

Research and Innovation Overview 2024

Department of Philosophy

In 2022-23, the Department of Philosophy at Maynooth University consisted of 5 academic staff and 14 postgraduate students. The year proved to be particularly fruitful for published research, especially in the History of Philosophy, with a focus on medieval, Renaissance, and nineteenth – to early twentieth-century phenomenology. Faculty members made significant contributions to the study of major historical figures and themes, both through publications and participation in international conferences.

Head of Department: Professor Michael Dunne



Research Themes and Focus Areas

The department's research covers a range of historical and contemporary philosophical topics, with key focus areas including:

- **Medieval and Renaissance Philosophy:** Research on medieval Irish thinkers and early Renaissance scholars continues to be a hallmark of the department's contributions to the history of philosophy.
- **Nineteenth and Twentieth-Century Phenomenology:** Faculty members are actively engaged in research on key figures such as Brentano, Scheler, and Stein, contributing to the broader understanding of phenomenology.
- **Philosophy of Science and Ethics:** Research in this area intersects with mathematics and the natural sciences, with a particular emphasis on ethical questions arising from scientific inquiry.



Significant Research Outputs

In 2022-23, the Department of Philosophy produced several significant research outputs and secured prestigious research grants:

Publications

- Professor Michael W. Dunne authored and co-edited three volumes published by Brill and Brepols, including the first major study on Peter of Ireland, Professor of Logic and Natural Science at the University of Naples (1230-1265). His work includes the first English translations of Peter of Ireland's scientific writings.
- Together with Dr Simon Nolan, Professor Dunne co-edited The Brill Companion to Richard FitzRalph, the first comprehensive study of this influential Anglo-Irish thinker from Dundalk, whose career spanned from Chancellor of the University of Oxford to Archbishop of Armagh.
- Dr Amos Edelheit co-authored and edited a collection of papers with Dr Ivor Ludlum on Platonic and Ciceronian themes, and published a well-received book on Pico della Mirandola's engagement with Scholastic philosophy.

Awards and Grants

- Dr Susan Gottlöeber was awarded QQI funding for her project on education and philosophy, one of only six awards given in 2022. Her research findings were presented at major international conferences in Cambridge, Porto, and Florence.
- Professor Dunne collaborated with Monika Michałowska on a Polish Science Foundation research award to study Richard FitzRalph, further strengthening international research networks in medieval philosophy.



Collaborations and Partnerships

The department maintains a robust network of international collaborations:

- **International Society for the Study of Medieval Thought (SIEPM):** Professor Dunne and Dr Gottlöeber organised the SIEPM conference at Maynooth, bringing together leading scholars to discuss the concept of toleration in the Middle Ages.
- **Interdisciplinary Collaboration:** The department co-hosted the Consonances I: Mathematics, Language, and the Moral Sense of Nature conference with the Department of Mathematics and Statistics, facilitating interdisciplinary dialogue between philosophers and mathematicians.



Research Impact and Societal Contributions

The department's research has far-reaching implications for both historical and contemporary philosophical discourse:

- **Medieval and Renaissance Thought:** The department's publications on key medieval figures such as Richard FitzRalph and Peter of Ireland are making substantial contributions to the understanding of Irish philosophical history.
- **International Recognition:** Dr Mette Lebech delivered several keynote addresses at international conferences, further raising the department's profile in the global philosophical community.



Future Directions

The department will continue its focus on medieval and Renaissance philosophy, nineteenth and twentieth-century phenomenology, and the philosophy of science. Upcoming projects will further explore the contributions of Irish thinkers to the history of philosophy and continue building international collaborations.

The Department of Philosophy at Maynooth University remains a leader in historical and interdisciplinary philosophical research. With strong publications, international collaborations, and ongoing contributions to the field, the department continues to shape philosophical discourse in Ireland and beyond.