

32nd International School Psychology Association Conference

– Dublin is the venue

The Psychological Society of Ireland will co-host the 32nd International School Psychology Association (ISPA) conference with the Northern Ireland British Psychological Society in Dublin from 20th to 24th July 2010. Trinity College, Dublin, has been booked as the venue. Don't miss it if you are interested in getting an insight into the international world of educational/school psychology.

ISPA members are an enthusiastic and very friendly lot who are committed to developing and expanding psychology in education. The ISPA Executive was very keen to come to Ireland and persuasive in enlisting Irish members of ISPA to take on the task of organization a conference in Ireland. The large contingent of US membership makes Ireland a popular destination. This was confirmed at the promotion stand mounted at this year's ISPA conference in Malta, where high levels of interest were evident. The task of organizing is challenging but the outcome of a successfully run conference hosted in Ireland will be worth the effort.

So what is ISPA and who are its members? ISPA is the only international organisation for psychologists who work in schools/education. It was established in 1972 and has Danish/US origins. The first conference was held in Munich in 1975. Since then three conferences have been held in the US and 22 in Europe. The Constitution and Code of Ethics of ISPA was

adopted in 1980. ISPA produces a journal, School Psychology International, which is published by Sage. Individual membership totals approximately 600 from about 50 countries. It also accommodates affiliate membership of organizations working in school /educational psychology.

ISPA is a Non Government Organisation. It has special Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations, and is also represented on UNESCO. At the ISPA Annual Conference each year eminent keynote speakers present papers on current international best practice in the field of school/educational psychology and workshops are conducted by psychologists working in the field.

The Psychological Society of Ireland and the Northern Ireland Branch of the British Psychological Society are working with the voluntary Local Organizing Committee (LOC), which has representation from the Republic and Northern Ireland, in the planning process. The LOC has been working on the 2010 proposal to host the conference since September 2007 and it is intended that the conference will be a North-South venture. Hosting the conference in Ireland will be a major event for Psychology in Ireland and, in particular, for Educational Psychology. It should provide rare insights into international practices in the fields of school psychology and special education.

A scientific sub-committee has been convened which has been meeting regularly to plan the programme for the conference. The theme of the conference is *'School Psychology: making life better for all children'*. Subthemes include, Academic achievement; Diversity & inclusion; Working

together; Biopsychosocial health; Pro-social behavior; Professional issues. Four keynote speakers have agreed to attend the conference including Sheila Greene from Trinity College, Ingrid Lunt from Oxford University, David P Farrington from Cambridge University and Beth Doll from the University of Nebraska.

Emphasis is placed on fostering good social interaction during the conferences and the Irish conference is likely to continue this tradition. The social activities always engender great interest at the ISPA conferences when participants get an opportunity to sample local culture and cuisine. A social sub-committee has been convened and much imagination is being used to make the social programme a success. A trip to Northern Ireland will form part of the social programme in 2010 as will a traditional Irish themed event for the farewell party.

The conference will receive financial support from the Department of Education and Science as well as the participation of members of the National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS) in the Republic. It is hoped that the conference will receive funding from the Department of Education in Northern Ireland also, with the active involvement of educational psychologists working in the Northern Ireland, Education and Library Boards.

Please put the dates 20th – 24th July 2010 in your diary and you will make new friends in the field of educational psychology as well as learning a lot. It is hoped that all psychologists on the Island of Ireland working in education or interested in the promotion of psychology will support this

conference and will choose to become involved. Support will be needed particularly during the conference. Involvement provides an opportunity to keep in touch with developments internationally in the field of school/educational psychology. It also provides the opportunity to make contacts and form friendships with colleagues on the international scene.

If you are interested in participating in the organization of the 2010 ISPA Conference in Trinity College, Dublin please contact *mgt_grogan@eircom.net*

Further information about registration or submissions is available on the ISPA website www.ispaweb.org.

Local Organising Committee:

Michael Sheehan, Chair

Margaret Grogan, Secretary

Pat Holahan, Treasurer and PSI representative

Anne Kerr, Promotion and NIBPS representative

Peadar Crowley, Chair, Scientific Committee

Ann Marie Sheehan, Chair, Social Committee

Scientific Committee members:

Paula Dunne, Flan Geaney, Trevor James, William Kinsella, Barbara

Mc Connell, Liam O Hare, Mona O Moore, Keith Sullivan

Social Committee members:

Paddy O Dwyer, Ethna Swan, Niamh Ní Aoghaín

Margaret Grogan end