



2021

Annual Report

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(Term of Office Ended November 2021)

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(Appointed November 2021)

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Attracta Halpin

Philip Hamell

Paul Haran

John O'Neill

Philomena Poole

Blathna Ruane

Institute of Public Administration

57- 61 Lansdowne Road, Dublin D04 TC62

T + 353 1 240 3600

F + 353 1 668 9135

information@ipa.ie

www.ipa.ie

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01

Report of the Director General & the Chairperson of the Board



01

Report of the Director General & the Chairperson of the Board



Dr Fergal Lynch

Chairperson



Dr Marian O'Sullivan

Director General

The Institute of Public Administration was founded in 1957 by a group of public servants who identified a need for the professional education and training of Irish public sector employees, and for the analysis and evaluation of public management and policymaking.

The Institute exists to advance the understanding, standard and practice of public administration and public policy. Under the aegis originally of the Department of Finance and, since 2011, the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform, the IPA has been supporting the development of public servants and the public sector in Ireland and abroad for almost sixty-five years.

The IPA differs from other educational and training providers in that it covers the whole of the public sector and adopts a multifaceted approach. We work with and across central government and local government, providing education, training, research, publishing and consultancy services. This crosscutting approach ensures that the IPA applies a unique, whole-of-government perspective to its activities. We also provide services for the community and voluntary sector, where they interact with government, and for private sector clients wishing to gain a better understanding of the state, its role in Irish society, and public administration.

The Covid-19 crisis has had a significant and lasting effect on the Institute's operating environment. In 2020 the Institute was quick in establishing a Covid-19 strategic group at senior management level. This group met regularly to decide on the Institute's policy in relation to the evolving Covid-19 crisis. Senior management also established a formal Working Group on Technology-Enabled Services, which identified the requirements for staff, students and clients in order to ensure the continuation of studies, training and other client services during 2021. During this period the IPA operated primarily online and adapted to the needs of students, clients and staff.

The Annual Report allows time for reflection on what the Institute achieved in 2021. It also provides an opportunity to acknowledge the high levels of professionalism, expertise, commitment and hard work of an excellent team of staff and the IPA Board. It is important that we celebrate and acknowledge a very successful year in very challenging and difficult circumstances. The ability to act decisively and efficiently meant that the challenge of staff working remotely, coupled with the online delivery of programmes and examinations, was managed smoothly.

In 2021, as part of the NUI quality assurance processes, a distinguished panel of national and international experts conducted a major institutional review of the implementation and effectiveness of the IPA's quality assurance systems. The outcome of the review was successful and the review panel concluded that the IPA met all objectives of the review. On the basis of the review, the NUI Senate approved programmes at the IPA for a further seven years.

The Institute offered undergraduate and postgraduate programmes ranging from level 6 to level 10 of the National Framework of Qualifications. Students who enrolled on education programmes will receive NUI-accredited qualifications. At the 2021 annual conferring ceremony, 1,003 graduates were conferred with diplomas and degrees. An additional 689 students were presented with certificates.

In 2021 seven specialisms were offered on the Bachelor of Arts (Hons) and four on the Bachelor of Business Studies (Hons). The Institute also offered a wide range of certificate and diploma programmes ranging from Law to Computer Studies and from Local Government Management to Public Procurement. Two new programmes, namely the Professional Diploma in Innovation in the Public Sector and the Professional Certificate in Public Expenditure Management, were offered. Overall, over 1,380 students were enrolled on our undergraduate programmes in 2021.

The Institute's Master of Arts programmes have a common first year, which leads to an award of Postgraduate Diploma in Public Management. In year two students progress to a choice of seven specialist areas. The total number of students enrolled on Master of Arts programmes was 226.

The Doctorate in Governance programme commenced in 2003 and in 2021 thirty students were enrolled across all years of the doctorate programme.

The year 2021 saw the appointment of Dr John O'Neill as the new Director of Research, Publishing and Corporate Relations. The IPA has a small, full-time, dedicated team of staff undertaking applied research for government departments and other public sector bodies. The IPA completed a major

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research programme with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to review Ireland's water governance arrangements. The objectives of this two-year research programme were to help inform thinking in relation to the third-cycle *River Basin Management Plan, 2022–2027* and share lessons learnt from new governance arrangements in respect of water with other areas of the Irish public service. This is in line with the IPA's strategic objective of informing discussion, debate and practice on the current and future direction of the public service. *Public Sector Trends 2021*, the twelfth report in the series, was also published.

The year also saw the continuation of the IPA 'Local Government' research series, under which the following report was published:

- *Leading the Local Response to Covid-19: The Role of Local Government*
by Laura Shannon and Fergal O'Leary.

In line with the publishing strategy, overseen by the Institute's Book Publishing Committee, a number of texts were either completed or approved for publication. These included:

- *Achieving Impact in Public Service: Essays in Honour of Sylva Langford*
by Dónal de Buitléir (Editor);
- *City and County Management in Ireland, 1929–2022*
by Richard Boyle and Fergal O'Leary.

Now in its fifty-sixth year, the IPA continues to publish *Ireland – A Directory*. The Directory is regarded as Ireland's most comprehensive database on public and private organisations. Over 9,000 organisations are included in the Directory, which is also available as a phone or desktop app.

In the Training Division, the Institute continued to provide a broad range of public and customised learning and development programmes, and specialist advisory services in the areas of public sector leadership and management, human resource management, governance, accounting, financial management, auditing, project and programme management and information technology, including accredited programmes which lead to formal membership of professional bodies. Having successfully pivoted to online offerings in 2020, the teams continued to innovate throughout 2021 in designing, creating and delivering a diverse range of blended learning online offerings, courses, special topic webinars and programmes. The year also saw a small return to more face-to-face engagements, mostly at the request of clients, and there was an increasing number of hybrid offerings, which again presented challenges but were successfully delivered. The forums and other key events and activities continued in an online format, utilising a range of educational and online platforms, including Moodle, MS Teams, Zoom, Webex, Pexip, Panopto and GoToWebinar.

In the Leadership and Management team, the requirement for services was wide-ranging. Twenty-eight government departments, offices and state bodies continued their engagement with us for our practical, online, bespoke programmes to transform leadership and managerial capabilities at all levels, from clerical to principal officer. We were privileged to continue our engagement and collaboration with a number of key stakeholders and partners in the work of climate change at local government level. Working closely with the Local Authority Services National Training Group, the Climate Action Regional Offices and a range of national contributors, drawn from across academic institutions, central and local government, the Irish Meteorological Service, the Association of Irish Local Government, energy agencies and MaREI, we embarked on a collaborative, intensive and ambitious project to train thirty-one local government climate action teams. We designed and delivered 165 days of bespoke development for some 1,403 participants in this sector.

In relation to CIPD (Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development) accredited programmes, 2021 saw continued strong demand from across our key sectors. As part of legacy offerings, we had three CIPD programmes running centrally and within client organisations: The CIPD Diploma in HR Practice, the CIPD Diploma in Learning and Development and, most importantly, the new CIPD Certificate in People Practice. We continued with the Mediators' Institute of Ireland Certified Mediation programme on a hybrid basis, where we have sought to mix online sessions and support with, where possible and appropriate and in accordance with public health guidance, some face-to-face delivery for the practical skills aspects.

There was strong demand for financial management and accounting-related services. Consultancy services included advice on statements on internal control, annual financial statements and assurance systems, as well as the development of financial policies and protocols for key sectors. We also delivered the CIPFA-accredited Certificate in International Public Financial Management.

The Governance Forum programme schedule for 2021 included eighteen different events which commenced on 14 January and concluded on 9 December. From March 2020 onwards, the forum went virtual and successfully migrated to an online webinar series, which saw us again achieve record numbers of attendees in 2021. The virtual platform also allowed us to more easily access national and international contributors.

On the international front, we were privileged to receive an invitation from the Ukrainian Parliament to present at their virtual conference and share Ireland's experience in civil service learning and development, discuss the mechanisms in place at central level to respond to the system's needs, and present the Institute's role in responding to current and future needs of Ireland's civil servants.

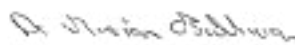
In 2021 a positive financial performance was recorded. There was significant investment in enhancing our cybersecurity and IT infrastructure, and financial management systems. Investment continued in the IPA sustainability programme, and the National Public Sector Energy Efficiency targets were met. The IPA ICT team, working with colleagues across the organisation, successfully developed and implemented the technological infrastructure solutions to enable this digital and business transformation. The Institute complied with its financial, taxation and regulatory obligations during 2021, and the Board of the IPA continued to oversee the effectiveness of the System of Internal Control across the Institute.

The IPA is privileged to have a highly talented, professional and committed workforce, and a strong body of associates. All are vitally important in delivering on our mission and vision. The IPA is committed to supporting all staff in their professional and personal development and well-being. Institute specialists continued to support a wide range of organisations undergoing change as a result of the pandemic and the general reform process.

2021 was a very productive and rewarding year for the IPA. We delivered on our *Strategic Plan*, fully pivoted our business model online, and continued to build our reputation at a national and international level. We would like to express our appreciation and thanks to the IPA Board members and all of the IPA staff and associates, our students, clients and member organisations. We look forward to continuing our productive relationship with them in the years ahead.



Dr Fergal Lynch
Chairperson



Dr Marian O'Sullivan
Director General

02

Education



02 Education



Dr Michael Mulreany

Assistant Director General

The IPA is the primary specialist provider of education to the public service in Ireland. The education services of the IPA are particularly important at this time of renewal and change in the public service. Our programmes aim to provide specialist skills and knowledge, a broadly based understanding of public management and policy, analytical skills and the opportunity for progression from level 6 awards right up to level 10 on the National Framework of Qualifications. The programmes are also designed to provide a flexible and personalised service so as to facilitate and support students who are working full-time. In that context, the provision of online support and delivery for students has become particularly important and is an inevitable trend in light of the Covid-19 pandemic. In recent years, the uptake on education programmes has been steadily growing.

National University of Ireland and University College Dublin Accredited Programmes

Between 2001 and 2011 the IPA was a recognised college of the NUI. Between 2011 and 2018 the IPA was a recognised college of UCD. In 2018 the IPA resumed as a recognised college of the NUI. Students enrolled on education programmes from September 2018 onwards are eligible to receive NUI-accredited qualifications. At the 2021 annual conferring ceremony, 1,003 graduates were conferred with diplomas and degrees. An additional 689 students were presented with certificates.

In academic years 2020/1 and 2021/2 delivery of programmes was moved online in response to public health restrictions due to the Covid-19 pandemic. In 2021 the Institute offered the following suite of undergraduate and postgraduate programmes ranging from level 6 to level 10 of the National Framework of Qualifications.

Undergraduate Programmes

The flagship programmes – the Bachelor of Arts (Hons) and Bachelor of Business Studies (Hons) – were once again offered in 2021. In 2021 seven specialisms were offered on the Bachelor of Arts (Hons) and four on the Bachelor of Business Studies (Hons).

The Institute also offered a wide range of certificate and diploma programmes ranging from Law to Computer Studies and from Local Government Management to Public Procurement. Some of the professional diplomas are offered in conjunction with government bodies. The Professional Diploma in Official Statistics for Policy Evaluation is a

one-year programme offered in conjunction with the Central Statistics Office. The Professional Diploma in Human Rights and Equality is delivered in conjunction with the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission. The Professional Diploma in Industrial and Employment Relations is offered in conjunction with the Workplace Relations Commission and the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform. In academic year 2020/1 two new programmes, namely the Professional Diploma in Innovation in the Public Sector and the Professional Certificate in Public Expenditure Management, were offered. Overall, over 1,380 students were enrolled on our undergraduate programmes in 2021.

Postgraduate Programmes

The Institute's Master of Arts programmes have a common first year, which leads to an award of Postgraduate Diploma in Public Management. In year two students progress to a choice of seven specialist areas. In 2021 the total number of students enrolled on Master of Arts programmes was 226.

The Master of Economic Science in Policy Analysis is a two-year programme with the award of Postgraduate Diploma in Policy Analysis at the end of the first year. Students study a range of policy-related subjects in the first year and they work on applied dissertations in the second year. In 2021 twenty-four students were enrolled on the programme.



The Master of Science in Business and Management programme commenced in September 2011. This MSc is a two-year, part-time programme. The first graduates of the programme graduated in December 2013. In 2021 twenty-two students were enrolled on the programme.

The Professional Certificate in Governance is a one-year programme which was first offered in 2011. Over 170 students were enrolled on the programme in 2021.

The Doctorate in Governance programme commenced in 2003, and the first graduates were conferred in 2006. Between 2003 and 2011 the Doctorate in Governance programme was jointly offered with Queen's University Belfast. In 2011 the Institute embarked on a new arrangement to jointly offer the programme with UCD. The first graduate of the joint IPA–UCD doctorate was conferred in 2015. In 2019 the NUI approved the IPA's proposal to take sole responsibility for the administration and delivery of the programme. In 2021 over thirty students were enrolled on the programme.

Quality Assurance

In 2021, as part of the NUI quality assurance processes, a distinguished panel of national and international experts conducted a major institutional review of the implementation and effectiveness of the IPA's quality assurance systems. The outcome of the review was successful and the review panel concluded that the IPA met all objectives of the review. On the basis of the review the NUI Senate approved programmes at the IPA for a further seven years.

03

Research

03 Research



Dr John O'Neill

Head of Research,
Publishing & Corporate
Relations

The Institute has a small, full-time, dedicated team of staff undertaking applied research for central government, local government and other public sector bodies. In 2021 Dr John O'Neill was appointed as the new Head of Research, Publishing and Corporate Relations. For central government the key piece of research carried out in 2021 was the continuation of the *Public Sector Trends* report, now in its twelfth year.

Public Sector Trends 2021

The annual *Public Sector Trends* report, by Dr Richard Boyle, was published in December and examines trends in public sector development. Using data gathered from a number of sources, information on the size and cost of the public sector, the quality of public administration, efficiency and performance, and levels of trust and confidence is presented in a simple but rigorous manner. This report is available for download at <https://www.ipa.ie/state-of-the-public-service-series/public-sector-trends-2021.5807.html>

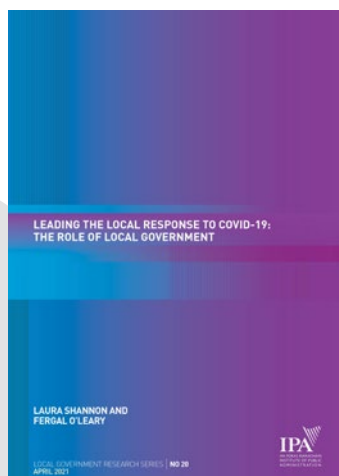
The year 2021 also saw the continuation of the 'Local Government' research series, under which two outputs were completed and published:



Leading the Local Response to Covid-19: The Role of Local Government

This research paper, by Laura Shannon and Fergal O'Leary, looks at the impact of the pandemic on the local government sector during the first wave of coronavirus. How local authorities dealt with the initial disruption caused to their workloads, the challenges they experienced, and how they supported local communities and businesses are key areas explored. The aim of the research was to document local government's overall response to the pandemic, and identify and analyse what worked well, and what could have been improved.

Given the unprecedented circumstances, the research shows that local authorities overall responded very well to minimise the disruption to workloads and ensure the delivery of essential public services. Central coordination and support within the local government sector was strong and provided consistency. The report is available at https://www.ipa.ie/_fileUpload/Documents/IPA%20LGR%2020%20web.pdf



City and County Management in Ireland, 1929–2020

This book, by Richard Boyle and Fergal O'Leary, reflects on the introduction of the management system to Irish local government in 1929 and the contribution of city and county managers to Irish life since then.

The first part of the book includes contributions by renowned academics and practitioners, who describe the origins and development of the management system and its role in local and national development. The second part of the book focuses on the individuals who have held the office of city and county manager (and, since 2014, chief executive) in Ireland from 1929 to 2020. Short career profiles are provided on all former and current managers/chief executives and there is also an analysis of these profiles. Furthermore, the book provides an extensive chronology that highlights developments in local government over the period examined. Further information can be found at <https://www.ipa.ie/government-and-politics/city-and-county-management-in-ireland-1929-2020.5639.html>

03 Research

Research Programme with the Environmental Protection Agency

The year 2021 was also notable for the completion of the major research programme with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to review Ireland's water governance arrangements. The objectives of this two-year research programme were to help inform thinking in relation to the third-cycle *River Basin Management Plan, 2022–2027* and to share lessons learnt from new governance arrangements in respect of water with other areas of the Irish public service. This is in line with the IPA's strategic objective of informing discussion, debate and practice on the current and future direction of the public service.

As part of the IPA/EPA research programme, three papers were published by the IPA, with a further three reports published by the EPA, facilitating wider dissemination of the key research findings.

IPA Publications

- *Water Governance in Ireland: Towards the Third-Cycle River Basin Management Plan, 2022–2027. Report on Proceedings of Key Stakeholder Workshops Held as Part of the EPA–IPA Water Governance Research Programme, May 2021;*
- *Case Studies on Local Government Catchment Groups in Ireland, 2018–2020;*
- *An Fóram Uisce (The Water Forum) as an Example of Stakeholder Engagement in Governance.*

All these reports can be downloaded at <https://www.ipa.ie/research-papers/epa-reports.5762.html>

EPA Publications

- *Using an Experimental Governance Lens to Examine Governance of the River Basin Management Plan for Ireland 2018–2021;*
- *Using the OECD Water Governance Indicator Framework to Review the Implementation of the River Basin Management Plan for Ireland 2018–2021;*
- *Sharing Lessons Learned from Water Governance (published in 2022).*

The EPA reports can be downloaded at the following links:

https://www.epa.ie/publications/research/water/Research_Report_373.pdf

https://www.epa.ie/publications/research/water/Research_Report_372.pdf

https://www.epa.ie/publications/research/water/Research_Report_406.pdf

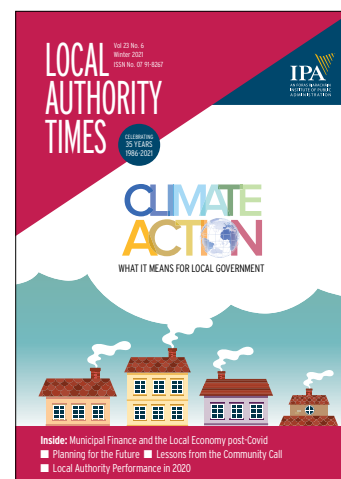
Other work carried out by the Research Division included the provision of the Irish country chapter for an EU-commissioned project, looking at public administration reform trends across the EU 28 (European Public Administration Country Knowledge – EUPACK2).

The research team is responsible for editorship of *Administration*, the peer-reviewed research journal of the IPA. Four editions are published each year. The editorial advisory committee of the journal, which includes prominent academics with a public management and politics background, meets once a year. All issues and articles from volume 63 onwards are freely available online:

<https://sciendo.com/journal/ADMIN>

Local Authority Times and the *EU News Bulletin* were also published by the Research Division throughout the year. The team also provided research support for the IPA's annual *Ireland – A Directory*, as well as contributions to IPA Education and Training programmes.

In addition, the team was significantly involved in planning ahead for 2022 with the development of a new three-year programme of research for the local government sector, a new two-year IPA/EPA research programme and discussions on new areas of work to support the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform with regard to public sector reform post *Our Public Service 2020*.





04

Training & Development

04

Training & Development



Teresa Casserly

Director, Business Development, Leadership and Management, and International Services



Aidan Horan

Director, Governance, Finance, Human Resource Management, Information Technology/Project Management and Local Authority

The year 2021 was very successful across the units within the Training and Development Division, in spite of the ongoing challenges and uncertainties due to Covid-19. Having successfully pivoted to online offerings in 2020, the teams continued to innovate throughout 2021 in designing, creating and delivering a diverse range of blended learning online offerings, courses, special topic webinars and programmes. The year also saw a small return to more face-to-face engagements, mostly at the request of clients, and there was an increasing number of hybrid offerings, which again presented challenges but were successfully delivered. The forums and other key events and activities continued in an online format, utilising a range of educational and online platforms, including Moodle, MS Teams, Zoom, Webex, Pexip, Panopto and GoToWebinar.

We continued to evolve our teaching and learning approach to integrate available resources, e.g. video recordings, case studies, films, real-time delivery, interactive tools and techniques. This evolution continues where we see the ongoing potential of virtual and asynchronous education, training and development programmes. We acknowledge that the demand for online and hybrid delivery of services will continue. We continue to look for and exploit the opportunities that the various approaches provide, while also remaining conscious of the need to ensure high-quality participant engagement and the achievement of learning objectives. We also need to acknowledge that

some of the services provided across the various units are best delivered in an in-person format, and indeed the professional accreditation bodies have requested in some instances that face-to-face engagement for skills development be integrated into delivery.

In financial performance terms, the division, and all the units, had a very strong performance buoyed up by a significant pipeline of demand and client attendance on new and refreshed offerings, coupled with the continuing dedication and commitment of the administrative and specialist teams to proactively and reactively respond to client and market needs. In addition to training

and development offerings across financial management and accounting, human resource management, information technology, project management, local government, governance and leadership, we also offer professionally accredited courses and programmes. In terms of our diversified portfolio, we were also commissioned to provide consultancy and advisory services in central government, local government, state bodies and agencies, regulatory bodies, higher education institutions, education and training boards, publicly funded and public benefit entities, the sports sector and national governing bodies.

We are pleased that, in spite of the uncertainties in 2021, our service offerings were much in demand and that we continued to work successfully with our clients, partners and stakeholders to respond to the myriad of requests we received. Our very comprehensive online prospectus for 2021 and the current 2022 prospectus provide an important showcase for our services, with a blend of virtual and in-person offerings, and many of our open enrolment programmes continue to be sought as in-house events, bespoke for individual organisations.



04 Training & Development

Leadership & Management

With the objective of providing a broad range of relevant, open and bespoke competency-based development programmes to support the current and future needs of leaders, managers and their organisations, the Leadership, Management and Business Development Teams responded to a strong demand for services from across a broad spectrum of government departments, offices, agencies and local authorities during 2021.

The requirement for services was wide-ranging. Twenty-eight government departments, offices and state bodies continued their engagement with us for our practical, online, bespoke programmes to transform leadership and managerial capabilities at all levels, from clerical to principal officer. We worked closely with existing civil service customers and branched into new departments and offices to develop further and expand our suite of programmes that address the growing demand for training for newly recruited and recently promoted civil servants. In a joint initiative with the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, we developed, launched and successfully piloted a new course for recently recruited senior civil servants. This addresses their requirements for knowledge of civil service procedures and understanding of the democratic process and the roles of various actors in that system, with the focus on the role of the civil servant as the agent of the minister and the rules that determine the civil servant's role in the process.

We were privileged to continue our engagement and collaboration with a number of key stakeholders and partners in the work of climate change at local government level. Working closely with the Local Authority Services National Training Group, the Climate Action Regional Offices and a range of national contributors, drawn from across academic institutions, central and local government, the Irish Meteorological Service, the Association of Irish Local Government, energy agencies and MaREI, we embarked on a collaborative, intensive and ambitious project to train thirty-one local government climate action teams. Working with 391 highly experienced technical, administrative

and professional staff from across all local authority directorates, the project resulted in the delivery of fifty-three days of Climate Leadership training. The scope of this initiative has generated a momentum for climate action teams to think and act strategically, become adept at finding common ground and achieve buy-in among stakeholders with disparate views and agendas while leading out on the behavioural change and adaptive issues involved in the now critical issue of climate change. Over the course of the year, we also engaged closely with nineteen local authorities to develop further line manager capacity for those in first-line, middle and senior managerial roles. We designed and delivered 165 days of bespoke development for some 1,403 participants in this sector.

During 2021 we had the privilege to work with the education sector, in particular the education and training boards (ETBs), to develop a senior leadership initiative for chief executives, their senior leadership teams and directors from across the sixteen ETBs. Designed to develop further leadership capacity at the level of the individual, team and organisation, the initiative differentiated from other leadership approaches by the interweaving of a number of elements. Senior leaders had the opportunity to engage with our conceptual framework for thinking about leadership challenges, developing a set of techniques or skills for working strategically and tactically within their organisations, and building capacity to endure the stresses of leading the change necessary for progress on real and current challenges that often have deeply personal connections and implications. The scope of this leadership initiative, initiated by the sector's ongoing focus on continuous professional development for its senior leaders, has created a shared language for the sector to discuss purpose, strategy, structure and culture, and develop a new appreciation, as well as ideas and practical tools, to work collaboratively towards sectoral challenges and change. Well over half of the sector is now engaged in discovering new possibilities for cooperation, collaboration and innovation – owned and driven by the leadership teams of the ETBs – using a common framework, vocabulary and renewed sense of purpose.

With the increasing global and national demand for a hybrid-working model and the impending government regulation, there was substantial interest in a new 'Managing in a Hybrid Environment' offering, which we developed early in 2021 and initially offered as a public course. The offering gained traction amongst several public bodies and a number of bids for this training as a bespoke programme were successful. The module teases out the change management and people aspect of a hybrid model to promote facilitation and cultural adaptation. In tandem with this, we also developed an additional offering, 'Employee Hybrid Working', which has tapped in to a growing demand for more specific training as government policy and organisational policies are prepared for roll-out.

We renewed our engagement with the Local Government Management Agency to support delivery of a new graduate programme to equip recently recruited graduates to the local government system. A series of regional skills sessions, aimed at recognising and integrating critical skills and competencies into their work experience, including an introductory module to orientate the new cohort of 150 graduates to the role, functions, structure and culture of local government, was virtually delivered by our leadership experts in 2021.

On the international front, we were privileged to receive an invitation from the Ukrainian Parliament to present at their virtual conference and share Ireland's experience in civil service learning and development, discuss the mechanisms in place at central level to respond to the system's needs, and present the Institute's role in responding to current and future needs of Ireland's civil servants. Equally, we were pleased to accept an invitation from the European Commission, DG NEAR, to participate in a TAIEX Expert Mission to Zhvania School of Public Administration Georgia, where we chaired discussions and presented a paper on the 'Evaluation of Modern Approaches to Training and Development, Mechanisms and Tools' for reforming the local government sector in Georgia.



04 Training & Development



Human Resource Management Unit

In relation to CIPD (Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development) accredited programmes, 2021 saw continued strong demand from across our key sectors. As part of legacy offerings, we had three CIPD programmes running centrally and within client organisations: the CIPD Diploma in HR Practice, the CIPD Diploma in Learning and Development and, most importantly, the new CIPD Certificate in People Practice. As we move into 2022, the Certificate in People Practice will be the flagship offering and we are seeing a good level of in-house client demand being requested. We continued with the Mediators' Institute of Ireland Certified Mediation programme on a hybrid basis, where we have sought to mix online sessions and support with, where possible and appropriate and in accordance with public health guidance, some face-to-face delivery for the practical skills aspects. The feedback on the various programmes very positively acknowledges the efforts we have made to ensure successful hybrid delivery on this and the CIPD programmes.

There continued to be constant demand for the range of HRM and related courses, including competency-based interviewer and interviewee online training across all key client sectors, including state bodies and agencies, and health, local government and civil service sectors. The service portfolio included Performance Management & Development workshops, Grievance & Discipline Management, Dignity at Work, Learning/Training Needs Analysis, Employment Law Essentials, as well as many Personal Safety at Work courses delivered both online and in-person. We continued to deliver Freedom of Information Training and Awareness, centrally and locally for specific clients. The niche consultancy and advisory services provided were also in demand, including grading reviews, HR strategy and workforce planning, and independent ballot services.

While training course delivery in 2021 was mainly through online workshops, we saw some in-house face-to-face delivery and this has been a growing trend, albeit contingent on changes in rates of Covid infections and related concerns.

Local Authority Unit

Similar to the other teams, the Local Authority Unit was very active in 2021, with the majority of training, development, accredited and housing forum services delivered online. The Housing Forum, launched in August 2020, continued to be a highlight of the unit's offerings in 2021, with a programme of events including monthly webinars for housing practitioners on a wide range of contemporary special-interest areas. As in 2020, the audience numbers were very strong, with over 100 (local authority, approved housing body and public sector agency representatives) attending each event. In addition to the forum, we also convened short courses on bespoke housing service policies and initiatives, including Social Housing Fundamentals, Debt Management and Rental Inspection programmes.

There was continuing strong demand for our bespoke training programmes, including in particular the A-Z Training Programme in Local Government and the Local Authority Legislative Training. These programmes are offered online with a mix of pre-recorded video lectures coupled with real-time interactive sessions. Course participants also have access to the IPA Moodle system, which acts as a repository of research and reference material and has been acknowledged as very beneficial. The team continued to support the delivery of the local government accredited programmes, including the LG Certificate, LG Diploma, Housing Certificate and Housing Diploma. The team also provided niche advisory and consultancy support to local authorities.

Information Technology and Project Management

There was continuing strong demand for short project management and GDPR training courses, as well as for social media courses in 2021. It is notable that the provision of bespoke GDPR courses for individual organisations were as a result of a maturing in their approach to data privacy and new issues and new requirements arising. The demand also reflected a greater level of interest in some of our more technical courses, such as PMI-ACP (Agile) and a new BPI (Business Process Innovation – as opposed to Improvement) course. Over the years, the unit has traditionally offered face-to-face end-user systems training and this had migrated across to a fully virtual offering in 2020, with our niche prospectus offerings in strong demand. During the year we were commissioned to lead on several strategy review and planning engagements, and we continued to actively work within client organisations and within our central programme on building project management capacity and capability at senior- and middle-management levels across key sectors. It is noteworthy that as our services evolve, there is an increasing emphasis on case studies and tuition bespoke for the organisations, and the need to collaborate at design and development stage.

The unit also continued to support the delivery of modules and student supports on the Certificate and Diploma in Project Management and the Diploma in Computer Studies, and we are pleased with the level of student and sponsoring organisation feedback, which continues to be positive.

At the end of 2021, and into 2022, there was clearly a growing demand for in-person courses and, in responding to clients, we provided options of online and in-person or a mix of approaches depending on the topic areas and the specific client requirements.

04 Training & Development

Financial Management Unit

There was also strong demand for financial management and accounting-related services in 2021 from across all key sectors. In addition to the regular courses in the online prospectus on budget management, finance for non-financial managers, accounting fundamentals, understanding sectoral finance and costing, sector-specific accounting events, special topic webinars, internal audit and other areas, the new offerings on aspects of the *Public Spending Code* were very well received, with both central offerings and increasingly in-house client offerings in strong demand in 2021 and into 2022. The year also saw successful bespoke events for government departments and offices. The services addressing *Public Spending Code* requirements for state bodies and local government evolved and, in the context of the various code obligations, we were commissioned to develop and deliver specific technical modules, depending on needs, on an in-house basis. This type of demand and tailoring, we envisage, will continue into the future.

We delivered the CIPFA-accredited Certificate in International Public Financial Management. CIPFA UK are updating this course (now called IPFM Futures) and this transition means we now must wait until new modules are agreed for the latter half of 2022. For our existing students from the 2021 intake, exam revision sessions were made available to assist their progression.

Consultancy services provided by the team included advice on statements on internal control, annual financial statements and assurance systems, as well as the development of financial policies and protocols for key sectors. The team also provided inputs to other accredited programmes, including the Diploma in Health Management, the Professional Diploma in Project Management as well as the Certificate and Doctorate in Governance.

Governance Unit

The Governance Forum programme schedule for 2021 included eighteen different events, which kicked off on 14 January and concluded on 9 December. From March 2020 onwards, the forum went virtual and successfully migrated to an online webinar series, which ironically, due to the broader reach and limited constraints on access, saw us again achieve record numbers of attendees in 2021. The virtual platform also allowed us to more easily access national and international contributors and we were very pleased with the positive feedback and acknowledgement received from the forum member organisations.

The topic areas in 2021 included Department–Agency Relations, Cyber and Data Governance, Culture and the Role of the Board and Senior Team, The Board as a Team – Characteristics and Effectiveness, Communications and Engagement, Finance and Financial Reporting, Strategy, Board Members' Roles and Responsibilities, Integrated Risk Management, Periodic Critical Reviews and Board–Executive Relations. The forum also convened events for the chairpersons of audit and risk committees. The Chairpersons Network and the Board Secretaries Network also met on three and two occasions, respectively, during 2021.

In response to the HSE cybersecurity incident in 2021, the forum in association with the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer, DPER, organised a priority, free webinar for those with governance and leadership roles across the civil and wider public service on the topic of cybersecurity risk and governance on 3 June 2021. The virtual registered attendance was 466.

Based on the very positive feedback and the need to continue to raise awareness and understanding on this evolving area, the forum arranged for a follow-up session on 14 July on the topics of Incident Response and Business Continuity Planning. The forum also worked with the Comptroller and Auditor General in June to host and support their latest Audit Insights event, which was attended by 260. The morning event addressed a variety of topics, including procurement, culture, control environment and managing fraud risk.

Other work demands remained strong and included consultancy, advisory, support, and training and development programmes from across all key client sectors. The thematic areas included independent governance reviews, risk management, assurance reviews, committee and board evaluations, senior governance and leadership training, benchmarking reviews, governance framework development, and policies and procedures. We are seeing increasing demand for board, senior leadership teams and committee interactions face to face, as requested by the clients. We have tendered for and been successful with commissioned work across many key sectors. The unit also supported the delivery of the Professional Certificate in Governance programme throughout 2021. The Pension Forum also continued in a virtual format in 2021 with special-interest events well attended.



05

Library & Information Services



Senan Healy

Head of Library &
Information Services

05 Library & Information Services

The Institute is unique in hosting the only specialist library in the country dedicated to public administration.

The vision for the IPA Library is to be a central and intrinsic part of the Institute community, connecting our users to the information they need to help them succeed. The Library aims to promote a culture of research-informed practice and decision-making, deliver flexible, responsive and high-quality services aligned with the needs of our customers, and help to enable academic success by fostering essential information literacy skills. The Library's core mission is to provide access to the best information and research in a timely manner to students, staff and members of the Institute, and to advise on the appropriate, critical and ethical use of information.

The Library, located in Lansdowne Road, provides a lending, reference and information service to students, staff and members of the Institute. Queries from researchers are also welcomed by phone or email. Access is provided to books, e-books, journals, electronic databases, reports, statistics and official publications in the general area of public management. This service covers a wide range of subjects, including management, economics, sociology, law, criminology, health, finance and local government. The continued development and curation of the Library's unique collection has cemented its position as a key national resource in the arena of public management and administration. In 2021 the Library continued with the development of its e-book collection, to make key texts available to students online when 'in-person' access to the Library is not possible.

In September the Library moved to a new library management system called Koha, which included a new online library catalogue for use by students and staff. The online catalogue is mobile optimised, making it easier for students to search whether on

a laptop or a smart device. It also includes features such as browsing a virtual book shelf, links to online reviews of books and a new searchable A-to-Z of journals to which the IPA Library is subscribed. The move to Koha is another step in improving accessibility to the IPA Library collection for staff and students, with further developments to come in the future.

The aim of the Library is to provide the right information and resources in the most appropriate format and in a timely manner to a diverse and geographically dispersed range of clients. Different avenues of communication are used by the Library to promote its services. Librarians provide orientation sessions to students at the start of the academic year and information sessions to individual students or to groups (online and in person) over the course of the year. Hundreds of students attended online information sessions while the Library was closed during the Covid-19 pandemic. The Head of Library & Information Services attends briefing sessions to students embarking on research work for dissertations and advises them on the library assistance available to them. Twitter has been adopted as the main social media platform to engage with IPA students, the external research community and other libraries.

Reading rooms are available for study, for consulting and borrowing books, and for accessing electronic resources. Students can avail of the Library service by phone, by email, by webchat or by accessing electronic databases and thousands of full-text journal articles via Moodle. Materials not held in the Library may be requested through the inter-library loans service and items can be delivered in hard copy or electronically.

During term the Library is open from 9.15 a.m. until 8.00 p.m., Monday to Thursday, and until 5.15 p.m. on Friday. It also opens on a restricted basis on the majority of Saturdays during term. Full and up-to-date information on opening hours is available on the IPA website.

06
Publishing



06

Publishing



Dr John O'Neill

Head of Research,
Publishing &
Corporate Relations

The work of the Publications Division, as a part of the Whitaker School of Government and Management, links with the wider education and research activities of the Institute, and provides an important knowledge and information base to inform the practice of public administration. The year 2021 saw the appointment of a new Head of Research, Publishing and Corporate Relations, Dr John O'Neill, the completion of several projects and the commencement of some new publishing initiatives.

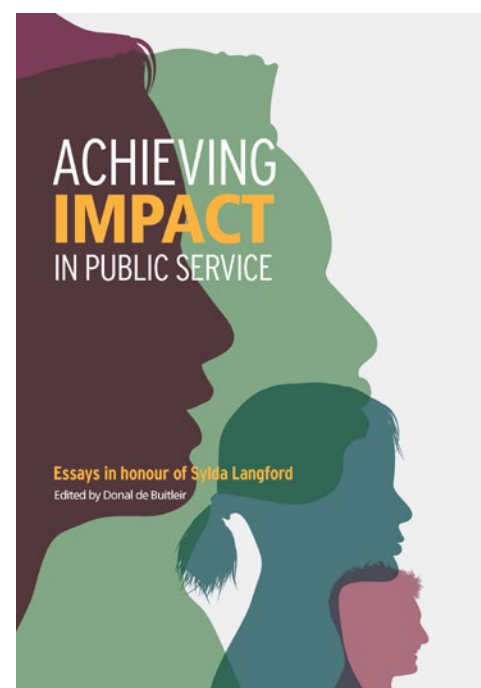
Books Published

In line with the publishing strategy, overseen by the Institute's Book Publishing Committee, a number of texts were either completed or approved for publication, including:

- *Achieving Impact in Public Service: Essays in Honour of Sylva Langford*, edited by Dónal de Buitléir. Launched by Frances Fitzgerald, MEP, this volume was published as a tribute to the remarkable public service career of Sylva Langford, which culminated in her appointment as the first Director General of the Office for Children and Youth Affairs. Sylva's achievements across the welfare of children and young people in Ireland are recognised by the contributions of distinguished authors for this volume. The result is a set of compelling insights into the making, shaping and delivery of public policy and services in Ireland.
- *City and County Management in Ireland, 1929–2020*, by Richard Boyle and Fergal O'Leary. Launched at the annual dinner of the County and City Management Association in November, this book includes contributions by renowned academics and practitioners, who describe the origins and development of the local government management system and its role in local and national development. The book also provides a specific focus on the 172 individuals who have held the office of city and county manager (and, since 2014, chief executive) from 1929 to 2020. A chronology is also included that highlights developments in local government over the period examined, as well as a bibliography that provides an overview of selected literature available on local government in Ireland.

A number of reports were also published on behalf of the Institute's Research Division, including:

- *Public Sector Trends 2021* [State of the Public Service Series No. 27] by Richard Boyle;
- *Leading the Local Response to Covid-19: The Role of Local Government* [Local Government Research Series No. 20] by Laura Shannon and Fergal O'Leary;
- *Water Governance in Ireland: Towards the Third-Cycle River Basin Management Plan, 2022–2027. Report on Proceedings of Key Stakeholder Workshops Held as Part of the EPA–IPA Water Governance Research Programme, May 2021*;
- *Case Studies on Local Government Catchment Groups in Ireland, 2018–2020* by Micheál O Cinnéide, Joanna O'Riordan and Richard Boyle;
- *An Fóram Uisce (The Water Forum) as an Example of Stakeholder Engagement in Governance* by Richard Boyle, Joanna O'Riordan, Laura Shannon and Fergal O'Leary;
- three issues of *Local Authority Times*.



Pictured at the launch of a new book from the IPA entitled 'Achieving Impact in Public Service - Essays in Honour of Sylva Langford' was Frances Fitzgerald, MEP, guest of honour, and Sylva Langford.

06 Publishing

Ireland – a Directory

Now in its fifty-sixth year, the Directory is regarded as Ireland's most comprehensive database on public and private organisations. Approximately 9,000 organisations are included in the latest edition, including government departments, local authorities, voluntary agencies, trade and professional organisations, merchant banks, advertising agencies, third-level institutions, independent radio stations, the media and EU institutions. The Directory is also available as a phone or desktop app. The Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage, Darragh O'Brien, TD, launched the Directory in December.

Administration Journal

Four issues of the Institute's journal, *Administration*, were published throughout the year. All issues and articles from volume 63 onwards are freely available online:

<https://sciendo.com/journal/ADMIN>

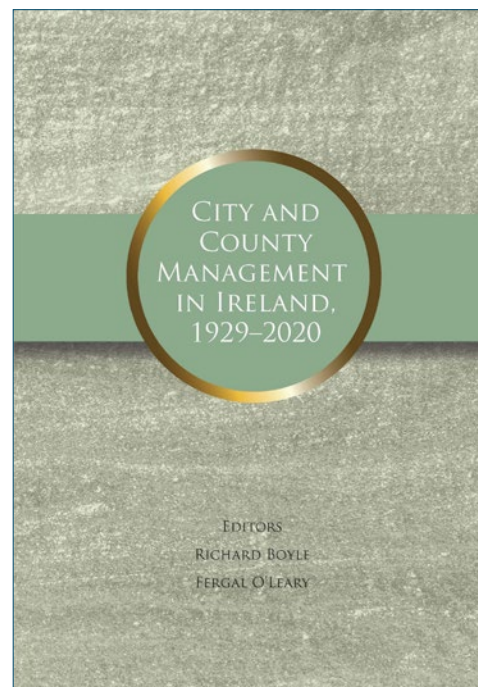
Reprints

Strong demand for many of the IPA's previously published books led to a number of reprints during the year, including:

- *Human Resource Management in Ireland* by Patrick Gunnigle, Noreen Heraty and Michael J. Morley;
- *Modern Management: Theory and Practice for Students in Ireland* by Siobhán Tiernan and Michael J. Morley;
- *Towards The Era of Lifelong Learning: A History of Irish Education 1800–2016* by John Coolahan.

Publishing Consultancy

The Publications Division continued to offer its expertise in the production and management of publishing projects on behalf of other public sector organisations, including the *Irish Probation Journal*, which was produced on behalf of The Probation Service and the Probation Board for Northern Ireland (North/South publication).



Peter Burke, Minister of State at the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, pictured with Dr John O'Neill, Head of Research, Publishing and Corporate Relations at the Institute of Public Administration, at the launch of 'City and County Management in Ireland, 1929–2020' at Fota Island Resort, Cork.





07

Finance & Corporate Services

07

Finance & Corporate Services



Noreen Fahy FCCA

Director, Finance & Corporate Services

The goals and objectives of the Finance and Corporate Services Division are aligned with the IPA Corporate Strategy and the division adopts a partnership approach in meeting the demands of stakeholders, both internal and external. The delivery of IPA Education, Training and Development, Research and Publishing services continued successfully throughout 2021, and enabling this business continuity, within government guidelines in relation to the Covid-19 pandemic, continued to present significant challenges for the IPA's Corporate Services Division. Working with colleagues across the Institute, IPA Finance and Corporate Services personnel ensured that targets and objectives continued to be achieved, and surpassed, and demonstrated excellence and commitment to the IPA's vision and mission. Key areas of high performance across the Finance and Corporate Services Division for 2021 are outlined below.

Finance

The audited Financial Statements for 2021, which accompany this report, demonstrate a surplus, continued growth in reserves and sustained liquidity. This excellent and significant performance is of particular note given the already acknowledged business continuity risks posed by the Covid-19 pandemic restrictions.

The Finance team continued to drive and implement process improvements across management accounting, payroll, payables and receivables, with the completion of an in-depth receivables project with colleagues in the IPA Education division. Further developments were embedded in Centros, our FMS, to respond to regulatory requirements as recommended by the Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General. Reviews and assessments of our control environment continued throughout the year, including internal and external audit reviews.

Information and Communications Technology (ICT)

In 2020 business continuity required the IPA to move to an online Education and Training business model in order to abide by government guidelines at the advent of the pandemic restrictions in March. The IPA ICT team, working with colleagues across the organisation, successfully developed and implemented the technological infrastructure solutions to enable this digital and business transformation. The year 2021 saw the continuation of the new online business model and a shift in focus to technology-enabled learning. This presented the ICT team with a wealth of digital transformation opportunities, and throughout 2021 the team worked diligently to support the IPA in its very successful outputs for the year.

Key highlights include:

- Zero business continuity cyberthreats were realised due to successful risk mitigation and significant investment in human and financial resources across all aspects of cyber and data security, including the appointment of a Cyber and Information Security Manager;
- Implementation of Multi Factor Authentication protocols;
- Migration of Moodle to Cloud (MS Azure);
- Office 365 Migration project commenced;
- Digital infrastructural project designed, delivered and successfully implemented;
- Circa 71,000 hours of digital delivery supported across MS Teams, Panopto, Zoom, Webex and GTW;
- Cyber and information security training for staff was successfully rolled out in 2021 and a subsequent test phishing campaign demonstrated increased cyber awareness amongst IPA staff.

Health, Safety and Welfare at Work

The IPA record from 2020 continued, with no Covid-19 outbreaks relating to business operations at the IPA premises in 2021. All Health and Safety Authority Covid-19 protocols were implemented and managed very efficiently by the IPA facilities team. All IPA personnel who attended site for essential business purposes engaged with and adhered to all health and safety protocols.

Facilities and Estates

Investment continued in the IPA sustainability programme, and the national Public Sector Energy Efficiency targets were met. The Facilities Team, enabled by the lifting of restrictions by government, led out on the reinvigoration of the Board-adopted accommodation refurbishment plan and recommenced the planned upgrading of offices and workspaces across the Institute.

Audit and Governance

The Institute complied with its financial, taxation and regulatory obligations during 2021, and the Board of the IPA continued to oversee the effectiveness of the System of Internal Control across the Institute.

To reflect the serious nature of the pandemic, and specifically the potential risks to business continuity, the Senior Management Group continued its enhanced risk reporting regime to the IPA Board and Audit and Risk Committee for the duration of the pandemic.

The IPA Audit and Risk Committee continued to oversee the implementation of the IPA *Strategic Internal Audit Plan* throughout 2021, which contributed positively to the assurance arrangements across the organisation.

Financial Prospects for 2022

The 2022 half-yearly performance indicates a positive financial performance for 2022 and forecasting on this basis suggests that the final 2022 outturn will be a positive one. As continuously acknowledged by the Board of the IPA, this is due to the commitment, drive and agility of the IPA management and staff in maintaining the delivery of Training and Education services in a fully online and remote working model, with minimal interruption to service. The IPA management and staff continue to plan for the various eventualities of the hybrid business model that will reflect the post-pandemic world, and financial indications for 2022, at this early stage, remain very positive.

The Institute's block grant remains at €2.725m for 2022 (the same as 2021), a positive support from its parent department. The Board of the IPA adopted the 2022 budget, which forecasts turnover at €12.618m with a budgeted surplus of €65k.

08

Conferring Ceremonies



08

Conferring Ceremonies

The 2021 IPA conferring ceremonies took place, due to public health reasons, at a later date than usual. The ceremonies were held at The Printworks, Dublin Castle, on 8 April 2022. A total of 1,003 students were conferred with professional certificates and diplomas, bachelor degrees or postgraduate degrees. In addition to the conferring ceremonies, an additional 689 students were presented with undergraduate certificates on foot of studies in 2020/1. The prizes awarded at these ceremonies were as follows:

Postgraduate Degree Awards

Master of Arts (Financial Management)

First Place: Adrian Dorr

Master of Arts (Healthcare Management)

First Place: Margaret Triggs

Master of Arts (Human Resource Management)

First Place: Alan Kerin

Master of Arts (Leadership & Strategy)

First Place: Niamh Cooper

Master of Arts (Local Government Management)

First Place: Declan Dolan

Master of Arts (Public Management)

First Place: Lydia Furlong

Master of Economic Science in Policy Analysis

First Place: Kerry Curran

Master of Science in Business & Management (Financial Management)

First Place: Cillian Browne

Master of Science in Business & Management (Human Resource Management)

First Place: Kieran Walsh

Postgraduate Diploma Awards

Postgraduate Diploma in Policy Analysis

First Place: Alan O'Connor

Postgraduate Diploma in Public Management

Joint First Place: Sarah Flynn, Susan Gillen

Postgraduate Professional Certificate Awards

Professional Certificate in Governance (three programme groups)

Joint First Place: Donncha Maguire, Leonie Vesey, Janet Flynn, Dervla Howlet

Whitaker School of Government & Management Postgraduate Student of the Year 2021

Niamh Cooper

Undergraduate Degree Awards

Bachelor of Arts (Hons) (Healthcare Management)

First Place: Bernadette Crowe

Bachelor of Arts (Hons) (Human Resource Management)

Joint First Place: Lorraine Crawford,
Elizabeth Glennon

Bachelor of Arts (Hons) (IT Management) & BBS (IS Management)

First Place: Declan Cahill

Bachelor of Arts (Hons) (Law & the Administration of Justice)

First Place: Anne Byrne

Bachelor of Arts (Hons) (Local Government) & Recipient of the Annual Cork County Council Academic Achievement Award

Linda Maher

Bachelor of Arts (Hons) (Management)

First Place: Luda Connolly

Bachelor of Arts (Hons) (Public Management)

First Place: Margaret Bell

Bachelor of Business Studies (Hons) (Accounting)

First Place: Deborah Kelly

Bachelor of Business Studies (Hons) (Human Resource Management)

First Place: Niamh Carroll

Bachelor of Business Studies (Hons) (Marketing)

First Place: Christie Kandiwa

Whitaker School of Government & Management Undergraduate Student of the Year 2021

First Place: Deborah Kelly

Professional Certificate in Public Expenditure Management

First Place: Colm Farrell

Undergraduate Professional Diploma Awards

Professional Diploma in Health Economics

First Place: Emer Sheridan

Professional Diploma in Housing Studies

First Place: Sarah Kennedy

Professional Diploma in Human Rights & Equality

First Place: Jennifer Warren

Professional Diploma in Industrial & Employment Relations

First Place: Martin Cuffe

Professional Diploma in Managing Change

First Place: Michelle Tritschler

Professional Diploma in Project Management

First Place: Wayne Liggett

Professional Diploma in Public Procurement

First Place: Marian Regan

Professional Diploma in Public Service Innovation

First Place: Justine Barrett

Undergraduate Diploma Awards

Diploma in Business Studies

First Place: Jennifer Coen

Diploma in Civil Service & State Agency Studies

First Place: Eugene Shiels

Diploma in Computer Studies

First Place: David Rafferty

Diploma in Healthcare Management

First Place: Rachel Diesta

Diploma in Health Services Policy

First Place: Niall Sinnott

Diploma in Human Resource Management

First Place: Lee Gregson

Diploma in Law

First Place: John Goldrick

Diploma in Local Government Studies

Joint First Place: Florence O'Sullivan, Cian Rohan

Diploma in Management

First Place: Terje Nolan

Diploma in Public Management

First Place: Aisling Donoghue

09

Outreach

09

Outreach

As noted in previous annual reports, the Institute is the body dedicated to developing the profession of public service. Consequently, the expertise of its staff is constantly called upon in ways other than through the direct provision of services.

Over the years, IPA specialist staff have been nominated to and co-opted onto a range of boards, governing bodies and committees within the state and wider public sector as independent non-executive members and chairpersons. These roles continued in 2021 and included positions on audit and risk committees within central and local government, and regulatory and state bodies and agencies.

IPA staff also contributed to the work of the *Our Public Service 2020* Public Service Management Group. The Director General is a member of a number of European and OECD networks of heads of schools and institutes of public administration worldwide.

The Institute facilitates a number of informal networks in order to disseminate best practice and sharing of information, experience and expertise. For example, the Institute supports a network of chief executives of state bodies, a network of heads of administration in state agencies and a forum for chairpersons of various public sector groupings.

During 2021 the Institute hosted a number of seminars to promote dialogue and debate amongst senior civil and public servants on key topics.

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Institute Senior Management

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Institute Senior Management



Dr Marian O'Sullivan

Director General

mosullivan@ipa.ie



Dr Michael Mulreany

Assistant Director General,
Education and Research

mmulreany@ipa.ie



Noreen Fahy

Director, Finance and Corporate
Services

nfahy@ipa.ie



Teresa Casserly

Director, Business Development,
Leadership and Management, and
International Services

tcasserly@ipa.ie



Aidan Horan

Director, Governance, Finance,
Human Resource Management,
Information Technology/Project
Management and Local Authority

ahoran@ipa.ie



Dr John O'Neill

Head of Research, Publishing and
Corporate Relations

joneill@ipa.ie



Christine McNally

Interim Director,
Human Resources

cmcnally@ipa.ie