

CORD Partnership launches Agenda for 2025-26 and Implementation Group (<https://www.activelink.ie/node/113203>)



In January 2025, the Criminal justice Open Research Dialogue (CORD) Partnership published An Agenda for the CORD Partnership, 2025-2026 (https://norf.ie/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/FINAL_AgendafortheCORDPartnership_20252026.pdf) . The 2025-26 Agenda was co-created with dozens of partners in 2024 to progress the CORD Partnership’s goals over the coming years.

Launched in January 2024 and funded by Ireland’s National Open Research Forum (NORF) (<https://norf.ie/>) under the 2023 Open Research Fund, the CORD Partnership aims to embed a culture of interdisciplinary open research in criminal justice in Ireland. CORD has 135 partners representing 59 organisations working across research, criminal justice policy, agencies and oversight, non-state justice services, civil society, and research infrastructure.

The Agenda (https://norf.ie/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/FINAL_AgendafortheCORDPartnership_20252026.pdf) is one output from a year of collaborative work, for which partners met three times to identify CORD’s purpose, principles and priorities, learn from partnerships in other countries, and identify actions that can help build bridges and translate research into policy and practice. In addition to the Agenda, 58 CORD partners from 32 organisations co-authored an article ([https://probation.ie/EN/PB/0/11F1D18649B81C2780258BF8004DCA64/\\$File/13%20Irish%20Probation%20Vol%2021.pdf](https://probation.ie/EN/PB/0/11F1D18649B81C2780258BF8004DCA64/$File/13%20Irish%20Probation%20Vol%2021.pdf)) that outlines a set of principles and priorities which they believe CORD should follow and address.

The Agenda (https://norf.ie/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/FINAL_AgendafortheCORDPartnership_20252026.pdf) has five action areas. These relate to sharing research findings, understanding each other, collaborating on events, piloting Areas of Research Interest and building infrastructure for partnership research.

The delivery of the 2025-26 Agenda will be overseen by an Implementation Group, drawn from CORD’s partners. With 20 partners from 15 organisations across the seven partner categories, the Implementation Group aims to ensure that the CORD Partnership’s Agenda is delivered to

the greatest extent possible, and in a manner that meets partners’ and society’s needs. It will also provide direction on CORD’s development more broadly.

The CORD Implementation Group members are: Dr. Clíodhna Bairéad (Research Officer, Probation Service), Dr. Sonam Banka-Cullen (Research Fellow and Project Manager, Trinity College Dublin), Saoirse Brady (Executive Director, Irish Penal Reform Trust), Andrew Bray (Senior Project Specialist, Centre for Effective Services), Dr. Fionnuala Brennan (Lecturer and Programme Leader, Higher Certificate in Custodial Care, South East Technological University), Dr. Sophia Carey (Senior Manager, Policing Authority), Maria Cleary (PhD Student in Criminology, Maynooth University), Sgt. Caroline Copeland (Garda Research Unit, An Garda Síochána), Dr. Sarah Curristan (Inspector, Office of the Inspector of Prisons), Edel Kelly (Research and Development Team for Youth Justice Projects), Enda Kelly (National Nurse Manager, Irish Prison Service), Dr. Threase Finnegan-Kessie (Assistant Professor in Design Innovation, Maynooth University), Dr. Deirdre Healy (Associate Professor in Criminology, University College Dublin), Dr. Susan Leahy (Senior Lecturer in Law, University of Limerick), Dr. Lauren O’Connell (Assistant Professor in Criminal Law, Dublin City University), Barra O’Duill (Researcher, Department of Justice), Barry Owens (Operations Manager, Irish Association for Social Inclusion Opportunities), Prof. Jennifer Schweppe (Professor of Law, University of Limerick), Alice Wainwright (Head of Research, Department of Justice), Dr. Kevin Wozniak (Assistant Professor in Criminology, Maynooth University).

The group will be chaired by Dr. Ian Marder (Associate Professor in Criminology, Maynooth University).



On the launch of the Agenda, Implementation Group (IG) chairperson, Dr. Ian Marder (Maynooth University), said: 'CORD partners have built strong, positive relationships and hold a wealth of knowledge about research, policy and practice. This Agenda gives us an opportunity to take advantage of the momentum we've gained in recent years to make positive change happen in Irish criminal justice.'

IG member and former Deputy Chair of the Project Consortium, Dr. Kevin Wozniak (Maynooth University), said: 'Researchers, policymakers, and practitioners all have different schedules, rhythms, and work expectations. Even when many stakeholders share the same goals, cultural and logistical differences across professions can present challenges. The Agenda presents an exciting opportunity to overcome these barriers, foster mutual understanding and collaboration, and pave the way for a more holistic, effective, and humane criminal justice system in Ireland.'

IG member Dr. Fionnuala Brennan (South East Technological University) said: 'Working in Irish prison officer education, we're at that meeting point between research and practice: we aim to embed new learnings from criminal justice and custodial care research into how prison officers

carry out their daily work. The CORD Partnership gives us access to knowledge and experience from colleagues across the sector, and that collaboration really enables what we do.'

IG member Barry Owens (Irish Association for Social Inclusion Opportunities) said: 'CORD is exciting for us because criminal justice is changing in line with Ireland's growing and diversifying population. We need to think differently about how we support people caught up in criminal justice, and for that we need collaboration across multiple sectors and agencies. CORD offers a means to not only create a shared understanding of the challenges but also to generate the type of research and resources we need to identify solutions and inform change. It is a timely and important initiative, one IASIO is very excited to be part of.'

On the participation of the Probation Service in the IG and the CORD Partnership, Frank Humphreys, Senior Data and Analytics Manager (Probation Service), said: 'The Probation Service has been delighted to partner with CORD from its inception. It is a fabulous new initiative that has brought welcome energy, drive and enthusiasm to the important goal of encouraging research collaboration between academics, practitioners, organisations and others working in the area of criminal justice.'

IG member Dr. Sophia Carey (Policing Authority) said: 'The Policing Authority is pleased to participate in the CORD Implementation Group, with the aim of enhancing community safety by contributing to a culture of open research in the criminal justice sector.'

IG member Dr. Sonam Banka-Cullen (Trinity College Dublin) said: 'Public health and criminology must work together to create a system that foregrounds prevention and builds safer, healthier communities. Having worked closely with vulnerable people for over ten years, I have seen the importance of transdisciplinary collaborations and holistic approaches to criminal justice.'

IG member Dr. Deirdre Healy (UCD) said: 'I'm delighted to be a member of the Implementation Group and to contribute to its important work of fostering greater dialogue, collaboration and understanding between academics, policymakers and practitioners in the fields of criminology and criminal justice.'

Irish Legal News reported on the launch of the CORD Agenda ([see here](https://www.irishlegal.com/articles/milestone-for-criminal-justice-research-dialogue-project)). (<https://www.irishlegal.com/articles/milestone-for-criminal-justice-research-dialogue-project>)

To read the Agenda for the CORD Partnership, 2025-26, please click here (https://norf.ie/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/FINAL_AgendafortheCORDPartnership_20252026.pdf).



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Region
Nationwide

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