

Enhancing Participation in Public Life & Politics

Parliamentary
Symposium 2022



Tithe an
Oireachtais
Houses of the
Oireachtas



Programme of Events

13th September, 2022
Dublin Castle





Tithe an Oireachtais Houses of the Oireachtas

Houses of the Oireachtas

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Introduction from the Ceann Comhairle

One of my priorities as Ceann Comhairle is to make Parliament more attractive and accessible to all our people, by ensuring the Houses of the Oireachtas is a welcoming and supportive environment and a more inclusive, family friendly and gender sensitive workplace.

Last year the Forum on a Family-Friendly and Inclusive Parliament which I established made a series of practical and achievable recommendations to do just this.

On Tuesday, 13 September in Dublin Castle, we will take this process further with a Parliamentary Symposium on Enhancing Participation in Public Life, Politics and Parliament. Members of the Dáil and Seanad will be joined by keynote speakers from Northern Ireland, Scotland and the United States, and panellists from across Irish life and society to discuss three areas which I believe we can make more inclusive, attractive and accessible: diversity, youth affairs and women's participation.

Our discussions will be available online and anyone interested in public affairs and parliamentary life will be able to see for yourself on Oireachtas.ie.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which reads "Seán Ó Fearghaíl". Below the signature is a horizontal line.

Seán Ó Fearghaíl TD
Ceann Comhairle.

Programme of Events

09:45 **Registration - Tea/coffee on arrival**

10:30 Doireann Garrihy, MC
Welcome by An Ceann Comhairle (Speaker of the House), Seán Ó Fearghaíl TD

10:45 ***'Reflecting the diversity of 21st century Ireland in the Parliamentary Community'***
Keynote Address: Furkan Karayel – Author, Diversity, & Inclusion Speaker

11:00 **Panel Discussion:**
Senator Fintan Warfield – Member of Seanad Éireann (Moderator)
Senator Eileen Flynn – Member of Seanad Éireann (Panellist)
Stephen Frost – Diversity, Inclusion & Leadership Expert (Panellist)
Shairoze Akram – GAA Diversity Ambassador (Panellist)
Nicola Kelly – Development Worker, Inner City Organisations Network (ICON)
- (Panellist)

12:00 **Q & A**

12:15 ***Family Photo – Printworks***

12:30 **Lunch – Dublin Castle, St. Patrick's Hall & Portrait Gallery**

14:00 ***"Representing the interests of Young people"***
Keynote Address: Keynote Address: Harry McCann - Founder of Digital Youth Council

14:15 **Panel Discussion:**
James O'Connor TD – Member of Dáil Éireann (Moderator)
Agata Walczak – Programme Specialist, Inclusive Processes and Institutions (Panellist)
Cllr Daniel Céitinn – Sinn Féin – (Panellist)
Israel Olatunde – Irish Professional Track and Field Athlete (Panellist) Noah Halpin – TENI Healthcare Officer (Panellist)

15:15	Q & A
15:30	Comfort Break
15:40	<p><i>'Promoting Women's participation in the Parliamentary Community'</i></p> <p>Keynote Address: Rachael Rollins - US Attorney for the District of Massachusetts - <i>Virtual Participation</i></p>
15:55	<p>Panel Discussion:</p> <p>Jennifer Carroll MacNeill TD – Member of Dáil Éireann (Moderator)</p> <p>Hon. Patricia Torsney - Permanent Observer to the United Nations – Inter Parliamentary Union (Panellist)</p> <p>Emily O'Reilly – European Ombudsman – (Panellist) <i>Virtual Participation</i></p> <p>Cllr Yemi Adenuga – Nigerian-Irish Politician – Fine Gael (Panellist)</p> <p>Rachel Weston Eschenbacher – Regional Policy Specialist Political Participation and Governance, UN Women Europe, and Central Asia Regional Office (Panellist)</p> <p>Alison Cowzer – Chairperson - Women for Election (Panellist)</p>
16:55	Q & A
17:10	<p>Wrap-up and Closing Remarks</p> <p>An Ceann Comhairle, Seán Ó Feargháil and Cathaoirleach Mark Daly</p>
17:30	Symposium Concludes
Photo op in lobby with speakers and panellists	

Biographies



Furkan Karayel

Furkan Karayel is multi award winning diversity and inclusion speaker and author of the best selling book “Inclusive Intelligence: How to be a Role Model for Diversity and Inclusion in the Workplace”. Furkan lectures at the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Master’s program at Dún Laoghaire Institute of Art, Design and Technology.

Furkan founded Diversein.com after 10 years of software engineering experience in multinational tech companies in Ireland. She has been honoured with “Speaker of the Year”, “Diversity and Inclusion Role Model in Business” and “Trailblazer” Awards. Additionally, Furkan is an active speaker at international events where she shares her learnings about experiences of the tech world as a woman, her recommendations for inclusive leadership and the power of diversity and inclusion in the workplace.



Fintan Warfield

Fintan has been involved in political activism since the age of 16. At the age of 22 he was elected to South Dublin County Council and as Mayor of South Dublin County he prioritised homelessness, youth unemployment and marriage equality. Now in his second term as a Senator he continues to work on strengthening equality legislation including Gender Recognition for transgender and non binary young people, banning so called conversion therapy and working as an active member of the Gender Equality committee.





Eileen Flynn

Senator Eileen Flynn was nominated to the Seanad by Taoiseach Micheál Martin in 2020 and is the first Traveller/Mincéir to serve in the Houses of the Oireachtas.

Her background is in community development and activism on behalf of Irish Travellers and in solidarity with other ethnic minorities. She is also deeply committed to the causes of women's rights, human rights, and equality.





Stephen Frost

Stephen is a globally recognised diversity, inclusion and leadership expert, and founded Included in 2012. He leads the team and works with leaders around the world to embed inclusive leadership in their decision-making.

From 2007-2012 Stephen designed, led and implemented the inclusion programmes for the London Olympic and Paralympic Games as Head of Diversity and Inclusion for the London Organising Committee. From 2004-2007 Stephen established and led the workplace team at Stonewall. Stephen has also led D&I at KPMG and worked in advertising and consulting.

Stephen was a Hertford College Scholar at Oxford and a Fulbright Scholar at Harvard. He remains a Visiting Fellow of the Women and Public Policy Program. He has won various awards from the 2010 Peter Robertson Award for Equality and Diversity Champions and 2011 Young Global Leader by the World Economic Forum to one of Management Today's Change Agents for his race and gender work and 2022 Winds of Change Awards from The Forum on Workplace Inclusion.

He has taught Inclusive Leadership at Harvard Business School, Singapore Management University and Sciences Po in France and advised the British Government, Royal Air Force and the White House. He is author of *The Inclusion Imperative* (2014), *Inclusive Talent Management* (2016) and *Building an Inclusive Organization* (2019), and the editor of *The Key to Inclusion* (July 2022).



Shairoze Akram

Shairoze Akram is an Inclusion and diversity advocate. Having moved to Ireland at a very young age Shairoze has experienced some of the difficulties faced by many from minority backgrounds. Shairoze has used sport to help him integrate himself into the Irish community and sport as the backbone of his life to date.

Shairoze has represented Mayo from underage teams all the way up to the seniors, along with winning an All - Ireland U21 Medal with Mayo in 2016. He has also represented his college team DCU at both freshers and Sigerson level winning All - Ireland titles in both. Shairoze uses his on-field success and personal story to make the GAA a more inclusive sport for everyone. Shairoze has worked with Croke park to deliver talks on inclusion and diversity to clubs. Recently Shairoze was involved with a documentary on RTE called New Gaels sharing his personal journey. He was also an ambassador for Supervalu's Bringiton campaign for 2021.



Nicola Kelly

Nicola works primarily with residents in local authority flat complexes on a range of issues, collectively with residents' groups and with individuals. She is available to work with any new groups or contact her if you have an issue in relation to maintenance or your living conditions.

ICON is a community network that is based in the north-east inner-city area, committed to fighting against disadvantage and ensuring that the voice of the community is heard.

ICON is a voluntary organisation made up of community projects, local tenant's groups, as well as individuals working and living in the area. ICON seeks to ensure the community has an active role in local developments and access to support, training, education, and employment.





Harry McCann

At just twenty-three years old, Harry McCann is an award-winning entrepreneur and journalist who has established himself not only as a thought leader but a powerful voice for youth across the globe.

Just months after his fifteenth birthday, Harry made headlines around the world when he started his first business, Kid Tech, to teach children how to code. This early success earned him the title of “Ireland’s answer to Bill Gates” and gained him the support of international celebrities such as Stephen Fry. Building on his early success, Harry combined his passion for STEM and his experience in the technology industry to establish the first Digital Youth Council (DYC) in the world. For six years, the youth council helped give young people a voice in STEM and Education. While under his leadership, the council formed partnerships with Accenture, Twitter, Facebook, and other industry leaders, including the Irish Government and European Commission. This innovative model, which Harry spent years developing, has since been replicated in the United Kingdom under the leadership of the Virgin Group.

Coinciding with his work as an entrepreneur, Harry has been an influential voice in youth affairs. As an advisor to the European Union and the Irish Government, Harry has helped shape many important digital strategies and policies across Europe. He has received several awards in recognition of this work, including the JCI Outstanding Young Persons Award.

As a journalist, Harry has established himself as one of the most recognisable youth voices in the Irish media. He contributes to several national television and radio shows and regularly writes op-ed columns for the Irish Independent and thejournal.ie. As one of only twelve young journalists selected by the European Commission, Harry is also a member of the European Pool of Young Journalists.

While pursuing several business and journalistic interests, Harry achieved an upper second class honours degree in Digital Humanities and Information Technology at the University College Cork, where he was awarded a full scholarship for his work in entrepreneurship and innovation. Harry also recently completed a Master's in Political Communications at Dublin City University (DCU).





Deputy James O'Connor

James O'Connor TD (Fianna Fáil) was elected to Dáil Éireann for the constituency of Cork East during the 2020 General Election.

At the age of 22, James became one of the youngest people ever elected to the Dáil.

Prior to his election to the Oireachtas, James interned in Leinster House with An Taoiseach, Micheál Martin TD, Jim O'Callaghan TD and Mary Mitchell O'Connor TD.

James's career as an elected representative began in Cork County Council where he successfully contested the 2019 Local Elections in the East Cork Municipal Area at the age of 21.

Since his entry into national politics, Deputy O'Connor has focused his efforts in the area of investment in capital infrastructure in the areas of transport, education and housing.

James is currently a member of the Public Accounts Committee, Transport and Communications Committee and the Committee on Enterprise, Trade and Employment.





Agata Walczak

Agata Walczak is an Inclusive Processes and Institutions specialist and a global focal point for parliamentary development at the United Nations Development Programme. With UNDP's global Governance portfolio since 2016, she has managed and supported various initiatives at the nexus of inclusive political participation, sustainable human development and peacebuilding, including a global programme on the parliamentary dimension of women, peace and security. Prior to joining UNDP, she held various policy and technical support roles at the UK House of Lords, the European Economic and Social Committee, a global parliamentary network Climate Parliament, and the European Climate Foundation. She holds a LLM in Public International Law with a specialization in environment and human rights from Utrecht University (the Netherlands) and a BA in Liberal Arts and Sciences from Utrecht and Monash University (Australia).



Daniel Céitinn

Daniel Céitinn is a Sinn Féin member of Dublin City Council for the South East Inner City since 2020, joining the Council at 24. He represents communities in the heart of the city and in Ringsend and Irishtown.

In his work, Daniel most often assists in cases related to housing difficulties, access to healthcare, and community-led responses to anti-social behaviour.

Daniel holds an MSc. in European Public Affairs and Law from UCD School of Politics and International Relations, and a B.A. (Hons) in History and Political Science from Trinity College, Dublin.



Israel Olatunde

My name is Israel Olatunde. I'm 20 years old and I'm from Dundalk, Co. Louth. I'm a final year Computer Science with Data Science undergraduate student at UCD.

I compete in the sport of athletics, where I run the 60 and 100-meter races. I started athletics when I was 15, through my secondary school and local club. Since then, I've represented Ireland at European and World Championships at Under-18, Under-20 and Senior levels. In August, I competed in the European Championships in Munich, Germany. I made it to the final, where I placed 6th. In the process I broke the National 100-meter Record and became the fastest Irishman in history. In the future, I aim to compete at the Paris and LA Olympic Games.





Noah Halpin

Noah is Healthcare Officer TENI's Transgender Equality Network Ireland. His work includes providing individual support and advice to the trans community going through the healthcare system; mainly in the areas of gender affirming healthcare, sexual health and mental health supports. This includes the public health service, private health service and health services outside of Ireland.

In Noah's role, he also works with state institutions to advocate for more adequate healthcare services and pathways to healthcare for trans people in Ireland. He also provides education training to healthcare and social care professionals, hospitals, clinics, universities and other relevant institutions.

Noah has been involved in the area of gender affirming healthcare for a number of years. Advocating for safe, accessible, best practice, person-centred healthcare for the community. He previously sat on the Government Transgender Healthcare Steering Committee, specifically for children and adolescents, as the Ministerial Representative and currently sits on the HSE's gbMSM Health Committee and has a special interest in sexual health, gender affirming health and HIV care.



Rachael S. Rollins

Rachael S. Rollins is the United States Attorney for the District of Massachusetts. Nominated by President Joseph R. Biden on July 26, 2021 and confirmed by the United States Senate on Dec. 8, 2021, Ms. Rollins is the chief federal law enforcement officer for the District of Massachusetts and the first Black woman to hold the position.

Prior to her confirmation, Ms. Rollins served as Suffolk County District Attorney (DA) for three years. She was the first woman to ever be elected DA in Suffolk County and the first woman of color to ever hold the position of DA in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Ms. Rollins previously served as Chief Legal Counsel to the Massachusetts Port Authority. Prior to that she served as General Counsel for the Massachusetts Department of Transportation and the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority. From 2007 to 2011, she was an Assistant U.S. Attorney for the District of Massachusetts serving in both the Civil and Criminal Divisions.

Earlier in her career, Ms. Rollins was an attorney at Bingham McCutchen LLP and from 1999 to 2002 she was a field attorney for the National Labor Relations Board. Ms. Rollins began her legal career as a clerk for Associate Judge Frederick L. Brown of the Massachusetts Appeals Court.

Ms. Rollins earned her Juris Doctor from Northeastern University School of Law and Masters in Law from Georgetown University Law Center. She received a Bachelor of Arts degree in Education and African-American Studies from the University of Massachusetts Amherst.



Jennifer Carroll MacNeill

Dr. Jennifer Carroll MacNeill was elected to the Irish Parliament in February 2020. She is the Vice Chair of the Fine Gael Parliamentary Party and Spokesperson for Equality. She is also Vice Chair of the Justice Committee as well as being a member of the Public Accounts Committee, the Parliamentary Privileges and Oversight Committee, the Implementation of the Good Friday Agreement Committee, the Committee on Autism and the Committee on Gender Equality.

Since being elected as a TD, Jennifer has continued to work at a local and national level, drawing on a decade of experience working in Government on policy and legislation. Notably, Jennifer recently advocated for the establishment of a Committee on Gender Equality which held its first meeting in December 2020.

Jennifer won the Basil Chubb Prize for the best PhD politics thesis in Ireland, and her work was published in an academic book “The Politics of Judicial Selection in Ireland” which was nominated for the 2017 Law Book of the Year.





Hon. Paddy Torsney

The IPU's Permanent Observer to the United Nations since 2014, the Hon. Paddy Torsney is served as the Member of Parliament for Burlington, Ontario, Canada from 1993-2006. She was also Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of the Environment (1998-2000) and Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Cooperation (2004-2006). Paddy was the inaugural chair of the Liberal Women's Caucus for two years in the new parliament. As an MP, she served on several committees including Justice, Finance, Environment, Industry Science and Technology, Status of Women, International Development and Human Rights. She chaired the special committee on the Non-Medical Use of Drugs which delivered consensus recommendations to improve drug policy in Canada. In addition to being the President of the Canadian Group of the IPU, she served on the executive of the Canada-USA Inter-Parliamentary Group.

A former public affairs and public relations consultant in Ontario and nationally, Ms. Torsney was engaged with local and national organizations, and continues to serve as VP of the Canadian Landmine Foundation. She graduated from McGill University in Montreal with a Commerce degree in International Business and Marketing and was a political staffer in the office of the Premier of Ontario.



Emily O'Reilly

Emily O'Reilly was first elected as the European Ombudsman in July 2013. Following the European Parliament elections, she was re-elected for a five year mandate in December 2014 and again in December 2019. As the European Ombudsman she investigates maladministration in the institutions and bodies of the European Union. In 2016, Ms O'Reilly featured on Politico's list of women who shape Brussels. She was awarded the Schwarzkopf Europe Award in 2017, the Prague European Summit Vision for Europe Award in 2018, and the University of Flensburg 'Europa prize' in 2020 in recognition of her work.

From 2003 until 2013, Ms O'Reilly was the first female Ombudsman and Information Commissioner in Ireland and was additionally appointed Commissioner for Environmental Information in 2007.

As national Ombudsman Ms O'Reilly was conferred in 2008 with an Honorary Doctorate in Law by the National University in Ireland for her work in promoting human rights throughout her career. In 2014 she was awarded an Honorary Doctorate of Law from the University College Dublin for her decade long commitment as Irish Ombudsman.

As a former journalist, author and political editor, Ms O'Reilly's career has attracted significant domestic and international recognition, including a Harvard University Fellowship in 1988 and multiple national awards. She has written three critically acclaimed books on Irish politics and media and is a current member of the International Advisory Board of Harvard's Nieman Foundation for Journalism.

In the course of her journalistic career, she won two awards: Woman Journalist of the Year in 1986 and Journalist of the Year in 1994.

Ms O'Reilly is married and has five children.



Yemi Adenuga

Councillor Yemi Adenuga, often referred to as “Energy in Motion”, is an elected Fine Gael Councillor representing Navan Municipal District on Meath County Council, a leadership powerhouse. She builds People. This multi-award winning TV Personality, talk-show host and two-time author is a high Impact Global Speaker, an experienced People development Strategist, an audacious mentorship expert and an Entrepreneur

Yemi is the Director of Programs at MIB INSTITUTE of People Development amongst other roles. She has designed and delivered several impactful training programs one of which is the Political leadership training program that has successfully produced women and migrants who are now involved in politics in their communities and have shown interest to run in the next local election.

Yemi is a mentorship guru, and through her global mentorship Program - The Yemi Adenuga Mentorship and Leadership Program (YAMAL Program), Yemi has mentored over 20,000 women and young people in different parts of the world over the past 26 years. She is founder and president of SHEROES GLOBAL, a social enterprise that inspires, empowers, and impacts women and Young people to be more through their various life changing programs. She is founder of the BOYS TO MEN PROJECT, which is aimed at raising a generation of good men, through male role-modelling and mentorship in the community.

Yemi is a UCD alumnae who studied for BBS Honours, Entrepreneurship Stream (2010), and Post-graduate certificate in Innovation, Entrepreneurship and Enterprise (2016). She holds an MBA in Project Management stream from Liverpool John Moores University, United Kingdom (2011).

Yemi is a history maker who is the first Black-Female Public Representative to be elected in the Republic of Ireland, first Migrant Councillor to be elected to Meath County Council, First migrant to be written into an Irish school textbook, (6th class Geography/Science textbook by folens publishers), first migrant PEACE COMMISSIONER for County Meath, and her family 'THE ADENUGAS' are the first migrant family to feature on Ireland's Number 1 reality TV program "Gogglebox Ireland".

She was listed as an Irish woman of influence by the Irish Tatler Magazine, named a "Game-Changer in Irish politics" by the Irish Independent Weekend Magazine and listed as one of Ireland's 100 women Change-makers, powerbrokers and champions of humanity who are changing the world, by the Irish Exam.





Richael Weston Eschenbacher

Richael Weston Eschenbacher is the Regional Policy Specialist on Political Participation and Governance for the UN Women Europe and Central Asia Regional Office. She has worked in the field of gender equality and governance for over 15 years to advance opportunities for women to lead within democratic institutions. She previously served three terms as an elected member of the Vermont House of Representatives where she was known as a champion of gender equality, democracy, and the environment. Her accomplishments include successful passage of legislation related to marriage equality, gender identity, the national popular vote, human trafficking, green energy, women in the workforce, and the removal of reproductive toxins from consumer goods. Richael holds over a decade of experience working in Europe and Central Asia on gender equality, democracy, women's political participation and governance. Prior to joining UN Women she worked with NDI, UNFPA, OSCE, and civil society organizations. She holds a B.A. from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst and a Master of Public Administration degree from the University of Vermont. She is currently completing a Master of Laws in Constitutional and Human Rights Law from the London School of Economics and Political Science.



Alison Cowzer

Alison is an entrepreneur and Chairperson of Women for Election, a national organisation that facilitates bespoke training programmes, events and mentoring supports that have helped get hundreds of women elected to local and national government in Ireland.

She has served on the Ceann Comhairle's Forum on a Family Friendly Parliament and Inclusive Parliament also on the National SME Taskforce. She is a Board member of GOAL the international humanitarian agency and a board member of the Ronald Mc Donald House Charity and Chair of Rough Magic Theatre Company.

