

**THE LIFESAVING FOUNDATION LTD.**

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**WIT AND LIFESAVING FOUNDATION FORM DROWNING RESEARCH PARTNERSHIP**

The Lifesaving Foundation has formed a drowning research partnership with Waterford Institute of Technology’s School of Health Sciences. The long-term aim of the partnership is to establish a permanent world class drowning research centre at WIT. The immediate aim is to reduce drowning death numbers through researching the concept of self-rescue in life threatening situations. This is being undertaken in co-operation with An Garda Síochána and An Garda Síochána Retired Members Association. Initial funding will be provided through the Doherty Police Research Fund.



Left to Right - Garda Lorcan Byrne An Garda Síochána Water Unit, Insp Michael Cleary (Rtd), Chief Supr John Long (Rtd) International Director of The Lifesaving Foundation, Mr Brendan Donohoe Lifesaving Foundation Chairperson, Deirdre Doherty Daughter of deceased Garda Commissioner Eamonn Doherty, Professor Willie Donnelly President of Waterford Institute of Technology, Mr John Connolly Lifesaving Foundation Secretary, Dr Suzanne Denieffe Head of Department of Nursing & Health Care at Waterford Institute of Technology, Garda Brian Moore, An Garda Síochána Water Unit, Supr Matt Cósgrave (Rtd) President, Garda Síochána Retired Members Association, Dr Michael Bergin School of Health Sciences at Waterford Institute of Technology

According to Lifesaving Foundation chairperson Brendan Donohoe for over 100 years the main focus of lifesaving organisations has been on teaching the public the Do’s and Don’ts of water safety, explaining how not to get into trouble, and on training lifesavers and lifeguards to rescue those in danger in water. This has been very successful.



One hundred years ago, when Ireland’s population was two and a half million, the number of drowning deaths was over 200. Today, with a population close to five million, the number of drowning deaths is just over 100. The 21<sup>st</sup> century lifesaving challenge is to teach the public how not to drown if they find themselves in trouble in water – to self-rescue.

Announcing the partnership WIT President Prof Willie Donnelly commended the work of The Lifesaving Foundation to date and added that the Institute looks forward to developing world-class drowning research including priority areas such as self-rescue. Professor John Wells, Dean of the School of Health Sciences, welcomed the new partnership saying that the Institute’s research capability combined with the Lifesaving Foundation’s drowning expertise would make for a symbiotic relationship benefitting all at risk from drowning worldwide. Lifesaving Foundation Secretary John Connolly explained that up to now drowning research

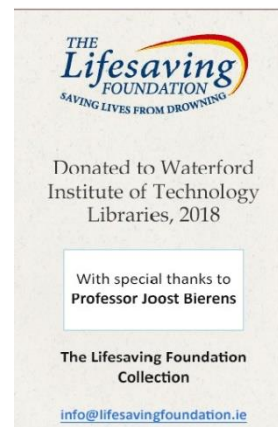
has been conducted on an ad hoc one-off basis. The Foundation board decided that it was time to put structure on its research and they were delighted to do this in partnership with Waterford Institute of Technology.



Presentations by Professor Joost Bierens (*Current Drowning Research*) and Dr Stathis Avramidis (*Drowning Near-Death Experiences*) to a group of invited guests were part of the launch programme. The launch was attended by representatives from An Garda Síochána Water Unit, Garda Síochána Retired Members Association, Waterford Marine Search and Rescue, The Irish Naval Service, and Waterford Fire Service.

The Foundation presented a large number of drowning books to WIT Library as the start of a major drowning research resource under the title of The Lifesaving Foundation Collection. All books donated to the collection will have a label inserted inside of the front cover identifying the source of the book. Once catalogued it will be possible for lifesavers worldwide to browse the collection on-line. It will be possible to access books in person at the library as an External Borrower and to borrow books via Inter Library Loan.

In addition to books the Foundation is seeking electronic copies of theses on drowning. The theses will be printed and bound before being added to the library collection. Persons with theses to offer are asked to contact the Foundation for instructions.



The Foundation welcomes public donations to the Garda Commissioner Eamonn Doherty Police Research Fund, Bank of Ireland, Lisduggan, Waterford City, IBAN: IE44 BOFI 9062 1664 7000 06.



Presentation of Books to The Luke Wadding Library at Waterford Institute of Technology  
Left to Right - Chief Supr John Long (Rtd) International Director of The Lifesaving Foundation, Mr Brendan Donohoe Lifesaving Foundation Chairperson, Prof Joost Bierens MD, PhD Editor of The Handbook on Drowning, Professor Willie Donnelly President of Waterford Institute of Technology, Mr John Connolly Lifesaving Foundation Secretary, Mr Kieran Cronin Waterford Institute of Technology Librarian, Dr Stathis Avramidis The Hellenic Centre for Disease Control

6<sup>th</sup> February 2018  
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