

General Biography

I would like to be a RiRS panel member because I am deeply passionate in the professional development of both pre-service and in-service teachers- specifically their pedagogical content knowledge development. My expertise is in the area of professional development with a particular focus on the enhancement of Inquiry-Based Science Education (IBSE) practice. I place strong emphasis on a community of practice model to facilitate this development. My PhD focused on the use of a pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) lens to capture and develop the scientific inquiry orientations of a cohort of pre-service science teachers within a professional learning community. I would very much like to focus my research idea on extending the use of professional learning communities to develop teachers' pedagogical content knowledge in areas such as nature of science and scientific literacy, in other words, to promote teacher-led learning in their own practice.

I was involved in the Chain Reaction project (2013-2016) which allowed me to experience working with in-service teachers using the collaborative model which is synonymous with a professional learning community. I see virtue in the importance of developing a positive relationship with other members of the professional learning community as a mechanism towards facilitating effective professional development and I still keeping in contact with teachers from the project today. I also worked on a project focused on promoting the place of women in STEM. In recent years, whilst working within St Angela's College I developed a keen interest in research on teacher collaboration and development education thereby extending my research endeavours beyond science education. More recently I have begun to focus on engaging in research on the teaching of science to students with additional needs, using inclusive education as the guiding framework.

My experience in working with both pre-service teachers and in-service teachers has allowed me to develop the skills to work with people at different stages of the continuum of teacher education- the initial and in-career stages of teacher education. I believe in the importance of capturing teachers existing beliefs and values and not forcing practices of teachers that go against their personalised beliefs, values and norms.

My attendance at international education conferences such as ASERA, NARST, ESERA, ECRICE, and AERA has led to the establishment of links with other education researchers dedicated to enhancing teaching and learning in post-primary education. I place strong emphasis on the importance of networking to inform my own practice and seek potential research collaboration. I am aware that I need to continually grow in my own practice, to become a better lecturer and researcher and collaboration, whether it be with researchers or teachers, is key to this.

My teaching experience stems mainly across third level education. I am currently a Lecturer in Education specialising in science and biology pedagogics, sociology of education and general pedagogics. I am also microteaching coordinator and a school placement tutor. I really enjoy the latter as it gives me the opportunity to meet teachers throughout Ireland and learn from their experiences on the ground.

In both my second level and third level teaching, I place emphasis on active learning as a pedagogical orientation towards inclusive practice.

Dr Louise Lehane | St Angela's College

Through my work with both pre-service and in-service teachers I believe that I can learn so much from their experiences to inform my own practice which is another reason why I would like to be considered a RiRS panel member. Additionally I am passionate about keeping abreast of current school contexts as sometimes working within third level can be disconnecting from the reality on the ground. I think this will help me to focus the knowledge I share with pre-service teachers and make it more relevant to life in schools currently.