



OLLSCOIL NA GAILLIMHE
UNIVERSITY OF GALWAY

Researcher Development at the University of Galway

Dónal Leech
Dean of Graduate Studies
University of Galway

Co-Authors:

Sinéad Beacom, Head of Researcher Development Centre

Marina Ansaldo, Researcher Development Manager

Anne Marie Forde, Director of Graduate Studies



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National Context since Salzburg

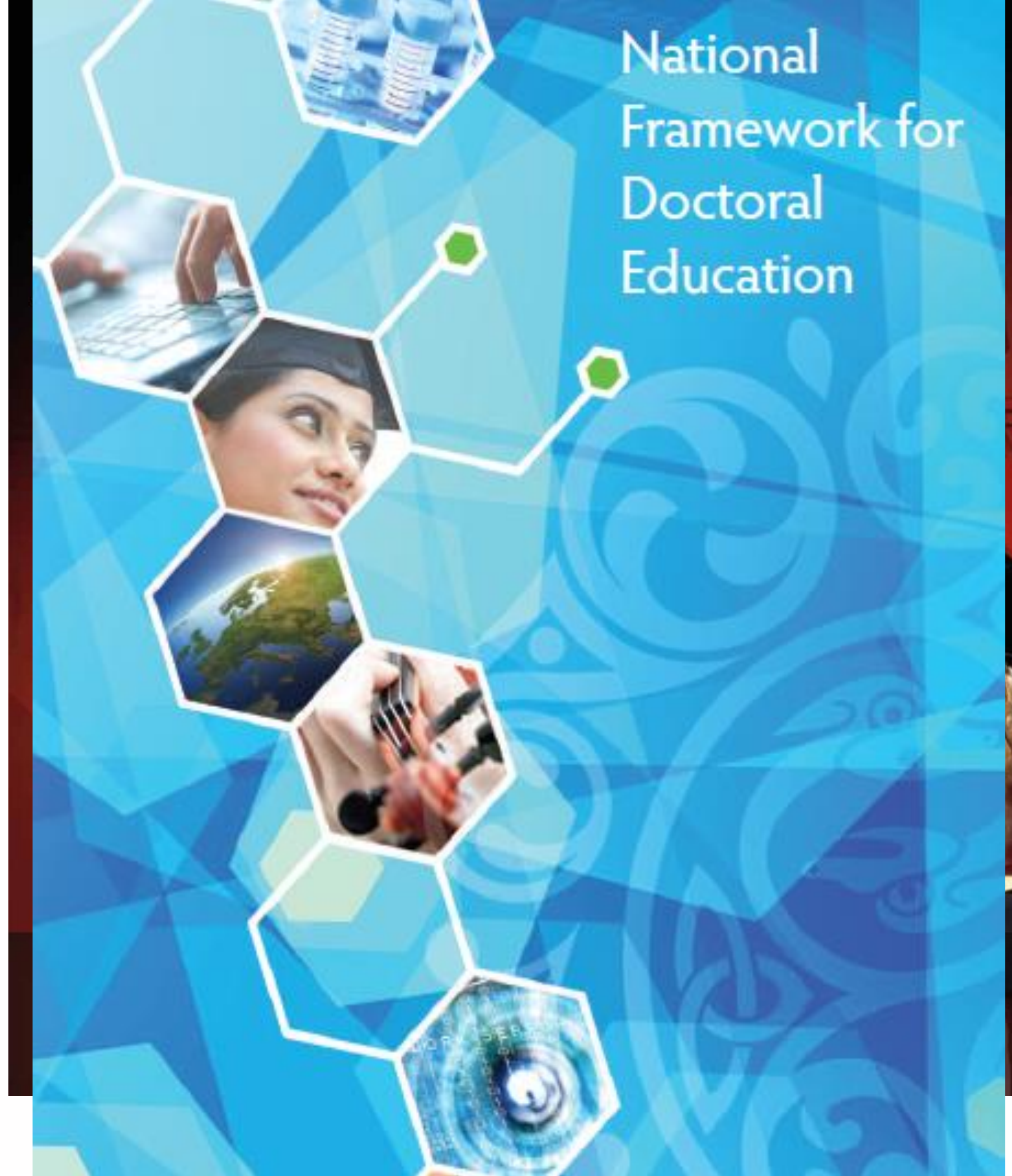
Establishment of Graduate Studies functions (2008 University of Galway)

2008 IUA PhD skills statement

Structured PhDs (modules & ECTS)

4-year programme (not 3)

2015 National Framework for Doctoral Education



The Funding Landscape

Establishment of

Science Foundation Ireland

Irish Research Council

PRTL

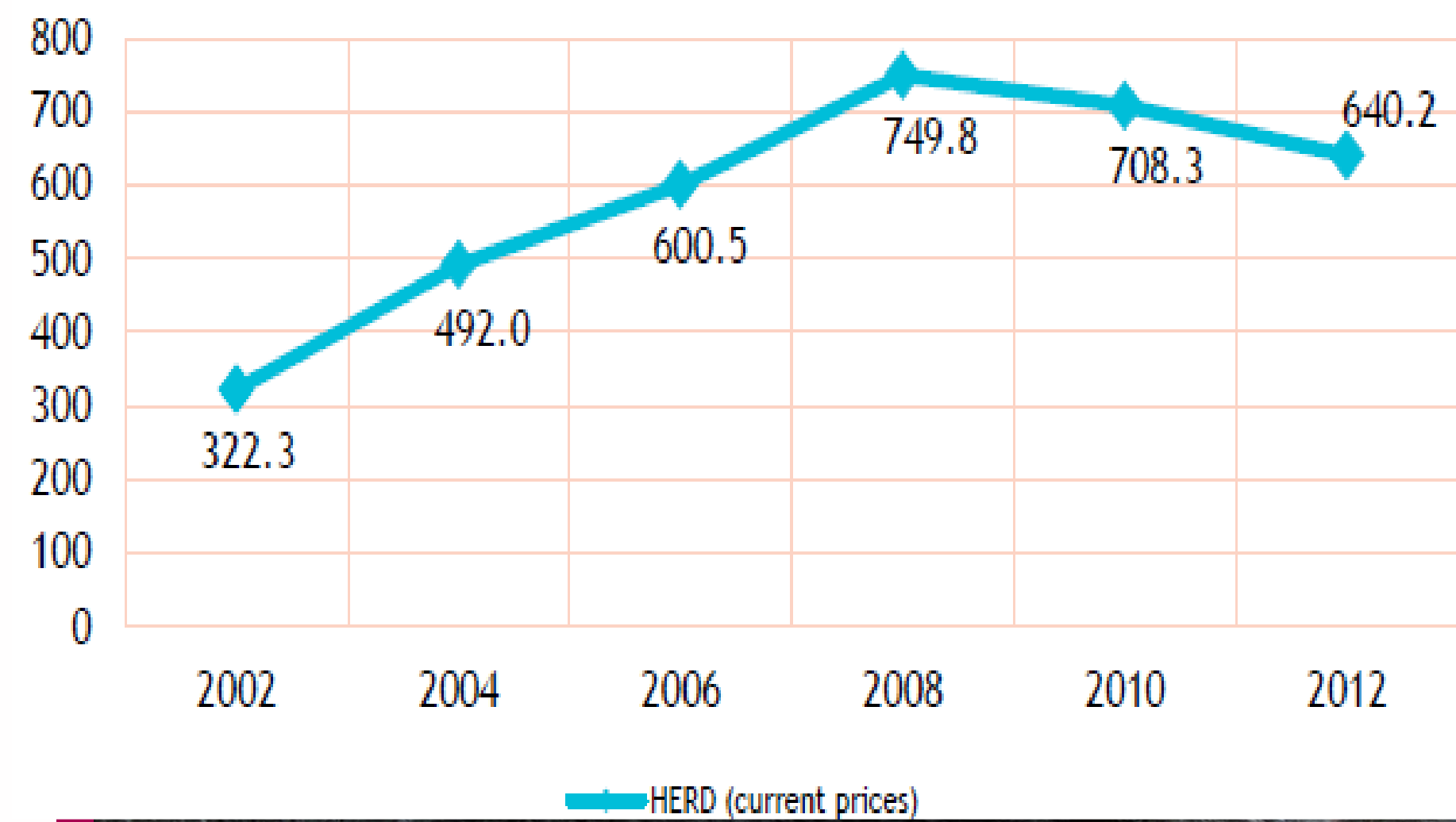
Innovation offices/schemes

Mission-aligned funding

EU funding

Economic crash 2008

Funding for economic benefit



University of Galway

Founded 1845 (Queen's College Galway)

Over 19,000 students

2,800 staff

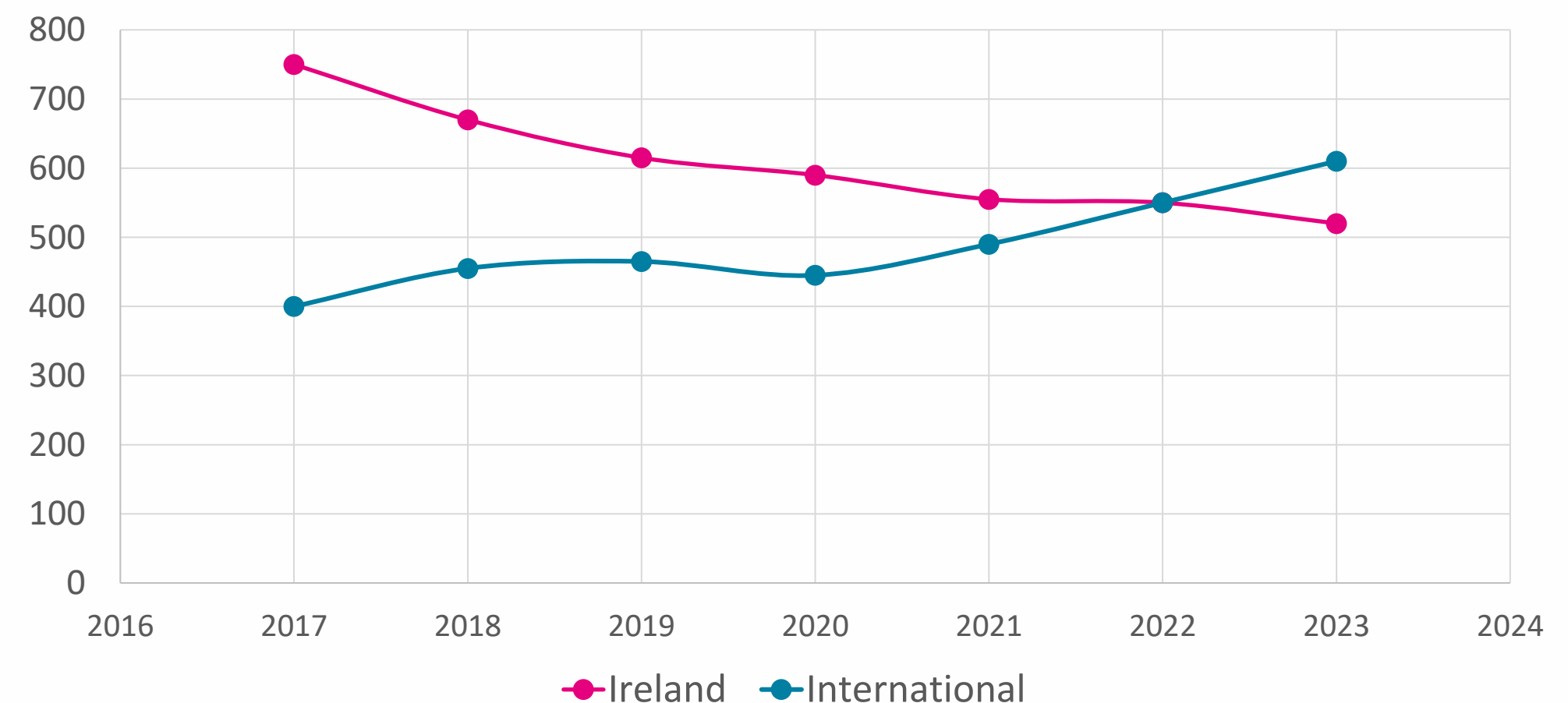
~800 research staff

~1,100 PhD researchers

Increasingly international population



PhD enrolments Galway



Establishment of Researcher Development Centre

2006 Endorsed European Charter and Code for Researchers

2013 HR Excellence in Research Award

Identified gaps in Researcher Career supports

2015 survey & focus groups on Researchers' needs

2012 & 2016-19 Institutional Review of Research Performance

Confirmed gaps in Supervisor and Researcher training

June 2018 Establishment of the RDC under VPRI/DoGS

March 2019 first workshop!

RDC Survey 2019

46% response rate

68% had no career plan

82% never trained on career planning

Desire to work on career planning &

receive guidance on career options

train on professional skills



RDC Mission

Create and foster a culture of continuing ***professional*** development for researchers at University of Galway (R1-R4)

Enable researchers to identify and enhance a range of skills suited to their ***personal*** career pathway

Enable researchers to identify suitable ***employment*** opportunities both within and beyond academia

Measure the impact of such training/CPD supports

RDC Portfolio

Personal Development Planning

Training on Professional Skills

Career Events

Workshops + self-paced/online options

Individual Career Guidance



RDC March 2019-May 2025

6,424 Workshops attended by researchers

Including 3,963 Workshops attended by PGRs (62%)

Coordinating training to ***researchers*** across University of Galway

Embedding Professional Development in PhD journey

As of 2023-24 all PhD researchers required to develop a PDP

Embedding PDP in PhD

Required for Annual Review Meetings

Each year, from Year 1

Increased attendance at PDP workshops

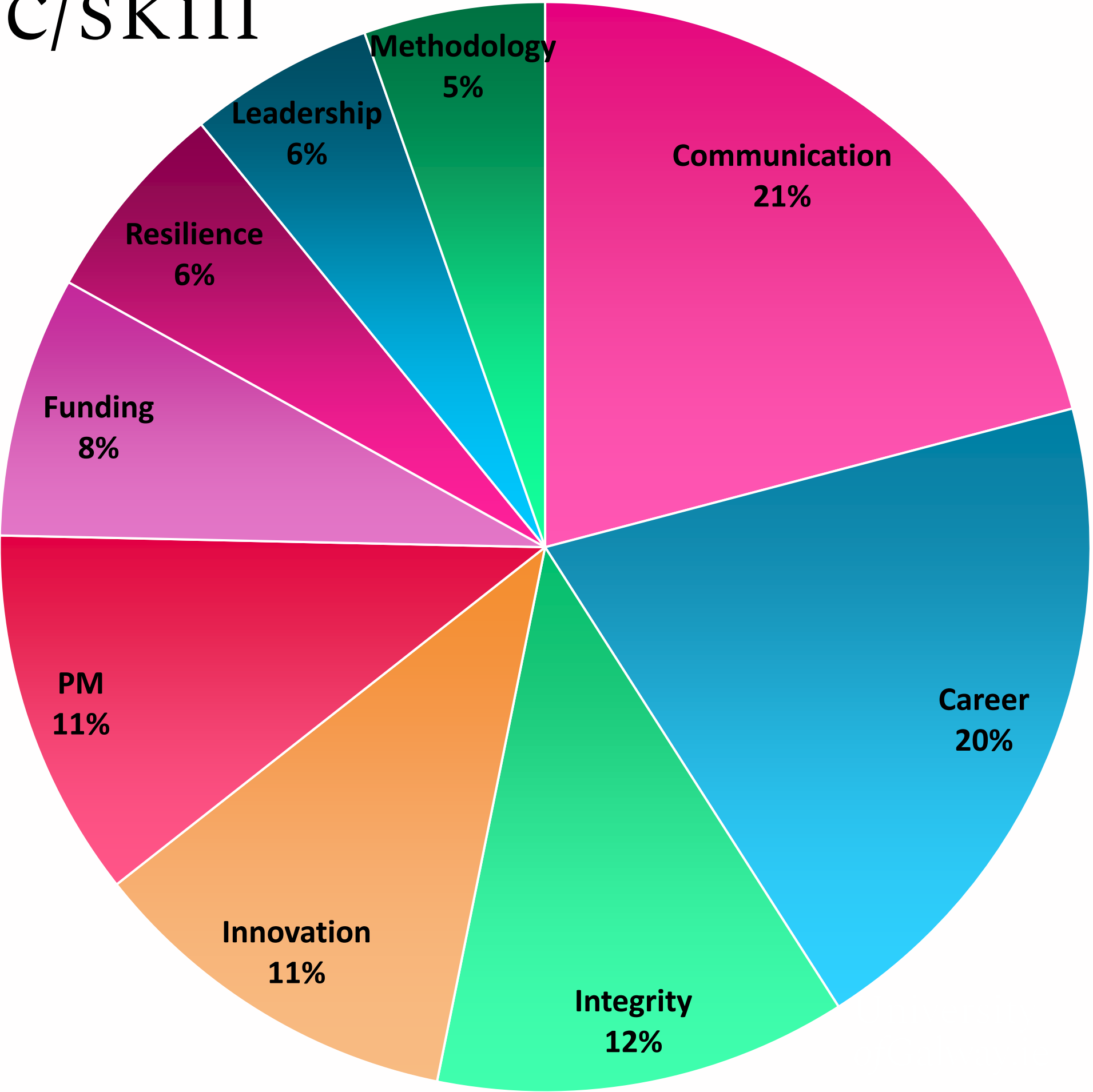
→to all other RDC courses too

Professional Development as part of PhD



Training delivered by topic/skill

Topic	Participants
Presentation & Communication	1343
Career Planning & Management	1288
Integrity, GDPR, Professional Conduct	785
Innovation & Impact	720
Project & Time Management	704
Grant Writing/Research Funding	497
Resilience, Assertiveness, Well-being	389
Networking, Team working, Leadership	353
Data Analysis/ Research Methods	345
Total	6424



Irish PGR Survey results

Questions	Responses	Galway 2023	Galway 2021	Galway 2019
Development				
Agreeing a personal training or development plan	YES	58.3%	51.3%	39.2%
Receiving training to develop my research skills	YES	81.3%	82.8%	72.9%
Receiving training to develop my other transferable skills	YES	66.3%	66.8%	54.6%
Receiving advice on career options	YES	42.3%	42.1%	35.0%
Receiving training in entrepreneurship and innovation	YES	21.8%	24.1%	25.2%
Career				
Academic career in higher education	Priority 1	35.4%	38.6%	38.7%
Research career in higher education	Priority 1	15.5%	12.9%	13.8%
Research career outside higher education	Priority 1	28.9%	26.0%	23.2%



Promoting Cultural Change

Professional Development is part of a PhD

A PhD prepares for a range of fulfilling careers

Academia is just ONE of the sectors

Society will benefit from our PhDs



Looking Ahead...

Funding uncertainty

Mission-oriented, shorter term, research

Technological Universities

State supports of PhD students

Innovate for Ireland

Impact 2030

Ireland's Research and
Innovation Strategy



Building on Salzburg

Excellence in research supervision → see Janet Carton presentation!

Doctoral candidates as professionals → employee contracts?

Critical mass → European alliances

Mobility and career options





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Thank you
Go raibh maith agaibh

<https://www.universityofgalway.ie/rdc/>