

# Support Postgraduate Workers' Organisation

Proposed by the Deputy President for Postgraduate Affairs to the TUSSU Student Council

## **Student Council notes with concern**

That postgraduate researchers are not recognised as workers by the university or the country. Without this recognition, they are without working rights and are not entitled to a salary based on the living wage, employment contracts, minimum notice periods, leave from work (personal, parental or sick), social and pension contributions, safety in the workplace, equal treatment, or privacy and data protection.

This lack of working rights has a significant impact on postgraduate researchers' welfare and financial stability. Doctoral stipends are not fixed, ranging from €0 - €25,000 pa. In all cases, this results in the candidate earning less than minimum wage for the qualified work being performed. Additionally, several departments at TUS require PhD researchers to complete unpaid tutorial and demonstrating hours to compensate for fee contributions. Considering the ever-increasing costs of living, the burden of these conditions is growing rapidly, resulting in a detrimental impact on the health and wellbeing of postgraduate researchers, that many times seek part-time jobs to pay for their personal expenses, increasing the number of working hours per week to 60-80.

## **Student Council further notes**

That Ireland ranks at the very bottom among EU/EEA countries when it comes to average PhD stipend to cost-of-living, with several EU/EEA already implementing working rights for PhD candidates.

## **Student Council therefore mandates**

TUSSU to support the creation of a Postgraduate Workers' Organisation (PWO) branch at TUS, that might be in collaboration with other Universities to create a stronger and more stable branch.

## **Student Council further mandates**

TUSSU to support the local and national activities and campaigns of PWO, when appropriate to the reality of TUS Postgraduate Research Students, following the advice of the TUSSU Deputy President for Postgraduate Affairs.