

# The O'Brien Chair of Global Surgery

Leading a population health approach to the delivery of essential surgical services in low and middle income countries

**CANDIDATE INFORMATION**



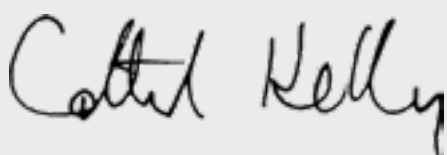
## Introduction

On behalf of the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland (RCSI), I welcome your interest in the O'Brien Chair of Global Surgery. This Professorship was created to provide vision, leadership and direction to address the complex problem of increasing access to safe and effective surgical care worldwide, with a particular focus on low and middle income countries (LMICs). The Chair will lead the RCSI Institute of Global Surgery, which aims to provide world-class leadership in education, research and advocacy, taking a population health perspective to current global challenges in surgery.

RCSI's role in the last 10 years has been to pioneer a health systems strengthening approach, through research, education and training, to provide solutions to the surgical deficit in resource-poor settings. We have achieved this through an [innovative approach to training surgical specialists in Africa](#) and a pioneering programme of [intervention and implementation health systems research](#), demonstrating how to deliver safe essential surgery to neglected rural populations in African districts.

RCSI is ranked among the top 250 universities worldwide for the 2022 Times Higher Education World University Rankings (top 2%); and is joint #2 in the world by THEWUR United Nations' Sustainable Development Goal No. 3 'Good Health and Well-being'. Our performance in global rankings reflects our focused research strengths across health disciplines, generating new knowledge on the complex factors that link 'bench to bedside to population' health outcomes. Our bespoke health-focused institution enables exciting collaborations among basic clinical and population science researchers and practitioners. We will leverage this strength in our approach to the challenges of ensuring access to and effective and efficient delivery of safe surgical services worldwide.

The O'Brien Chair of Global Surgery provides an exciting opportunity for an experienced individual with an established record of achievement in global health-related research, with a focus on delivering essential health services to patients and populations in low resource countries. We are seeking to appoint an outstanding and passionate trailblazer, able to lead and further develop a team of international leaders in global surgical education and training, research and advocacy, building on the RCSI Institute of Global Surgery's track record of success.



**Professor Cathal Kelly**  
Vice Chancellor & CEO/ Registrar

Building on over a decade of experience in innovative training and research, to improve access to quality, essential surgical services for some of the world's most underserved populations, RCSI is entering a significant phase of growth.

Our success in the field of global surgery is aligned to our inherent understanding and desire to create sustainable in-country systems to meet the surgical needs of their populations, built on long-standing local and regional collaborations. We have garnered significant experience and demonstrated that we can offer unique insights and solutions in sub-Saharan Africa; we now plan to increase our programmes at pace.

We are immensely proud of our ongoing surgical training partnership with the College of Surgeons of East, Central and Southern Africa (COSECSA) and in addition, RCSI has embarked on an extensive research portfolio to develop models, which can address the surgical gap in the short term, particularly among rural populations. The accelerated impact of this work is the result of successive European Union (FP7 and Horizon 2020) funded projects.

The appointee to the O'Brien Chair of Global Surgery will have the opportunity to make a major impact working with a world-class team focused on the provision of surgical care globally and will participate in generating high impact research outputs, while setting the foundation for greater growth. For the candidate who has already achieved success and has a promising track record in another field of global health and/or health systems research, this post offers the potential to achieve greater success in what is a relatively new and uncharted field of global health.



**Professor Ronan O'Connell**  
President, RCSI



## The Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland An Overview

RCSI University of Medicine and Health Sciences is a degree-awarding health sciences institution specialising in medical and health sciences education, surgical training and research. As a global institution with undergraduate medical programmes in Dublin, Bahrain and Malaysia; Schools of Medicine, Pharmacy and Biomolecular Sciences, Physiotherapy, Population Health, Postgraduate Studies, Nursing and Midwifery, and the Graduate School of Healthcare Management, RCSI has a broad international reach and the ability to unlock significant advancement for patient safety and clinical outcomes worldwide.

Since RCSI's establishment as the home of surgical training in Ireland in 1784, the institution has stayed true to its noble purpose 'to enhance human health through endeavour, innovation and collaboration in education, research and service.' For over two centuries, across five international campuses, RCSI has welcomed students, surgical trainees, faculty and researchers from every corner of the world and nurtured them to become inspirational healthcare leaders that have gone on to practice in 97 countries across the world.

RCSI has acquired an international reputation for excellence and enterprise and is regarded as one of Ireland's leading health sciences research institutions. RCSI's strong research culture and highly ranked results see it attract high levels of competitive research funding.

As an independent institution RCSI is agile, with a long history of innovation. RCSI is the only medical school internationally to have successfully replicated its medicine

curriculum across three time zones and the first in Ireland to build clinical research facilities on a hospital site. In 2017, an €80 million investment in the Dublin campus added an award-winning simulation-based medical and surgical training facility to its existing heritage and education campus.

A further investment of €90 million in RCSI's education facilities will deliver executive healthcare education and population health facilities, alongside research innovation, at the heart of its campus in Dublin city centre by 2025. When complete, alongside major ongoing curricular transformation, a ground-breaking ecosystem of education and innovation is envisaged that will deliver a new era of international medicine and health sciences education and research. The development will incorporate a public engagement facility as well as space for lifelong learning for those in the healthcare sector.

In this spirit of innovation, over a decade ago, RCSI began a collaboration with the College of Surgeons of East, Central and Southern Africa (COSECSA), creating the only partnership to effectively establish and advance in-country surgical training programmes across 10 countries in Africa. Since then, RCSI has led two multi-country research partnerships, impacting in a multi-level way from national policy down to district hospitals and rural communities, using a health-systems strengthening approach to demonstrate the feasibility, effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of non-specialist delivered surgery.

More details about RCSI can be found at [www.rcsi.ie](http://www.rcsi.ie)



## The RCSI School of Population Health An Overview

Recently established as the seventh school and a major education and research centre within the Faculty of Medicine & Health Sciences at RCSI, the vision of the School of Population Health is to contribute directly to RCSI's overall vision of 'leading the world to better health'. The foundation Head of School and Chair in Population Health is [Professor Edward Gregg](#).

RCSI had developed an impressive presence in the broad research and education areas of population health, individual health outcomes, health services and workforce evaluation, and primary care in the past 15 years. This success has been built through the establishment of the Division of Population Health Sciences in 2006; the Centre for Primary Care Research in 2007; and more recent developments such as the establishment of the Health Outcomes Research Centre and the Institute of Global Surgery.

The School aims to integrate world-class research and education across multiple disciplines (e.g. epidemiology, intervention effectiveness research, systems and policy research, behaviour and data science) to guide population health decision-making. With close to 50 staff members

engaged in the area of population health teaching and research, and an additional 15+ doctoral students at any time, the School was established as a common platform to build on success to date.

This is an incredibly challenging and inspiring time for all aspects of population health in light of the COVID-19 global pandemic. Global health systems, including global surgery, will require ever more guidance from research and innovation activities at this time to protect population health. RCSI continues to be an internationally recognised leader in this field at this transformative time. Our evidence-based research and education underpins RCSI's expert voice. The Chair of Global Surgery position is a unique opportunity to bring a population perspective to the global needs in surgery.

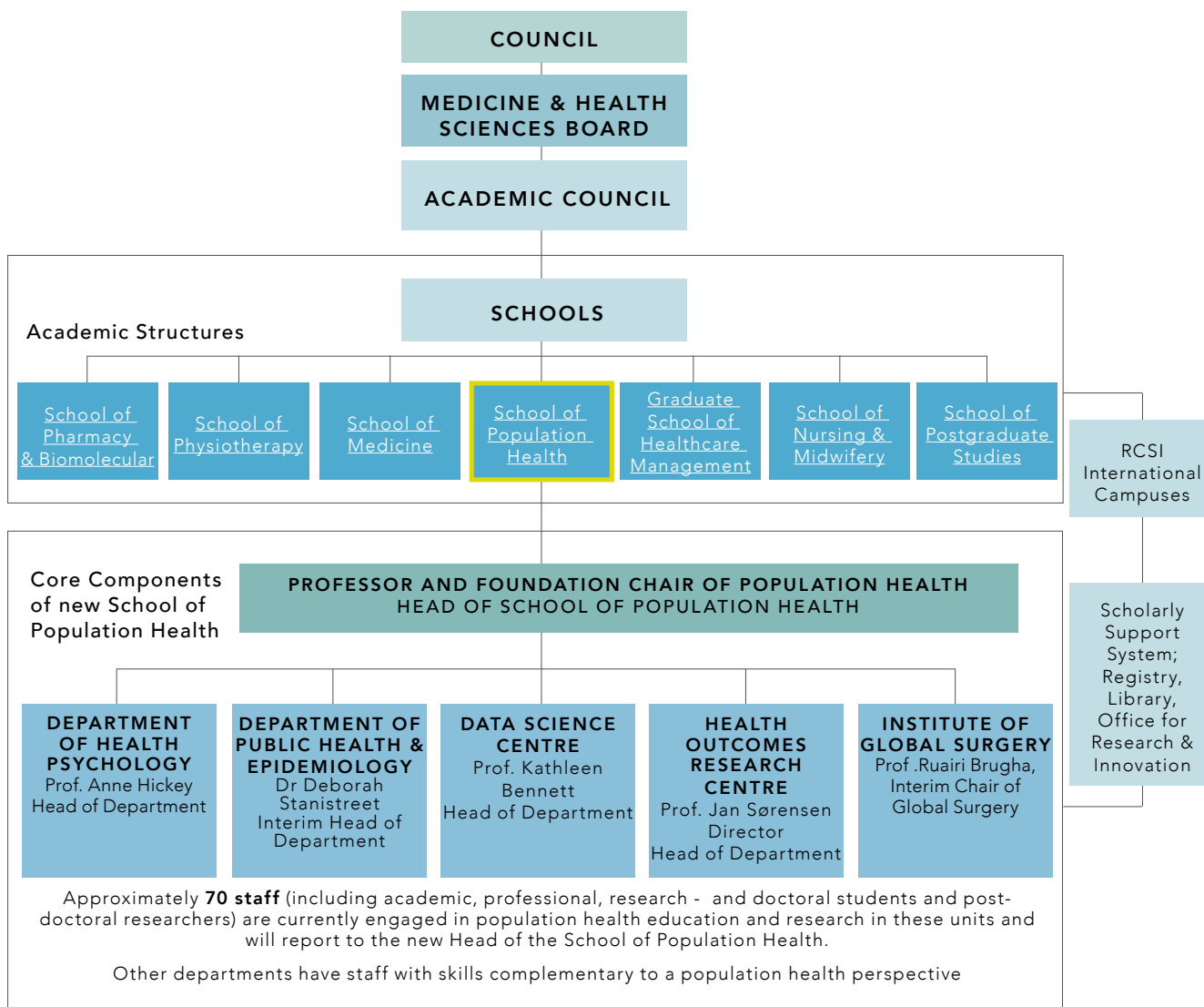


Fig 1: School of Population Health within RCSI Academic Structure

## The RCSI Institute of Global Surgery

The vision for the RCSI Institute of Global Surgery (IGS) is to be an international leader in addressing the provision of surgical care in LMICs, through expertise in health systems and healthcare personnel education and development, population health methods and, intervention effectiveness research. The IGS is building on a decade of experience of surgical training, education and research in Africa. These have had a proven impact and are uniquely positioned for acceleration and expansion.

Five billion people lack access to safe, affordable surgical and anaesthetic care, with LMICs worst affected. Last year alone, it is estimated that 140 million people needed surgical procedures to save their lives or to prevent long-term disability, but did not get them; 30 million more, who could seek care, were impoverished in the process due to the cost. There is an urgent and continually evolving need to develop innovative, multi-disciplinary research and educational programmes to overcome the most pressing challenges of global surgery.

This includes a need for research into the determinants, barriers and solutions to sub-optimal access and delivery of essential surgery. There is also an urgent need for intervention

effectiveness and implementation research to understand the comparative health and economic impacts and feasibility of different care models; the roles of the different health service levels (national, referral and district hospitals); and health systems and policy factors.

The IGS has harnessed the expertise of surgical training teams and surgical systems researchers in one leading Institute of Global Surgery, based in Dublin, with strong partnerships across leading African training and research institutions, and a voice that echoes worldwide. Led by a dynamic new Chair in Global Surgery who can focus our experience and expertise, increasing the ambition and attracting funding for new programmes, RCSI can build on a strong foundation and make greater impacts on the surgical and health needs of underserved communities, especially in LMICs, worldwide.

An imperative for the IGS is to continue to grow the synergies between the Institute's work in scaling up surgical training and building a culture of surgical systems research in LMIC. RCSI's pioneering new models have a proven track record and are highly effective in retaining expertise within the region – crucial for the longevity and ongoing growth of the programme.



## The IGS Team

The IGS team is made up of:

- [Prof Ruairi Brugha](#) – Interim Chair
- Programme Directors
  - [Dr Jakub Gajewski](#) – Research
  - [Eric O'Flynn](#) – Education, Training and Advocacy
  - [Deirdre Mangaoang](#) – Operations
- Research Programme Team: 1 Post Doc
- Education Programme team: 3 staff
- Administrative Assistant

### For informal enquiries, please contact:

- Professor Ed Gregg ([edwardgregg@rcsi.ie](mailto:edwardgregg@rcsi.ie)), recently appointed Head of School of Population Health, or
- Professor Ruairi Brugha ([rbrugha@rcsi.ie](mailto:rbrugha@rcsi.ie)), Interim Chair in Global Surgery

## RCSI – COSECSA Collaboration

RCSI and the College of Surgeons of East, Central and Southern Africa (COSECSA) established a collaboration programme in 2008 through the support of Irish Aid, the Government of Ireland's Development Agency. The aim of the collaboration is to increase the provision of quality, essential surgical and emergency care in the 12 countries which form the COSECSA region.

The RCSI COSECSA relationship is now the deepest and longest established transnational partnership in the field of global surgery and has enabled COSECSA to become the largest regional contributor to the surgical workforce in

## RCSI – COSECSA Collaboration

East, Central and Southern Africa. By 2022, 800 surgeons had graduated through this programme with 200 trainees entering every year across 100 accredited training hospitals.

Internationally, the collaboration programme works with a wide range of partners including the World Health Organisation (WHO), Global Health Workforce Alliance; and several NGOs, Colleges of Surgery and universities. RCSI and COSECSA have contributed to discussions at WHO and both Colleges are regarded as key and effective members of the Global Alliance for Surgical, Obstetric, Anaesthesia and Trauma Care (G4 Alliance).

In recent years, RCSI has leveraged its national training expertise to build capacity and scale up college-based training programmes in Africa, in surgery, anaesthesia, obstetrics, gynaecology and nursing. In addition, global surgery teaching has been embedded in RCSI, with modules delivered in the undergraduate medicine curriculum, in three Masters and in in-service professional development programmes for surgeons.

Within RCSI and led by Surgical Affairs, the COSECSA programme is supported by many units such as the academic departments of Anatomy and Regenerative Medicine, Pathology, Physiology and Medical Physics; Healthcare Management (through the Graduate School of Healthcare Management) and Registry; and professional departments such as Examinations, IT, Communications and Media Services.

For more information about the COSECSA collaboration see: [www.rcsi.com/dublin/globalurgery](http://www.rcsi.com/dublin/globalurgery) and [www.cosecsa.org](http://www.cosecsa.org).



## RCSI – Global Surgical Systems Research

In 2011, RCSI was awarded a €3 million research grant under the European Union's (EU) FP7 Programme to design, implement and evaluate national surgical training programmes for non-physician clinicians in Malawi and Zambia. Clinical Officer Surgical Training in Africa (COST-Africa) was the first major multi-country research project to undertake rigorous research on the strengthening of district level surgical systems in Africa. Since then, IGS staff have published around 25 journal articles from this research.

A follow-up research proposal to the EU's Horizon 2020 Programme was awarded €6 million in late 2016 to undertake a four-year implementation research project in support of governments in Malawi, Zambia and Tanzania. The overall aim is captured in the project title: Scaling up Safe Surgery for District and Rural Populations (SURG-Africa), 2017-20. SURG-Africa designed and evaluated a model of team supervision comprised of surgical anaesthesiology, nursing and obstetric specialists, supervising district hospital surgical teams, led by non-physician clinician or general medical officer surgical clinicians, depending on the context. With 12 journal articles published in 2021, it is likely that the research outputs will out-scale the earlier project – see [www.surgafrika.eu/outputs](http://www.surgafrika.eu/outputs).

In both research projects, RCSI has partnered with national surgeons and surgical associations in Africa, and with European partners. COSECSA has supported these research projects; and the projects in turn support and disseminate findings regionally through COSECSA's annual scientific meetings. A priority for the successful candidate for the O'Brien Chair of Global Surgery will be to work with the IGS team to source additional funding for research and training activities, building on the IGS's successful track record.

## RCSI Institute of Global Surgery – A Strategic Approach

The RCSI Institute of Global Surgery (IGS) is implementing a programme of work to achieve its strategic objectives across three pillars – Education and Training, Research and Advocacy. These pillars reflect RCSI's strengths and will enable the IGS, under the new Chair, to build on the relationships and achievements of the COSECSA collaboration, COST-Africa and SURG-Africa; as well as the global reach of RCSI's alumni and professional networks.

The goal of the Institute is to be a world leader in our core areas of Education and Training, and Research. Our approach is to:

- **Deepen** our country work, so that our education, training and research benefit district and rural populations who have the greatest unmet need for safe surgery;
- **Extend** new and tested approaches in our core areas for making safe surgery accessible to those who need it in new countries in the COSECSA region;
- **Broaden** our focus beyond surgical skills education, training and research to complementary areas, notably anaesthesiology, obstetrics, critical care and nursing;
- **Reach** out through partnerships and collaborations to bring our expertise and experience to new regions and countries. We anticipate further opportunities in West Africa, the Middle East, Malaysia and elsewhere in South East Asia.



## The O'Brien Chair of Global Surgery

RCSI is seeking to appoint the O'Brien Chair of Global Surgery. The successful applicant will lead the RCSI Institute of Global Surgery (IGS) in Dublin.

Applicants will have a strong international record of relevant research, a background in health (for example but not limited to public health, health systems, health services and surgery), and experience working in one or more LMICs. RCSI encourages individuals from all of these professional groups to apply. The successful candidate may come with a track record of successful research in a related and relevant area, such as the delivery of other (non-surgical) priority health services to patients and populations in resource-poor settings and a vision for integrating a population health perspective to the global challenges in providing access to effective surgery. RCSI is open to the successful candidate continuing to undertake research that is complementary to, while leading and supporting further development of, the current research focus of the IGS.

The O'Brien Chair of Global Surgery will be an internationally

recognised expert with extensive experience in global health programmes and advocacy, relevant research, strong executive management experience, and will have a track record or evidence of potential to lead the development of world-class surgical education and training programmes. The Professor will have the ability to drive the growth of the RCSI Institute of Global Surgery and inspire the development of our unique culture of collegiality and innovation to fuel a dynamic global health community across RCSI.

The O'Brien Chair of Global Surgery will report to the Head of School of Population Health and will work alongside the heads of departments of Public Health and Epidemiology, Psychology, Health Outcomes Research Centre and the Data Science Centre, which contains statistical expertise on which the IGS draws. The Chair will be supported by an advisory group comprised of RCSI's Chief Officers of Academia and Research. The Professor will provide vision and leadership, to ensure the delivery of education and training, research and advocacy excellence in Global Health.

The O'Brien Chair of Global Surgery is supported by the Iris O'Brien Foundation, which was established by Mr Denis O'Brien, a global philanthropist and passionate advocate for humanitarian initiatives around the world.





### Key responsibilities

- Provide vision, leadership and inspiration to develop and drive the goals and objectives of the IGS in promoting research, education and training pertinent to global surgical systems.
- Further improve and implement the strategic plan for the IGS.
- Lead the IGS to become a global leader in obtaining research funding and in generating high quality surgical services and systems research, relevant to the needs of populations in LMICs.
- Develop and deliver cutting-edge surgical education and training programmes that make an original and substantial contribution to the delivery of high quality, essential surgery where the needs are greatest.
- Secure external funding to support the execution of new education and training programmes and the continued advancement of existing programmes.
- Manage the generation and translation of evidence in the domain of global surgery into action for the improvement of human health globally, with a focus on the essential health needs in resource-poor settings.
- Represent RCSI at internationally renowned conferences and events, building the IGS's reputation in the field of global surgical systems and health.
- Develop partnerships and networks that promote the IGS's vision through:
  - research, training, education and innovation;
  - advocacy through RCSI alumni, members and fellows overseas;
  - building understanding and support from the Irish public, Government and other stakeholders for investments in global surgery; and
- working with colleagues in RCSI to support and strengthen RCSI's commitment to global health training, research and advocacy.
- Establish the IGS as an advocate, a sustainable resource and a primary contact point for those working or interested in global surgery at RCSI, nationally and globally.
- Contribute to the reputation of RCSI as a global leader in public health-related research and professional education.
- Bring a multidisciplinary, population health research perspective for surgery, including, but not limited to, sub-disciplines such as epidemiology, intervention and comparative effectiveness research, health services and health systems research, health policy and economics research, risk prediction and, understanding the determinants of poor outcomes.
- Manage an interdisciplinary team of surgeons/clinicians, researchers, educators, programme managers and administrators to develop academic, clinical and administrative skills in global surgery, public health and surgical systems development.
- Oversee and ensure the delivery of postgraduate, including doctoral, training
- Establish and maintain constructive and proactive communication with appropriate funders, stakeholders, fora and networks within RCSI and externally.
- Cultivate and promote a positive working environment in which IGS staff and research can thrive.
- Promote a culture of empowerment where staff are encouraged to make decisions appropriate to their role, level and experience.
- Produce original and up-to-date teaching methods and engage students to successfully transfer knowledge and learning.

### Person Specification Criteria

We are seeking to appoint an outstanding and passionate trailblazer, able to develop a team to become international leaders in global surgical systems research, education and training, and advocacy.

- The successful candidate will be appointed at the level of Professor and as such will hold an appropriate higher-level research degree such as PhD or MD.
- Recognised international expert in subject field as evidenced by a track record of regular invited talks at international conferences/events in relation to global/public health.
- A senior author on high impact peer-reviewed publications that are relevant to this post.
- A strong track record of obtaining external funding for research and/or education and training programmes.
- A background in health, in or related to the needs of LMICs.
- Training and/or a background in one or more of the following areas:
  - o Education/training
  - o Healthcare economics
  - o Healthcare management
  - o Health programme/services
  - o Medicine or surgery
  - o Public health
- An ability to engage and work with people successfully across cultures.
- Excellent leadership and people management skills, with an ability to lead a diverse team of academic, administrative and technical professionals in a changing environment and the ability to influence and manage complex relationships at all levels.
- Evidence of successful supervision of postgraduate students.
- Strong understanding and knowledge of strategic planning processes and the ability to devise communications strategies to develop the RCSI IGS internally and on the global stage.
- A high level of interpersonal skills to communicate effectively with executive level staff, members of the academic, clinical, professional, industry sectors and the community. Able to inspire the wider academic community and non-academic audiences with the message of the IGS.
- Capacity for original thought and enthusiasm for specialist teaching area.
- A clear commitment to interdisciplinary working
- Extensive knowledge of key players and established network of contacts in the global health / global surgery sector.

- Previous experience in similar high level leadership roles.
- Evidence of ability to work in LMICs and in multicultural environments.

### Particulars of Post

The O'Brien Chair of Global Surgery will be a full-time, permanent Professorial appointment within the School of Population Health.

### Remuneration

An attractive remuneration package is available in line with the responsibilities of the post and the qualifications and experience of the successful candidate.

### Relocation

International relocation support will be available, where appropriate, to the successful candidate.

### International Travel

The role will be based in Dublin with an expectation of travel to the regions in which RCSI operates. The successful candidate should expect to make a number of international trips annually.

### Informal Enquiries

Informal enquiries relating to the recruitment and/or the appointment process are invited in the first instance through

Maggie Walshe, Human Resources Department:  
[maggiewalshe@rcsi.ie](mailto:maggiewalshe@rcsi.ie). All applications for this post must be made through the careers webpage [www.rcsi.ie/careers](http://www.rcsi.ie/careers)

**Note:** This job description may be subject to change to reflect the evolving requirements of the Institute and RCSI in developing healthcare leaders who make a difference worldwide.

RCSI is proud to be an equal opportunity employer and welcomes applications from all suitably qualified persons regardless of their gender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability or race.



## Additional Information

### About Dublin

Dublin is one of the cultural capitals of Europe – a cosmopolitan city with excellent transport links, fantastic amenities and ready access to all of Ireland. Voted one of the friendliest cities in the world for students, and with RCSI's historic campus located in the city centre, this position is an exciting academic, professional, personal and family opportunity for the right candidate. Dublin is situated on the country's east coast, at the mouth of the River Liffey and Dublin Bay. Dublin is a city, which enjoys landscaped parks, rich Georgian heritage and a myriad of cultural attractions.

### Travel – Getting here

The main international airport for Ireland is Dublin (DUB), 10 km north of the city centre. The city has two ports that serve as the main points of sea transport with Britain; ferries from France arrive in the southern port of Rosslare.

### Work Permits

The Employment Permits Section of the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (DJEI) issues work permits. RCSI can support the successful candidate with this process.

### Education

Education in Ireland is compulsory from the ages of six to 16, or until students have completed three years of second-level education. Educational standards and curriculum in Ireland are similar to those in the United Kingdom. The Leaving Certificate, gained in five recognised subjects, is the qualification for entry to university. The school year is normally from September to June with three terms. Dependents of working expatriates do not require student visas to attend schools in Ireland. Further information on specific schools and costs can be provided to successful candidates.

If you have further questions about relocating to Dublin, please do not hesitate to contact us.