

BRUCE MORRISON LEGACY

VISA PROGRAM 1992-1995

GALA

The Morrison Legacy Foundation

Honoring Bruce Morrison

October 1, 2025



www.morrisonlegacy.com

“Immigration is not charity. We didn’t award the visas for the good of the Irish. We did it for the good of America.”

– Former Congressman Bruce Morrison



The inaugural Morrison Legacy Foundation Award has been commissioned by the Morrison Legacy Foundation and designed by renowned Irish craftsman, Dan Gardner.

The sculpture was inspired by the power of a simple form. Its design begins with letters representing the visa applications, before transforming into an airplane, symbolizing the journey across the Atlantic made by thousands of successful applicants. This evolution captures how one act of advocacy carried generations of Irish families toward opportunity and a new future.

Morrison Legacy Foundation Board member Niall O’Dowd will present Bruce Morrison with the award. It is the vision of the Board to continue this tradition annually, recognising those who have supported and influenced the Irish America immigration story.

‘Changing the ordinary into the extraordinary’
([instagram.com/dangardneroriginal](https://www.instagram.com/dangardneroriginal))



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BRUCE MORRISON LEGACY

VISA PROGRAM 1992-1995

Dear Esteemed Guests

It is our profound honor to welcome you to the Inaugural Bruce Morrison Legacy Foundation gala, celebrating the life and legacy of Congressman Bruce Morrison and the 30th anniversary of the Morrison Visa Program.

Just over two years ago, at a luncheon, we remarked on the many Morrison visa recipients in our company, it sparked a conversation that became a mission driven by pride and responsibility.

Central to that mission has been our guiding light Bruce Morrison, and his steadfast commitment to justice and equity in policy-making, gave rise to a program that opened doors for thousands of immigrants from around the globe, including 45,000 Irish men and women from across the island of Ireland who secured legal visas and provided an opportunity to put down roots across the United States, raising families, and lending their talents to every sector of American life.

The true measure of the Morrison Visa Program lies not in its numbers but in its impact. The contributions recipients have made continue to resonate

across the US and Ireland. Their stories are woven into the fabric of America, enriching culture on both sides of the Atlantic and strengthening the ties between the United States and Ireland. The newly formed Morrison Legacy Foundation will work to ensure that the legacy and impact of the Morrison visa program is documented and acknowledged. Our promise to you all is that we will work tirelessly to ensure that this legacy is preserved so that the next generation will continue to be inspired and will take on the responsibility of maintaining and enhancing the bridges between Ireland and the US.

We would like to extend our gratitude to the sponsors of tonight's celebration, whose generosity has made this meaningful tribute possible. Our fellow Board members who have been tireless in their commitment, the Steering Committee, and many volunteers who gave their time, talent, and energy so generously to ensure the success of this gala celebration.

Co-Chair Loretta Brennan
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President George H.W. Bush hands a pen to Attorney General Dick Thornburgh after signing immigration legislation Nov. 29, 1990. Next to Thornburgh (from left): Sen. Alan Simpson, Rep. Bruce Morrison, Sen. Ted Kennedy and Sen. Paul Simon.



The Morrison Visa Program: A Transformative Chapter in Immigration

Enacted under the Immigration Act of 1990, the Morrison Visa Program created a dedicated visa allocation over a three year period to nationals from countries underrepresented in U.S. immigration. Notably, 40% of these visas were designated for Irish immigrants from both the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland. 45,000 of these designated visas were successfully secured by Irish applicants.

This legislative milestone provided thousands of Irish individuals with a legal pathway to build new lives in the United States. Their contributions have since permeated various sectors, including business, education, and the arts, while also strengthening U.S.– Ireland relations.

Enacted under the Immigration Act of 1990, the Morrison Visa Program created a dedicated visa allocation over a three-year period to nationals from countries underrepresented in U.S. immigration.

The Morrison Visa Program: A Game Changer for Irish Immigration

The Morrison Legacy Foundation is a non-profit organization dedicated to commemorating the 30th anniversary of the Morrison Visa Program. This initiative honors the profound contributions of Irish immigrants who, through the Program, have significantly enriched American society. The Foundation aims to document this history, analyze its socioeconomic impact, and foster deeper connections between Ireland and the United States.

Bruce Morrison: Architect of Opportunity

Bruce Morrison, a former U.S. Congressman from Connecticut, played a pivotal role in authoring the Immigration Act of 1990. With a background in chemistry and law, Morrison's commitment to social justice led him to champion immigration reform. His efforts not only facilitated the Morrison Visa Program but also underscored the importance of inclusive and equitable immigration policies.



The Morrison Legacy Foundation: Honoring the Past, Shaping the Future

The Morrison Legacy Foundation, established to mark the 30th anniversary of the Morrison Visa Program, is a non-profit organization dedicated to preserving the history of the Program, celebrating its impact, and inspiring future generations. The Foundation promotes transatlantic cooperation and champions the legacy of legal immigration, bridging past successes with future opportunities.

“The Irish community came together like never before. There was a consensus that this was something worth fighting for, and they pushed in the same direction.”

- Former Congressman, Bruce Morrison

Mission:

- Celebrate and document the contributions of Morrison Visa recipients over the past three decades.
- Analyze the Program's economic and social impact on both the United States and Ireland.
- Foster transatlantic connections through cultural, educational, and business initiatives.

Initiatives:

- Collaborations with cultural and educational institutions to preserve oral histories and archival materials.
- Research projects assessing the long-term impacts of the Morrison Visa Program.
- Events and forums promoting dialogue on diaspora engagement.



Bruce Morrison

Bruce A. Morrison is Chairman of the Morrison Public Affairs Group (MPAG), which he founded in 2001 to conduct and supervise a broad practice involving strategic advice and representation for both domestic and international clients. He is also an attorney and provides legal advice and assistance in immigration matters. His consulting work involves advocacy to Congress and the Executive branch, as well as building alliances within the private sector.

From 1983 to 1991, Mr. Morrison represented the Third District of Connecticut (New Haven) in the U.S. House of Representatives. He also served on the Judiciary Committee, where he specialized in immigration, as well as intellectual property issues, bankruptcy law, and consumer protection policy, including privacy. As chairman of the Immigration Subcommittee, he led the passage of the Immigration Act of 1990, a comprehensive reform, which included expanded admission of skilled workers. This legislation created the “Morrison visa” program under which almost 50,000 Irish men and women received green cards in the early 1990s.

While in Congress, Mr. Morrison became Co-Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on Irish American Affairs and deeply involved in human rights issues in Ireland and around the world, including Chile, Central America, South Africa, Haiti, Paraguay, and the Middle East. Through his interest in human rights, he became involved in Northern Ireland, where he first visited in 1987. While in Congress, he was His factfinding trip to Northern Ireland in 1987 began his two-decade direct involvement in the Peace Process.

Since 1991, Mr. Morrison has traveled frequently to Northern Ireland and has been involved in many aspects of the Peace Process. In 1992,



he advised Bill Clinton, while a Presidential candidate, on issues related to Northern Ireland. He continued to provide advice and information to the Clinton White House from 1993 to 2001, including assistance on negotiations leading to IRA cessations in 1994 and 1997. In 1992 and 1996, he was Co-Chairman of Irish-Americans for Clinton-Gore.

After leaving Congress to run for Governor of Connecticut in 1990, he established a law firm specializing in immigration representation of firms and individuals. He also served from 1992 to 1997 on the U.S. Commission on Immigration Reform, which conducted a comprehensive study of U.S. immigration law.

During the Clinton Administration, he was appointed by the President as Chairman of the Federal Housing Finance Board, an independent agency regulating the twelve Federal Home Loan Banks, a wholesale banking system with assets in excess of \$600 billion. In this role from 1995 to 2000, he developed and implemented a farreaching strategy to modernize the business of the Banks.

Prior to his service in Congress, Mr. Morrison was the Executive Director of New Haven Legal Assistance Association, a program providing legal representation to the poor. Mr. Morrison holds a bachelor's degree in chemistry from MIT and a master's degree in organic chemistry from the University of Illinois. He is a graduate of the Yale Law School.



WILLIAM JEFFERSON CLINTON

October 1, 2025

Dear Bruce:

We are delighted to join your family, friends, and many admirers in celebrating the 30th anniversary of the Morrison Visa Program, and congratulating you on being honored tonight for your lifelong efforts to strengthen the bonds of friendship between the United States and Ireland.

Whether in elected office or as a private citizen, you've done so much to promote crosscultural connections and help the Irish-American community thrive. By creating the Morrison Visa Program, you gave tens of thousands of immigrants from the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland the chance to bring their talents, perseverance, and dreams to America. Their lives—and the life of our country—are better off because of your vision. The success of this program stands today as a powerful reminder that immigration makes America stronger and brings us closer to reaching our Founders' charge of forming a more perfect union.

We will also always be deeply grateful for the important role you played in the Northern Ireland peace process. By rallying support for peace on both sides of the Atlantic and serving as an invaluable interlocutor, you helped keep the momentum moving in the right direction until we ultimately crossed the finish line with the Good Friday Agreement. Now, because of your remarkable work and that of so many others, an entire generation has grown up free from the horrors of sectarian violence.

Thank you for your more than five decades of friendship and the wise counsel you have given us through the years, and congratulations again on this well-deserved honor. You have our best wishes for a wonderful celebration.

Sincerely,

Bruce

Hillary



The Irish Immigration Reform Movement Story



After U.S. immigration reforms in 1965 largely shut out Irish immigrants, opportunities for legal entry remained closed for decades.

In response, the Irish Immigration Reform Movement (IIRM) was founded in 1987 by undocumented immigrants and community leaders, who organized a grassroots campaign to change unjust laws. The IIRM was launched at a meeting of the County Cork Association of NY. The Cork Association was founded in 1884 to foster the benevolence, patriotism, and protection of Irish immigrants in New York City from Ireland's largest and southernmost county, Cork.

Their efforts gained crucial momentum through the leadership of Connecticut U.S. Congressman Bruce Morrison, whose vision and advocacy in Congress—alongside allies such as Senators Alan Simpson and Ted Kennedy, and U.S. Representatives Dennis Hastert and Joe Moakley—led to the 1990 Immigration Act.

This landmark legislation, known as the Morrison Visa program, reopened pathways for Irish immigration, granting 45,000 visas and treating all residents of Ireland equally. IIRM attorney Frank Schorn ensured the legislation included

all immigrants from across the island of Ireland. This vital clause proved very helpful in the work towards the Good Friday Agreement, demonstrating Congress's recognition of Ireland and its people as a whole.

The legacy of Morrison and the IIRM endures in many Irish Immigration Centers across the U.S., providing support to countless beneficiaries who contribute to Irish American communities and sustain immigrant support networks to this day.

In New York, the Emerald Isle Immigration Center, founded by leaders of the IIRM, was the first to guide Morrison Visa recipients and their contemporaries. The EIIIC has since assisted over 16,000 successful U.S. citizen applications and continues to offer immigration counseling and services to the Irish Diaspora, as well as individuals from over 130 other countries who call NYC home.

Contributed By Irish Immigration Reform Movement committee members Mae O'Driscoll, Sean Minihane, Lisa Johnston ESQ, Frank Schorn ESQ, Siobhán Dennehy, Sean Benson and submitted by member Dan Dennehy



SOME MORRISON VISA
RECIPIENTS AND NEXT
GENERATION



Morrison Visas, Passport to the American Dream

By Niall O'Dowd

As you look around the room tonight, think of so many who were given a passport to their American dream by Bruce Morrison.

They are everywhere now from California to New York from Idaho to Indiana all living out their American dream.

Think of where that dream has taken you after you set foot on American soil, think of the man who got you here, the ship's captain Bruce Morrison think of the wonderful opportunities that we all got in America.

The Morrison visas were not easily won. There was a pitched battle with hardline opposition to immigration which we see again today. But the tide will always turn, that message has been learnt, thanks to Bruce.

Congressman Bruce Morrison did not take 'no' for an answer and no one knows that better than the Irish community. The battle for immigration reform back in the 1980s and 90s was long, hard and sometimes bitter but Bruce Morrison never flinched. We had a Chieftain when we needed one.

The outcome of it all is evident in this room tonight.

I would be remiss if I did not mention Bruce's role in the peace process, another great achievement.

In that role he showed the dogged persistence which was Bruce's trademark his absolute will to drive on when it seemed every obstacle was insurmountable, his optimism, even on the bleakest day, gave life and energy back to the Irish American community just as it threatened to flicker out - No such thing will ever happen under Bruce's watch. We owe him a great debt.

Niall O'Dowd is Founder of Irish Voice, Irish America Magazine, IrishCentral.com and author of "Lincoln and the Irish-the Untold Story."

New York, 2025

Dear Mr. Morrison

Greatness arises from a lack of fear. It's the ability to take a risk. It requires seeing the pathway before anyone else has even imagined a way through. It's the ability to knock the world off its comfortable balance and maybe, just maybe, forge a whole new way of seeing.

This is the sort of visionary thinking that you have helped enable down through the years, not just in terms of the way you shaped our attitudes towards immigration and value and belonging, but also in the process of peace-making.

Generations of Irish people have discovered that the possible exists within the impossible simply because you were prepared to put fuel behind an idea that would burn a new light for us. Those candles lit other candles. And the light that came from them helped heal a whole host of wounds.

Lest we forget: Ireland was still on its back heel when you first proposed a burning focus on our potential. We were still trying to figure out who we were and where we could go. The economy sputtered. There were still those valleys of squinting windows. And, horrifically, the bombs were still going off in the North and beyond.

When we came here, we brought the energy of a nation, which was the energy of hope, which in turn could be redirected home. It was a symbiotic thing. The equation was being tilted. You somehow fired up a generation that saw the calculus of hope. (I doubt you're a mathematician, and I'm certainly not, because somehow all of us managed to see that two plus two might even equal five!)

I'm one of the lucky ones. The space was given to me. There are tens of thousands of us, but the effect is exponential. Make no mistake about it, the energy of your endeavours helped create a landscape of peaceful engagement.

And herein, a gentle word of warning, lest we fail to welcome others as we have been welcomed. There is no value in a locked door. The way to defeat the closed mind is to promote the open one.

On behalf of all who were given a chance to come in that doorway, go raibh míle maith agat.

Sincerely,



Colum McCann.



THANK YOU

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Special thanks to all the individuals and Family offices that have also supported tonight's event

*As of September 22, 2025

The chaos of our current immigration system
should make us yearn for the brilliant
and indefatigable work of Congressman
Bruce Morrison 30 years ago.

Loretta Brennan Glucksman



Thank you, Bruce, for your extraordinary contribution
and for shaping a brighter future for so many of the
Irish American community.

www.ballynahinchcastle.com



"Congressman Morrison's visionary leadership serves as a powerful reminder of the incredible impact that compassion and opportunity can have on individuals and communities, inspiring people everywhere."

Feargal O'Sullivan, *Founder and CEO of USAM Group Inc.*

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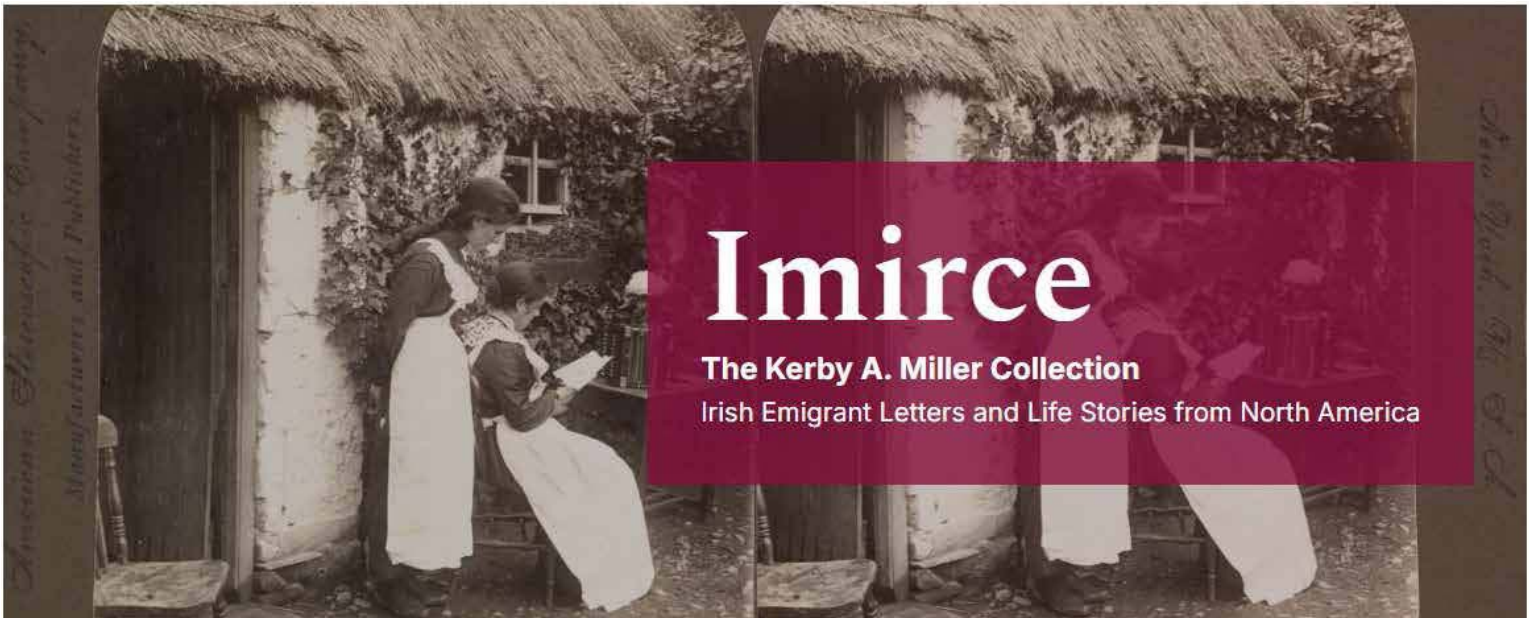
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Navillus Contracting proudly honors Bruce Morrison for creating the opportunity to fulfill the American dream through the Morrison Visa program, which provided over 45,000 Irish immigrants a path to U.S. citizenship. Many of these men and women joined the Navillus team, bringing the talent and dedication that helped shape the New York City skyline.

Bruce Morrison's vision not only transformed lives, but also strengthened America— leaving a legacy still visible in the city we proudly call home.

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Reflecting on 40 Years Since the Morrison Visa

The Imirce Project at the University of Galway is honoured to mark 40 years since the Morrison Visa, which opened new opportunities for thousands of Irish people in the United States and reshaped the story of Irish migration.

At the heart of the project is the Imirce Digital Collection — a growing corpus of over 5,000 letters and life stories composed by Irish emigrants to North America from the seventeenth through the late-twentieth centuries. This extraordinary resource was made possible following the donation of a vast collection of transcripts compiled by historian Kerby A. Miller, Curators' Professor of History at the University of Missouri (emeritus) and Honorary Professor of History at the University of Galway.

“One does not appreciate what it means to stand on the top of a hill in Ireland until he has been away and gets that gnawing feeling at his heartstrings for a last look at the places that only death can erase from memory...”

— Peter McCullagh, New York, to Michael Murphy, Crossmaglen, County Armagh, c. 1951

Documenting the immigrant voice is vital — it ensures that lived experience, often absent from official records, is preserved, understood, and reflected upon, even as we discuss modern immigration drivers, trends, and impact.

As we commemorate the Morrison Visa, we also acknowledge and celebrate, through Imirce, the resilience, contributions, and evolving stories of the Irish diaspora — and the enduring ties between Ireland and its global community.



OLLSCOIL NA GAILLIMHE
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To explore our growing digital collection,
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imirce.universityofgalway.ie



Celebrating Leadership, Legacy, and Lasting Impact



Tony Reilly’s career has been defined not just by financial expertise, but by a deeper belief: that true success is measured by the lives we uplift along the way.

This year, Tony was honored to be featured by the Bruce Morrison Legacy for his dedication to guiding families, entrepreneurs, and business owners toward building wealth with purpose, clarity, and confidence.

“Cherish the struggle, it’s a tool in your toolbox. If you learn to cherish your struggles, you will always be equipped for whatever life throws at you.”

-Tony Reilly,
CEO & Financial Advisor,

Ascend Advisory (ascendadvisory.com) – practicing in 44 states

At Ascend Advisory, Tony leads with the same principles that defined Bruce Morrison’s legacy:

- A commitment to integrity and excellence.
- A passion for mentoring the next generation.
- A vision for creating opportunities that ex-



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But what really makes the Irish so welcoming? It's partly that we love our island, and want you to enjoy it as much as we do. But it's also because you're meant to feel at home, too, whether you're reuniting with family, forging new friendships or just enjoying the chat with locals.

So come on, fill your heart with Ireland...

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bestowed immeasurable cultural influence and
societal enrichment on the American fabric.

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To those who left the West. And to those who never left it behind.

The Morrison Visa opened doors for more than 45,000 Irish people and their families. Many of you built remarkable lives in the United States, and we are proud of you. Your story is part of ours.

Today the West is changing fast. It is a region of ambition and industry, where communities are future-focused and ready to lead. From world-class research and renewable energy to creative enterprise and vibrant towns, this is a place with momentum.

The Western Development Commission's strategy, *Unlocking Potential, Driving Change*, is designed to back that ambition. We invest in founders and high-growth companies through the Western Investment Fund, connect talent and opportunity through Connected Hubs, support creative enterprise, and work with partners on the big opportunities from offshore wind to innovation. The result is a region that is open, ambitious and ready to collaborate.

If the West is the place you once left, it may also be the place you can help shape. Partner with us. Mentor a founder. Invest in a new idea. Bring a team home or base one here. Share your network. Together we can build sustainable jobs, stronger communities and a future that matches the promise of our people.

As we honour Congressman Bruce Morrison and a legacy that changed lives, we invite you to reconnect with the place you call home. Let us work with you to unlock potential and drive change across the West and North West.



Allan Mulrooney
Chief Executive, Western Development Commission
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September 18th, 2025

Celebrating Bruce Morrison

A champion for immigrant rights, a dedicated public servant , and a true friend to the Irish American community. Never turning down a tough case, you've shown time and time again that no challenge is too great.

Your unwavering support and guidance have been instrumental in our mission at the Emerald Isle Immigration Center. Thank you for your dedication to helping families achieve their American dreams. With deep gratitude and warm congratulations.

**SIOBHAN DENNEHY,
EMERALD ISLE IMMIGRATION CENTER**



DINNER PROGRAM

October 1, 2025 Rainbow
Room, New York

Master of Ceremonies
Pat Tully

Irish Dance
JiGGiG

Opening Song
Niamh Hyland, accompanied by Shu Nakamura

Welcome
Elaine Brennan

Executive Director, Global Strategic Partnerships, Northwell Health

Opening Remarks
Geraldine Byrne Nason
Ambassador of Ireland to the United States

Remarks
Michael J. Dowling
President & CEO, Northwell Health

Dinner
Morrison Visa Holders Fireside Chat
Panelists
Michael Brewster, Stifel
Orla Maguire, Lash Star Beauty
Feargal O'Sullivan, USAM Group

Tribute and Award Presentation
Niall O'Dowd
Founder, IrishCentral, Irish America Magazine and The Irish Voice

Acceptance Speech
Bruce Morrison

Closing Song
Karl Skully

congressman bruce morrison! Con-

Your recognition of the value that immigrants bring to a nation has endured the test of time. As a university committed to **imagining and creating better futures for all**, Maynooth University is proud to be a partner of the Bruce Morrison Legacy Foundation.

MU is a **University of Sanctuary** that recognises the **excellence** that immigrants, refugees and asylum seekers bring to us all when provided with the **opportunity** of education. Our **Excellence in Exile** initiatives and our status as **Ireland's leading university for supporting access into higher education**, as well as our research in areas of migration and diaspora, make our collaboration all the more pertinent – today and into the future.

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One of four constituent universities of the National University of Ireland, Maynooth University is ranked among the top 90 global Times Higher Education Young Universities. Tracing its origins to the foundation of the Royal College of St Patrick in 1795, Maynooth University was formally established as an autonomous university in 1997. Maynooth is one of Ireland's fastest growing universities with more than 17,000 students and opened Ireland's newest School of Nursing in 2025. Located 15 miles west of Dublin, MU also offers a range of international programmes and partnerships.

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