

ELECTION 2020

*IHA endorses 'Save our Spark'
campaign*

February 2020

Irish Humanities Alliance



***IHA Endorses 'Save our Spark' Campaign
and calls for a balanced higher education and research eco-system***

The Irish Humanities Alliance today reiterates its support for the 'Save Our Spark Campaign' and endorses the calls made by the Irish Universities Association (IUA), the Technological Higher Education Association (THEA) and the Union of Students in Ireland (USI) for a pre-election commitment to increase core exchequer funding to third level by **€100m** per annum and to secure an additional **€200m** per year from the National Training Fund.

Over the past three decades increased access to higher education has had a transformative effect on Ireland. Yet state funding per student to third level institutions is now **40pc less** than it was a decade ago despite an unprecedented growth in the student population over the past decade. With student numbers projected to increase significantly over the next ten years this is something that needs to be addressed urgently. Failure to act risks undermining the progress that has been made.

Prof. Eugene McNulty, Chair of the IHA, said 'in 2016, the Government of Ireland published the report of the review group led by Peter Cassells into the funding of higher education. This report made several important recommendations, including a call for an additional **€600m** a year for higher education by 2021, which have not been acted upon'.

Speaking about the need for a balanced higher education system Dr Niamh Nic Ghabhann, Vice-Chair of the IHA, said 'the humanities make a significant contribution to an open, inclusive and secure society across the island. We are calling for parity of esteem between all disciplines and increased support for the Irish Research Council as a body supporting excellent researchers across all disciplines. Moreover, in a post-Brexit scenario we are calling for enhanced funding streams that support collaborative research between scholars based in Ireland and Northern Ireland.'

Further information

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