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University College Cork, Ireland
Coláiste na hOllscoile Corcaigh

Panel Discussion: If Ethical Technological Innovation is the Challenge, is Science Fiction the Solution?

Authors: Dr. Carolanne Mahony, Dr. Simon Woodworth, Dr. Ciara Heavin, Prof Joseph Feller *(not attending)*

Many of us are now living our lives in a digitally connected world with nearly ubiquitous access to information and to individuals. We form deep every day relationships with, and dependencies upon, our technologies. Being digital has transformed how we work, play, engage with one another, and understand and define ourselves. We generate and consume an ever-increasing amount of data, personal and otherwise, and we continually expand and intensify the domain of technology's impact. In such a world, Mark Zuckerberg's motto "move fast and break things," while inspiring, may not be the ideal approach. Not everything that is easily broken can be as easily fixed.

In business, education, and society, innovations in areas such as data analytics, artificial intelligence, augmented reality, and the Internet of Things (IoT), continually create both new opportunities and new challenges. This panel is an opportunity to address three key questions: How do we ensure that tomorrow's technology leaders have both the innovation and ethical decision-making skills they need? How do we ensure that students are cognizant of the wider implications of technological innovation, both positive and negative? How do we cultivate a personal sense of responsibility for managing these implications?

Stories have power. Good stories **expand** our awareness; providing access to new places, people, and situations. Great stories go further to **transform** our awareness; challenging us to critically imagine new futures, perspectives, and values. We are accustomed to taking seriously the stories of our observable past. We call this history. This panel challenges us to take seriously the stories of our imaginable future. We call this science fiction.

Please join us for a lively and open conversation between the panellists and audience, exploring together the potential of using science fiction in different ways to teach ethics in computing and innovation modules in higher education. While the panellists will put forward their own opinions and ideas, they are ultimately there to raise difficult questions, not provide easy answers. The session will focus on gathering insights from the audience and collectively developing ideas on how to challenge students to think critically, ethically, and creatively as they shape our digital future.

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