

Website launch introduces secondary school students to real world science



Pictured at the launch were from (L to R): Jon O'Halloran, SSPC General Manager, Dr Mary Shire, Vice President of Research, University of Limerick, Dr Sarah Hayes, SSPC Education & Outreach Officer, Senator Maria Byrne and Prof. Luuk van der Wielen, Director, Bernal Institute at the University of Limerick

The Synthesis and Solid State Pharmaceutical Centre (SSPC) funded by Science Foundation Ireland (SFI) and based in the Bernal Institute at the University of Limerick (UL) has launched their Medicines In My Life initiative. The purpose of the initiative, which includes a website and resources for teachers and pupils, is to support the SSPC's innovative educational programme for post-primary teachers and pupils, entitled 'Innovation in Medicines', a module designed to introduce students to the world of medicine.

Pupils taking the module in their Transition Year will take the knowledge learned through the module and website and translate this into an exhibit for a science centre/museum/art gallery/library or public space. The exhibitions should be interactive and approach different aspects of medicines in our lives, and the development of medicine through advances in scientific research and in industry. 'Medicines in my Life' supported teacher training and development of materials to enable Transition Year Science Teachers to teach 'Innovation in Medicines' (the SSPC's Transition Year module) to their pupils.

Dr Sarah Hayes, European leader in the field of education and outreach, said:

“The purpose of this scheme is to connect groups to STEMM with classroom-based education, as well as informal education that occurs outside the classroom. A goal of this project is to shed light on the relationship between scientific research, to provide educational experiences and take STEMM to the wider community”.

The SFI discover funded initiative, closely linked to the SSPC molecule, material and medicine research programme, introduces Transition Year and Senior Cycle pupils to real world science and research in the area of pharmaceutical manufacturing, development and innovation.

Speaking at the launch, Senator Maria Byrne and Dr Mary Shire, Vice President Research at the University of Limerick, not only highlighted the importance of such initiatives for Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics and Medicine (STEMM) education but also how they support and encourage females early in their careers. The programme designed to engage students with material and activities, will explore students’ thoughts on medicine, shows the possibilities and the opportunities available in an ever growing setting in Ireland, and globally.

In addition, the project addresses Science Foundation Ireland’s goal to have an engaged and scientifically informed public in Ireland and addresses promoting STEMM career pathways.

The SSPC continues to navigate the best methods of engaging all of its internal and external members, including those at the centre of education and training activities and programmes. The exceptional Education, Outreach and Training programme fosters a culture of inclusivity and equity of sharing across all domains. Over the past 12 months, SSPC have participated in over 96 such events.

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About the SSPC

The Synthesis and Solid State Pharmaceutical Centre (SSPC), a Global Hub of Pharmaceutical Process Innovation and Advanced Manufacturing, funded by Science Foundation Ireland and industry, is a unique collaboration between 24 industry partners, 9 research performing organisations and 12 international academic collaborators.

The SSPC transcends company and academic boundaries and is the largest research collaboration in Ireland, and one of the largest globally, within the pharmaceutical area. The role of the SSPC is to link experienced scientists and engineers in academia and the pharmaceutical industry, to address critical research challenges.

The SSPC leads the way for next generation drug manufacture and spans the entire pharmaceutical production chain from synthesis of the molecule, to the isolation of the material, and the formulation of the medicine. The aim of the SSPC is to deliver industry relevant solutions, which result in job growth and retention within the pharmaceutical industry in Ireland.

SSPC Mission

Recognised as the leading centre of excellence shaping the future of global pharmaceuticals.

Contacts

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