UEM fundamentals advocate for student agency and diverse learning experiences.

University Education Model (Office of the Registrar): The University Education Model (UEM) provides the scaffold to holistically embed practice-based learning into all Programmes. Programmes are encouraged to integrate 'authentic' learning experiences.

Work Ready Graduates (Convene): Emphasis placed by the TU Dublin President in recent graduation speeches on practice based learning, learning by doing and real world experience to ensure that are graduates are work ready.

Workshop and Studio Practice (School of Art & Design): Throughout their programme of study, students use skills and knowledge developed through workshop and studio practice, to engage with physically making, testing and iterating their ideas.

WorldSkills (Admissions): Current students applying and refining their technical skills in a high-pressure, competitive environment that mirrors real industry settings.

WorldSkills Competition (School of Electrical and Electronic Engineering): Annual internal competition for our Level 6 apprentices, the winners of this competition can progress to the WorldSkills Ireland competition.

Innovative and Collaborative Programme Provision

Access Foundation Programme and International Foundation Programme: An important part of what differentiates TU Dublin, with TU Dublin having the largest Access programme in the country with students going on to complete qualifications up to PhD in various areas.

Process Instrumentation and Automation Learn and Work (School of Electrical and Electronic Engineering): The programme is a three year Level 7 BSc with eighteen months of work experience embedded across the three years.

Certificate in Medical Device Regulation (School of Mechanical Engineering): Over the last two years the school has had nearly 300 level 9 online learners come through three accredited 5 ECTS certificates accredited by TU Dublin and delivered by a notified body, SGS, cofunded through an EU project NoBoCap.

Certificate in Food Entrepreneurship (School of Culinary Arts and Food Technology): Certificate in Food Entrepreneurship was recently developed by the school in collaboration with Supervalu, the National Local Enterprise Offices and TU Dublin's Enterprise Academy.

Co-Design – Certificate in Applied Procurement Management with BT Sourced (Enterprise Academy @Convene): Co-design of bespoke Certificate in Applied Procurement Management offered to BT staff internationally.

Collaborative Provision – Certificate in Food Entrepreneurship with SuperValu and Local Enterprise Offices (Enterprise Academy @Convene): Accredits an existing initiative designed to support early-stage food and drink entrepreneurs, scaffolded by a technical module. Delivered in collaboration with SuperValu and the Local Enterprise Offices.

Collaborative Provision (Convene): Enterprise Academy's role in collaborative provision and jointly working to validate, deliver or manage programmes that will lead to TU Dublin awards in line with QQI requirements.

Data Centre Technician Certificate Programme (School of Enterprise Computing and Digital Transformation): this programme has operated for 7 years with AWS and is one of the fastest routes to a career change with full time employment available at any programme in TU Dublin.

Diageo Learning for Life (School of Culinary Arts and Food Technology): The Diageo Learning for Life programme is a programme in basic culinary skills developed by the School, supported by Diageo, for students from marginalised communities.

Earn-and-learn (School of Surveying and Construction Innovation): This approach allows students to work in the property, construction, and infrastructure industries while attending college one day per week.

Executive Education (Graduate Business School): Partner with a significant number of organisations to offer customised executive education. We then leverage those partnerships for expert guest speakers, a seminar series, company visits, live projects etc.

GetReskilled (School of Chemical and BioPharmaceutical Sciences): 20-year industry-academia partnership; 14 consecutive Springboard+ contracts; Over 2,000 mature students over the past 20-years have taken CPD awards; Over 75 graduates from the BSc

Human Centred AI Masters (School of Enterprise Computing and Digital Transformation): Applied programme focused on industry needs. The development partnership of the programme included four universities, three SMEs and three research centres across Europe.

InnopharmaLabs (School of Chemical and BioPharmaceutical Sciences): Accreditation by TU Dublin of programmes at L6-9

Laboratory Apprentice (School of Chemical and BioPharmaceutical Sciences): Earn while you learn education which combines workplace learning with an academic component to gain to a qualification at levels 6-7 on the National Framework of Qualifications.

Learn+Work programme (School of Informatics and Cybersecurity): Combines academic study with substantial industry experience: each year, students spend five months in full-time study and seven months on paid work placement, working four days a week and attending university one day a week.

Panoraima (School of Enterprise Computing and Digital Transformation): Its objective is to develop Master's programmes and modular content tailored for non-ICT specialists. The central theme is Responsible AI, with initial focus areas including Health, Media, Regulation, Management, and Finance.

Part-Time Civil Engineering Programmes (School of Transport and Civil Engineering): Students work with an employer 4 days per week and attend classes 1 day per week.

Research Technique & Dissemination (School of Architecture, Building & Environment): Part-time postgraduate education to upskill the professional community and to provide a platform for expert individuals to innovate, disseminate and create new knowledge areas.

RPL based on Work Placement (School of Mechanical Engineering): Students can be exempted from a professional development module if they can demonstrate how they managed to meet the module LOs during a formal period of work placement with a company.

Validation of ESB Programmes (School of Electrical and Electronic Engineering): Our Power Plant Technology (Plant Operations) and (Plant Management) programmes are delivered by the ESB to their employees, who work in the operation and management of electrical power stations.

Workday Partnership (Partnerships): The diversity of work carried out with Workday from programmes, to support for research, and access and outreach.

Professional Engagement

Accreditation (School of Global Business): Undertake REPs accreditation as part of their programme of student.

CORU Accreditation (School of Physics, Clinical and Optometric Sciences): Optometry / Dispensing programmes are regulated by CORU, Ireland multi-profession health and social care regulator and the discipline has a high level of engagement with CORU to maintain their approval.

Development of National Standards (School of Electrical and Electronic Engineering): Staff across the school have been, and continue to be, involved in the development of various industrial standards.

Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) (Sustainability Education): SATLE teaching and learning projects are focused on practice-based education e.g. third year students become accredited as BER assessors.

Embedding sustainability in food degrees (School of Food Science and Environmental Health): Lecturer professional development programme that assimilated inputs from stakeholders across the food system, including enterprise and the public sector, food professionals and sustainability experts.

Engineers Ireland Accreditation (School of Electrical and Electronic Engineering): This School staff, together with colleagues in the other Schools in the Faculty, have contributed to the Accreditation Board of Engineers Ireland and to multiple Accreditation Panels.

Marketing Institute of Ireland (School of Marketing & Entrepreneurship): We are deeply connected to employers through their 2,000+ member companies, collaborative provision, panels, competency framework.

Membership of Institutions (School of Transport and Civil Engineering): The majority of our engineering academics are members of: Engineers Ireland, The Institution of Structural Engineers and The Institution of Civil Engineers, often at Chartered or Fellowship membership.

Professional accreditation (School of Transport and Civil Engineering): Staff are accredited to various institutions including to the Institute of the Motor Industry (Fellow), WorldSkills's Expert, Advance HE (Fellow)

Professional Body Accreditation (School of Physics, Clinical and Optometric Sciences): Significant and continuous engagement with: Optometry Ireland (OI); Irish Association of Dispensing Opticians (IADO); Federation of Ophthalmic and Dispensing Opticians (FODO), Ireland

Professional Communities (School of Physics, Clinical and Optometric Sciences): Optical Registration Board, CORU, College of Optometrists in the U.K., British Universities Committee of Contact Lens Educators (BUCCLE) and Optometry Schools Council (OSC), World Council of Optometry (WCO)

Professional Diploma in Architectural Practice (School of Architecture, Building and Environment): One of only two established Professional Examination routes to the Statutory Register of Architects. Each student must identify a practice based mentor who supports them through their studies.

Qualifying (School of Tourism and Hospitality Management): Students on Sports & Leisure Management qualify in Occupational First Aid, Pool Lifeguards and Swim Teachers

Skills for Success module (School of Global Business): Linked with Microsoft Office Specialist certification in year 1 & 2 of BBS programmes

Lectures and Classes by Practitioners

Careers in sessions (Student Success - Careers): We invite employers and alumni in to speak about careers in different sectors. Usually in short presentation / Q& A format . Also includes graduate pathways.

Common Purpose Dublin Legacy (School of Global Business): 3 day leadership development programme in November each year. The programme is sponsored by partners such as Google, IDA, EY, NTMA, Iarnrod Eireann and Foroige and runs in the Google's Foundry and IDA HQ.

Company Presentations (School of Mathematics and Statistics): Fourth years talk to the 3rd year about their work placement experience. A brief talk is given by a company offering internships (e.g. Accenture-Dr Laura Alvarez-Jubete).

Employer Engagement (School of Transport and Civil Engineering): Liaison with employers for field trip, guest lecturers, mock interviews and graduate placement

Employer Workshops (School of Mathematics & Statistics): Employer workshops where external partners were invited to talk to our students about careers for mathematicians and statisticians, the roles in their sector and provide insight into their businesses.

Engineering and Society (School of Transport and Civil Engineering): The module incorporates a programme of guest lectures from industry experts.

Event Operations (School of Tourism and Hospitality Management): industry guest lectures from our strategic partners to highlight work experience opportunities for students working in an operational capacity in the events industry

Guest Lecturers (School of Culinary Arts and Food Technology): Industry providers are invited in on a regular basis as guest lecturers in individual practical classes.

Guest Lectures (School of Mechanical Engineering): We regularly have guest lecturers on campus giving lectures on specialist topics.

Industry/professional experience of academic staff (School of Transport and Civil Engineering): Many staff have industry experience - for example 33+ years industry from apprentice to national aftersales manager, from retail to distributor level, worked nationally and internationally.

Master Classes and Guest Speakers (School of Enterprise Computing and Digital Transformation): Experienced CIOs, Senior ICT professionals from diverse backgrounds, sectors, industries, and global contexts serve as guest speakers on the programmes, offering insights, experiences, and anecdotes relevant to the course modules.

Masterclasses (School of Culinary Arts and Food Technology): A series of masterclasses are held every year to which all culinary staff and students are invited during which chefs from industry showcase specific techniques or foods.

Part-Time Staff (School of Architecture, Building and Environment): Studio teaching teams comprising full time staff and part time educator/practitioners who bring contemporary industry and practice skills and knowledge to the teaching and learning environment.

SISK Surveying Masterclass (School of Transport and Civil Engineering): Surveying masterclass hosted by SISK where students use skills developed in their Engineering Surveying module to carry out examples of real-world surveying exercises.

Work placement (School of Global Business): Some companies are so impressed they have asked to be able market the placements to the students and this year 1 set of presentations took place on the campus of Fidelity.

Philanthropy and Sponsorship

Amazon Web Services Partnership (Partnerships): AWS programme on Tallaght Campus, including support for the ED Tips project.

Award Sponsorship (School of Physics, Clinical and Optometric Sciences): School's annual academic awards, 23 prizes are presented to students of the Optometric Sciences discipline and 20 of these are sponsored by industry/professional body partners.

Cygnum Awards (School of Transport and Civil Engineering): Cygnum offer an annual award, worth €1,000 for each winner, for academic excellence in a timber construction-related project.

Industry Sponsorship (School of Computer Science): Industry sponsored prizes for the final year project show case for 3 undergraduate programmes and sponsorship of lab facilities and equipment.

Irish National Opera Scholarship (Conservatoire): Irish National Opera: funded scholarship for MMus in Repetiteur which enables the recipient to work with a professional opera company.

Philanthropic donations (School of Physics, Clinical and Optometric Sciences): TU Dublin Transforming Tomorrow campaign when approximately €1 Million of funding/equipment was raised to secure the discipline's ability to equip the National Optometry Centre (NOC)

Scholarships (School of Culinary Arts and Food Technology): Several of the school's industry partners provide scholarships to students.

Sponsorship (School of Transport and Civil Engineering): Sponsorship of equipment from various employers, e.g. Soils Mechanics equipment from GDCL Consulting Engineers; Concrete Mixer from Roadstone; Structural teaching frames from O Connor Sutton Cronin

Women studying Mathematics (School of Mathematics & Statistics): Work with Kastus (surface technologies) to provide an industry-funded scholarship for women studying undergraduate mathematics at TU Dublin.

Working in Collaboration

EUT+: TU Dublin is collaborating across Europe with partners on projects such as those identified through [EUT+ Accellerate](#).

ARISE programme (HEMS Research Hub): The HEMS Research Hub is heavily involved in the ARISE program. The five ARISE Business Development Managers generate leads with industry to create projects.

ARISE Programme (Research and Innovation - Engagement and Impact): Five Business Development Managers who broker/develop relationships between university experts and regionally based enterprises, 23 new PhD projects with employer involvement.

Coaching in Schools (School of Global Business): Provide coaching as part of their programme of study directly with schools.

Commercial partners for Research (Research and Innovation): Extensive engagement within R&I function under Enterprise Ireland funding and also joint funded projects in collaboration with commercial partners (including clinical trials).

Community-Based Enterprises (School of Architecture, Building and Environment): Fourth and fifth year BArch students have an opportunity to conduct community engaged, practice-based learning.

Engaged Research PhD projects - Smart Self Care for Dementia project (Research and Innovation - Engagement and Impact): Multidisciplinary team across Computer Science, Engineering and Society, with External Collaborator.

Engaged Research Societal Challenge Projects - Leaf No Waste (Research and Innovation - Engagement and Impact): Multidisciplinary team of contract research staff to examine the impact of agricultural interventions on reducing the risk of food loss along the supply chain.

Exercise for special populations module (School of Tourism and Hospitality Management): E.g. Working with communities of older adults

FinTech Collaborative Providers (Partnerships): Fintech Gathering for collaborative providers took place in the Central Quad in April 2025

Future Makers Collective (Faculty of Arts and Humanities): Future Makers Collective (TA campus) is a group of educators, students, creative professionals, and organisations working together to address societal and environmental issues at the nexus of art, media, and technology.

Healthy Campus (Societal Engagement): Healthy Campus is a University wide project seeking to 'develop and promote a collaborative and sustainable approach to the health & wellbeing of the TU Dublin community', with external collaborators.

Industry linked research projects (HEMS Research Hub): The HEMS Research Hub regularly hosts students from TU Dublin and overseas (primarily France) working on industry linked projects.

International Women's Day (School of Transport and Civil Engineering): Annual event where women volunteers from AtkinsRéalis and TU Dublin present on their experiences of being Women in Engineering to over 50 female TY Secondary students from local schools.

Joint funding of a PhD scholarships (Research and Innovation): Fiosraigh Business Partnership scheme - e.g. with the Irish Blood Transfusion Service - the project brings together the knowledge of TU Dublin researchers to look at ways to improve blood service provision.

Membership of National Research Ethics Committee for clinical trials (Research and Innovation): Supports the rollout of clinical trials for academic/industrial partnerships that include Ireland.

New Venture Creation (School of Management, People and Organisations): Working in groups, students raise money for charities.

Nourishing Communities (Societal Engagement): Collaboration outputs are tailored for each participant and may include nutrition workshops and educational materials designed to address specific health issues.

Occupancy Evaluation of Ava Housing Completed Project Case Studies (Societal Engagement): Students worked with Ava Housing to explore an approach to the occupancy evaluation in the real-world.

Professional Development & Wider Engagement (School of Architecture, Building and Environment): Students participated in social engagement projects.

Promoting Computing as a discipline nationwide (School of Enterprise Computing and Digital Transformation): 10,000 online on the CsInc digital platform. Leaving Certificate Computer Science (LCCS) focused workshop to over 1,000 LCCS students; Professional Development to over 1,600 teachers.

Raising awareness of social injustice in communities affected by domestic violence (Societal Engagement): TU Dublin Marketing and Entrepreneurship students worked with Saoirse to explore its impact in communities and to develop an event to raise funds for and awareness of this social issue.

Serious Games for Social Impact – A Game Design Initiative (School of Media): Students collaborate with community, cultural, and charitable organisations to co-design games that address real-world challenges and create meaningful outcomes.

Skills Development (School of Global Business): Working with AVISTA and other such services to develop and implement adapted physical activity programmes for the services

SPARK (Sustainability Education): Sustainability are partners in the Pobal-funded SPARK project which aims to build a climate resilient community in Phibsboro through a cooperative system approach.

Sustainability Action Lab (Societal Engagement): Through Sustainability Action Lab, students, academics and Collaboration Partners work together on knowledge exchange and co-creation and engage in critical thinking.

Switch on STEM with Biology (Societal Engagement): Students work in groups to prepare short 10-minute scientific demonstrations and educational infographics/resources which they then apply at an on-site event for local primary school pupils.

Technology Gateways (HEMS Research Hub): The HEMS Research Hub hosts three Technology Gateways (some ISO 9001 accredited) which engage with between 80 and 100 companies per year.

Undergraduate Practice-Based Research Community of Practice (Faculty of Arts and Humanities): E.g. practice-based case studies by students on placement who worked with second language children and families in Early Years settings to support the children's English acquisition.

Where There Is No Engineer (School of Transport and Civil Engineering): Design initiative coordinated by Dr Liam Mc Carton, funded by Irish Aid and delivered in partnership with Concern Worldwide, Engineers Ireland and Engineers without Borders Ireland.