

## Forum Insights

### THE SOCIETY FOR WOMEN IN PHILOSOPHY, IRELAND (SWIP IRELAND)

#### About

Since its official inauguration in July 2010, SWIP Ireland has sought to unite researchers and teachers in philosophy across the island of Ireland.

Participants in our network are predominantly based in Irish Institutions of Higher Education. We count among our ordinary and executive members undergraduate and graduate students, early career researchers, and tenured lecturers from universities, institutes of technology and HECA institutions. The majority of our members are based within Schools of Philosophy but we welcome members from across disciplines and departments.

Currently we have 80 paying members and 350 online members (via Facebook).

We are working towards a clear mission of professional and educational enhancement, taking valuable guidance from good practice examples in the US and the UK. For our 2015 mentoring workshops, for example, we are inspired by the recommendations of the British Philosophical Association and by the example of the Gender Action Group in the Department of Philosophy at Durham University.

We collaborate closely with philosophy networks in Ireland and beyond (the Irish Philosophical Circle, the British Philosophical Association and SWIP UK) and with national and international funding bodies (the Irish Research Council and the Fulbright Commission of Ireland). We are working continuously towards a transparent and inclusive organisation and membership structure. We regularly update and expand our Constitution and seek feedback from all our members.

#### Aims and Objectives

The Society for Women in Philosophy (SWIP) Ireland aims to:

- promote philosophy by women
- raise awareness of problems faced by women in the discipline
- facilitate co-operation between women in philosophy in the Island of Ireland
- create links with women philosophers in other countries
- promote research by and on women philosophers
- organise conferences and meetings on topic of interest to women philosophers

Though our Annual Conferences take place in Dublin, we are keen to host Spring Workshops in institutions across the country. SWIP Ireland members in NUIG and UCC have in recent years responded to our call for local events. In the coming years, our aim is to extend further our activities and to host workshops at the National University of Ireland, Maynooth, and Queen's University Belfast.

A key priority of our 2014 AGM was the election of a new committee with members more evenly located across the island of Ireland. Our present committee is comprised of senior, early career and student representatives from University College Dublin, Trinity College Dublin, the National University of Ireland, Galway, the National University of Ireland, Maynooth, University College Cork and Carlow College.

#### Our Work

To date, we have hosted in Dublin three international conferences (2012, 2013 and 2014). In November 2015 we will host our fourth.

Two smaller workshops, one at the National University of Ireland Galway (March 2014) and one at University College Cork (June 2014), have also taken place.

In March 2012, with contributions from Early Career Researchers as well as more established academics, we hosted our first mentoring session at Newman House, Dublin. The focus of this event was the transition from Ph.D. student to Early Career researcher.

This workshop was followed in February 2015 with a mentoring session specifically geared to the discussion of the relevance of Philosophy outside Academia. We were delighted to invite Sabina Higgins, a graduate of NUIG Philosophy, as our central speaker on the day.

Our next mentoring workshop is planned for September 2015. Our central speaker is Professor Jennifer Saul of the University of Sheffield. Professor Saul will address our members on the topic of Implicit Bias in academia in general and in philosophy in general.

We are immensely grateful to the National Forum for their financial contributions both to our Annual Conference (November 2014) and to our two 2015 mentoring workshops. We look forward to continuing partnership with the National Forum in future.

## Call for Interested Members

The members of SWIP Ireland are predominantly based in Irish Institutions of Higher Education. We count among our members undergraduate and graduate students, early career researchers, and tenured lecturers from universities, institutes of technology and HECA institutions. The majority of our members are based within Schools of Philosophy but we welcome members from across disciplines and departments.

Through our website, our Facebook and Twitter accounts, we post regularly regarding funding opportunities, news stories and academic activities for women in philosophy.

People can get involved by liking us on Facebook or following us on Twitter. They can also attend any of our regular conferences or workshops or email the committee directly.

SWIP Ireland initiatives have already led to transformation of practice in the philosophy sector (for example, recent graduate surveys reveal greater levels of satisfaction from our female students). We continue to work on implementing the BPA Best Practice Guidelines and are confident that the coming years will see more women philosophers entering and staying in the sector. SWIP I is a hugely productive intervention in an Irish context. It promotes and supports women philosophers, while highlighting and possibly undoing some of the traditional inequalities that women in philosophy have had to endure.