

## **Government plans for €250,000 a year trophy-staff will further undermine Third-Level Education, says IFUT**

**Friday 10 November 2017**

Government plans to pay exorbitant salaries to attract a small number of ‘top researchers’ to Ireland is like lighting matches to drive away the cold and will further exacerbate the crisis in Third-Level Education, the Irish Federation of University Teachers (IFUT) has said.

Joan Donegan, General Secretary of IFUT, said that proposed salaries of €250,000 a year for a few trophy staff is no response to a full decade of policies that have forced huge numbers of highly qualified Researchers in our universities to emigrate or seek alternative employment.

She said that “Researchers in colleges in particular have been subject to the harshest cost-cutting measures, including lack of security of tenure, low pay and unacceptable working conditions.

“The treatment of Research Staff at Tyndall National Institute in Cork is a clear example. A number of Researchers there moved abroad to develop hugely commercial concepts and designs, due to a combination of stringent pay caps and lack of state support.

“Only this week IFUT won a long-running Labour Court case concerning an attempt by a university to deny permanent employment to a researcher by manipulating fixed-term employment legislation.

Joan Donegan said it is completely unacceptable that the Government is making this type of pot-hole filling announcement “while the findings of the July 2016 Cassells Report on Third-Level Funding are being ignored and the government appears to be blocking publication of the special Oireachtas Committee Report on Third-Level Funding.

“The simple fact is that the state is starving Third-Level Colleges of State Funding. The crisis of attracting and maintaining qualified Lecturers and

Researchers will only be reversed by a recommitment of the Exchequer to provide adequate resources,” Joan Donegan said.

In his recent Budget speech Finance Minister Pascal Donohue stated that “education at all levels is the bedrock of our society.” Adequate funding, not the diversion of overpaid trophy-staff, is the means to deliver on that statement,” Joan Donegan said.

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