



RCSI

UNIVERSITY
OF MEDICINE
AND HEALTH
SCIENCES

DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT & ALUMNI RELATIONS

August 2026

MC

MCLEAN
Partnership

118 Faiche Stiabhna
St Stephen's Green

About RCSI

RCSI University of Medicine and Health Sciences (RCSI) is an innovative, world-leading international health sciences university and the professional training body for surgery in Ireland. Founded by Royal Charter in 1784 to set and support professional standards for surgical training and practice in Ireland, RCSI has been at the forefront of healthcare education and research for over 240 years. This rich heritage in clinical practice informs RCSI's approach to its wider health sciences educational mission. RCSI is a Recognised College of the National University of Ireland.

RCSI gained independent degree awarding powers in 2010 and became a Designated Awarding Body in 2012.

Today, RCSI is one of the highest ranked* universities in the world for its contribution to good health and well-being, the third UN Sustainable Development Goal. It is an organisation shaped by its mission: *"To educate, nurture and discover for the benefit of human health"*.

*Time Higher Education Impact Rankings 2026



About RCSI

RCSI has undergraduate and postgraduate schools and faculties across the full health sciences spectrum, with campuses in Dublin, Bahrain and Malaysia. RCSI has dual functions as a Professional Training Body and a University of Medicine and Health Sciences. It is home to several healthcare institutes and leading research centres, driving pioneering breakthroughs in human health. RCSI is committed to service, academic freedom, diversity, and to addressing humanitarian concerns. It employs c. 1,360 staff in Ireland, and has 5,682 registered students, of which 2,844 are undergraduate, 1,511 are postgraduate and the remainder surgical trainees, with students coming from more than 95 countries.

As an independent, not-for-profit, international, health sciences university and research institution, RCSI operates

a primarily self-funded model with c.14% of revenue derived from public sources. In line with its charitable remit, all surpluses earned are reinvested for the furtherance of RCSI's education and research objectives. Annually, there is a strong focus on generating a cash surplus to enable the organisation to meet its commitments as they fall due. These are both current and capital in nature, including funding day-to-day operations, working capital needs, debt servicing, and campus infrastructure investment. Significant capital expenditure projects are funded through an appropriate balance of debt and cash reserves. A level of reserves is maintained to provide for continued investment and to enable responsiveness to general market volatility.



Governance Structure

Council

The governing body of RCSI is its Council, which is comprised of 21 surgeons, all of whom are Fellows of RCSI and are elected biennially by the RCSI Fellows and Members. The Council also has two lay members. The Council is led by an elected President. The President of RCSI is Professor Michael Kerin. The overarching role of the Council is to provide governance to ensure that the College adheres to its Noble Purpose: “Building on our heritage in surgery, we will enhance human health, through endeavour, innovation and collaboration in education, research and service”.

Senior Management Team

The Senior Management Team (SMT), with delegated authority from Council, is responsible for the management, operation and executive oversight of the institution. The role of the Vice Chancellor & Registrar parallels that of the Presidents/Rectors of the publicly funded universities in Ireland. The Deputy Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs (DVCAA) is the chief academic officer, and RCSI SMT members hold similar functions to vice-presidents in publicly funded universities.

The SMT is comprised of:

- Vice Chancellor and Registrar (Professor Cathal Kelly)
- Deputy Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs (Professor Tracy Robson)
- Deputy Vice Chancellor for Research and Innovation (Professor Fergal O’Brien)
- Director of Finance (Jennifer Cullinane)
- Director of Human Resources (Barry Holmes)
- Director of Corporate Finance and Investments (Neil Collins)
- Director of Development and Alumni Relations (Aine Gibbons – *incumbent*)
- Director of International Engagement and External Relations (Abi Kelly)
- Managing Director of Surgical Affairs (Kieran Ryan)
- Chief Commercial Officer (Rebecca Patterson)
- Chief Technology Officer (Justin Ralph)



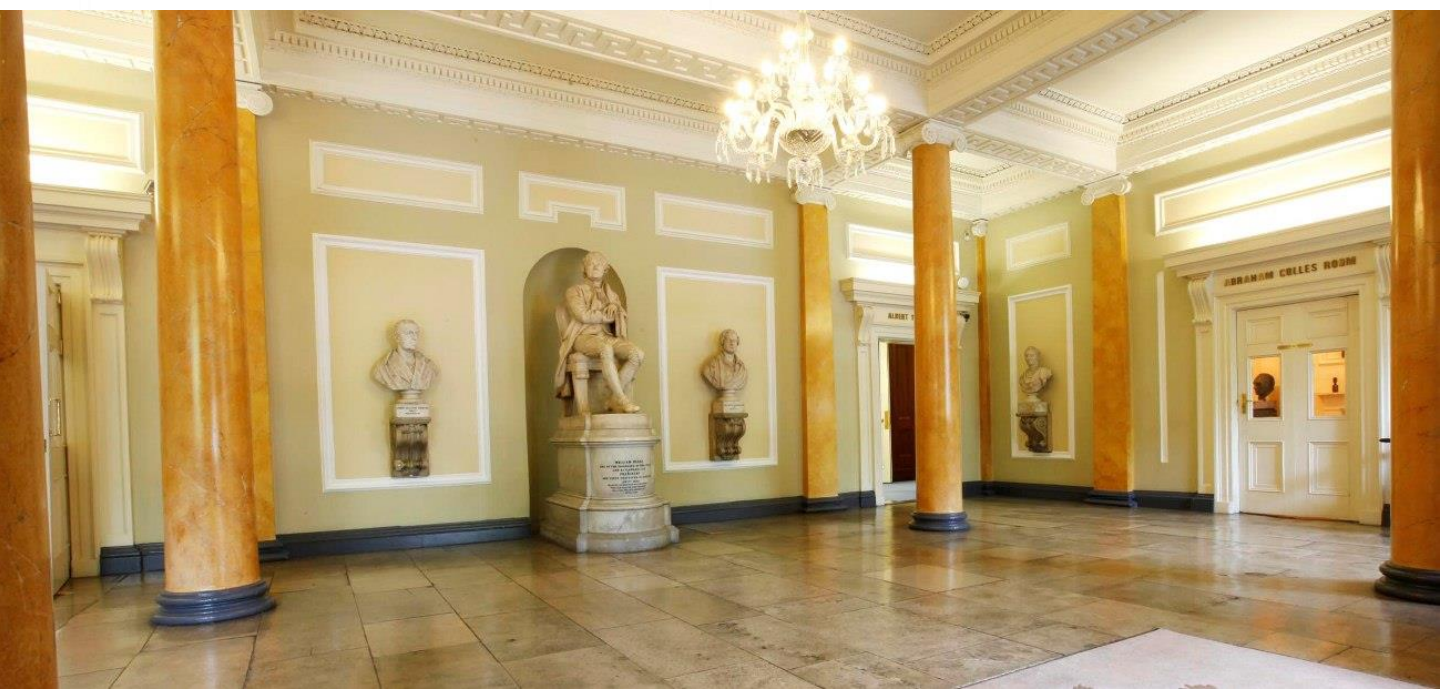
Development, Alumni Relations and Fellows & Members Department

The **Development, Alumni Relations and Fellows & Members Department**, currently comprising a team of 14 professionals, is responsible for advancing RCSI's fundraising ambitions and fostering lifelong engagement with two key stakeholder communities: **Alumni** and **Fellows & Members**. The Department plays a pivotal role in delivering RCSI's strategic objectives through the **RCSI_TOMORROW** campaign, a comprehensive philanthropic initiative designed to achieve lasting impact on global health through targeted investment in education and research.

Since the launch of **RCSI_TOMORROW** in 2016, RCSI has seen substantial growth in philanthropic support, securing more than **€50 million** in income. Building on the strong foundations established during Phase 1, Phase 2 is now underway, leveraging previous successes and lessons learned to deliver greater impact and ambition.

Funds raised through philanthropic partnerships have been strategically directed towards priority areas that strengthen the University's mission, support institutional advancement, and enhance RCSI's standing among the world's leading universities. As RCSI continues to evolve, philanthropy is expected to play an increasingly significant and sustained role in supporting the University's long-term vision and growth.

Having established a disciplined and successful major gifts programme, the primary focus of **Phase 2** is to secure transformational leadership gifts at the 7-figure level, expand international giving opportunities, particularly across the Middle East and Asia, increase multi-year commitments from alumni and grow both legacy giving and the RCSI endowment.



Director of Development and Alumni Relations

Overview

The **Director of Development and Alumni Relations (including the Fellow & Members function)** is a strategically significant leadership role within RCSI, responsible for strengthening engagement with the University's key communities and growing philanthropic support to advance the priorities set out in the [RCSI Strategy 2023-2027 Innovating for a Healthier Future.](#)

Based in Dublin and reporting directly to the **Vice Chancellor**, the Director serves as RCSI's chief fundraising officer, leading efforts to maximise philanthropic investment in strategic priorities including capital projects, research initiatives, academic programmes, faculty development, and student support. The role leads a well-established, high-performing team of 14 professionals with expertise across fundraising, alumni engagement, communications, project management, events, finance, and data analytics.

With a global alumni network of more than **35,000 graduates across 96 countries**, Development and Alumni Relations operate as closely integrated functions, working collaboratively to deepen engagement and build a sustainable pipeline of future donors and supporters. The Alumni Relations team maintains strong levels of contactability, currently exceeding 70%, through targeted outreach, multi-channel communications, volunteer engagement, and a dynamic programme of events.

RCSI's professional surgical network of **10,000 Fellows & Members** is an influential community who play an important role in the life of the institution. Cultivating engagement through meaningful stakeholder relationships and professional affiliation is an ongoing priority.

Together, these integrated functions contribute significantly to strengthening RCSI's global community, enhancing its reputation and influence, and securing the philanthropic and professional support required to deliver lasting impact in healthcare education, research, and patient care worldwide.

Fundraising Challenges

For a mission-driven, higher education institution such as RCSI, focused on healthcare, there are a number of elements which challenge successful fundraising to be considered, namely:

- RCSI has small pool of 7-figure prospects and donors;
- RCSI competes for major donors with other Dublin based universities;
- Major donors are increasingly more sophisticated, requiring performance outcomes and matching funding to unlock their philanthropy;
- Corporate decision making at six-figure level take can take 12-18 months; and
- International giving in the US and Canada is strong, across Asia and Middle East philanthropic giving is developing.

Director of Development and Alumni Relations

The Role

The Director of Development and Alumni Relations leads on securing all income from philanthropic sources, including from major donors, corporates, trusts and foundations, and leads on supporting RCSI's alumni community, including ways for alumni to give back in support of RCSI and its current students.

The post holder's main responsibilities are to maximise philanthropic income in support of RCSI's strategic objectives and to develop and oversee alumni relations, Fellows & Members activities, including strategic engagement, communications, and secure management of a comprehensive database of records.

Main Responsibilities

Leadership

- Lead and manage a successful and high-performing Development, Alumni Relations, Fellows & Members team;
- Take a leadership role in driving a collaborative process involving RCSI's academic staff to support the realisation of Development /Campaign goals and objectives;
- Oversee and steward two RCSI trusts; Friends of RCSI (US) and Friends of RCSI (UK), both legal entities established to receive tax efficient gifts managed by alumni volunteer leaders;
- Contribute to the leadership of RCSI as a member of the Senior Management Team.

Fundraising

- Design and implement a Development (fundraising) strategy that supports RCSI's strategic objectives;
- Act as RCSI's lead fundraiser by managing a personal portfolio of potential major donors and funders, enhancing their relationship with RCSI and making asks;
- Cultivate relationships with major donors, corporate, and trusts and foundations;
- Work effectively with RCSI's leadership, academic and administrative staff, Council members and other senior leaders to build relationships with potential donors;
- Support academic and selected senior leaders to make 'asks';
- Ensure donors of all levels are stewarded effectively in a manner befitting RCSI;
- Develop and oversee effective fundraising programmes at all levels, including regular giving, alumni mid-tier and legacy giving;
- Achieve agreed financial and performance measures and targets.

Director of Development and Alumni Relations

Alumni Relations and Fellows & Members

- Lead the development and implementation of a clear strategy for engagement across the alumni, Fellows & Members communities, ensuring it supports Development activities and aligns with the RCSI Strategy.
- Increase engagement through existing and new channels, and develop appropriate metrics for engagement;
- Develop and launch new vehicles for alumni to make donations towards RCSI, especially as part of wider fundraising efforts;
- Grow Fellows & Members subscriptions associated income and retention;
- Work with relevant colleagues, including the Director of International Engagement and External Relations to establish how alumni relations activity can complement and enhance other areas of strategic importance.

Communications

- Protect and champion the vision, mission and values of RCSI internally and externally;
- Develop compelling fundraising communications and materials;
- Contribute to thought leadership with regard to philanthropy within the broader community;
- Keep abreast of relevant policy developments nationally and internationally which impact fundraising;
- Act as the public face of Development and Alumni Relations, whilst marketing, promoting and advertising it to all public, private and institutional donors.



Director of Development and Alumni Relations

The Person

Personal Characteristics:

- A high degree of personal integrity and will possess the requisite decorum to act as an ambassador for RCSI;
- Intellectual curiosity with a personal and professional desire for success;
- Strong interpersonal skills, with the demonstrated ability to influence, collaborate and empathise with key stakeholders, external partners and funders;
- Self-motivated and adaptable with significant resilience and determination;
- Be educated to degree level.

Skills and Experience:

- A successful track record at senior level of leading comprehensive philanthropic campaigns (7 years+) and experience of how a high-performance Development and Alumni Relations Office operates;
- Significant management experience, coupled with the ability to lead, mentor and inspire staff while developing a team committed to achieving results;
- A results driven focus and a track record of significantly growing the number of major donors and value of lead gifts for the campaign;
- Excellent judgement and the ability to drive the campaign to the next level.



Director of Development and Alumni Relations

Competencies

Leadership

- Strategic leadership record;
- A track record of managing high growth performance and achieving targets;
- Ability to refine high-level Development services and functions (prospect research, campaign analytics, rationales/case for support);
- Excellent team building and people management skills.

Fundraising

- A proven ability to build relationships at the most senior level with major and corporate donors;
- Broad business development skills including communications, marketing, negotiating etc;
- Track record of closing complex high-value funding proposals and the ability to make 'the ask'.

- Knowledge of best practice governance, fundraising practises, policy development (gift acceptance etc);
- Proven ability to work to deadlines and manage multiple priorities.

Communications

- Exceptional communications skills applied both internally and externally to RCSI;
- An authentic belief in RCSI's mission of "To Educate, Nurture and Discover for the Benefit of Human Health" and the ability to convey RCSI's achievement and ambitions clearly and persuasively to potential donors;
- Outstanding written and spoken communication skills, flexibility and the demonstrated ability to thrive in a fast-paced environment;
- Globally aware and literate.



How to Apply

RCSI has engaged McLean Partnership to support and advise on this appointment. For an informal and confidential discussion about the role, please contact Dr Graham Little at McLean via email at grahamlittle@mcleanpartnership.com

Applications should consist of a CV and brief supporting statement outlining your motivation and relevant experience against the person specification. Completed applications should be submitted via email at RCSI@mcleanpartnership.com

The deadline for applications is **9 AM on Monday, 21 September 2026**.

Timeline for Interviews

- First round (virtual) interviews will take place during the week commencing 12 October 2026.
- Final (in person) interviews will take place in Dublin during the week commencing 19 October 2026.





RCSI

UNIVERSITY
OF MEDICINE
AND HEALTH
SCIENCES



MCLEAN
Partnership