STANFORD NEURODIVERSITY SUMMIT – 7-9 NOVEMBER 2021
THEME: *"Your Neurodiversity Identity for You and Your Community"*

Session Title:
"Identifying as neurodivergent in diverse communities: Experiences, opportunities and challenges"
Timing: Tuesday 9 November 5:45pm-7:15pm (90 minutes) (Dublin time)
(Organised by University College Dublin, Maynooth University, ADHD Ireland, Untapped & Neurodiversity Hub)

Session Theme:

Around the world, rising numbers of people are identifying as neurodivergent. However, awareness, understanding and attitudes regarding neurodiversity vary hugely across countries and contexts. This session considers the range of consequences that may follow a decision to publicly identify oneself as neurodivergent in a variety of settings.

On the positive side, claiming a neurodivergent identity may empower a new self-confidence, help communicate one's unique strengths and needs, and open up valued new communities of similar others. More negatively, publicly identifying as neurodivergent can expose a person to stigmatisation or discrimination. This session explores the diversity of experiences of claiming a neurodivergent identity across multiple settings.

Session Structure:

5.45-5.55pm - Dr Cliodhna O'Connor – 'Anticipating social responses to revealing a neurodivergent identity: Differences across diagnoses, populations and contexts'

Bio: Dr Cliodhna O'Connor is a social psychologist and Assistant Professor in the School of Psychology, University College Dublin, Ireland. Her research explores the social and psychological processes through which we classify individuals into social categories and how those categories affect people's lives.

Topic: Dr O'Connor will explore the range of social responses that people experience when they disclose a neurodevelopmental or psychiatric diagnosis to others. The research literature is inconsistent regarding whether revealing one's neurodiverse status helps or hinders social interactions. Much depends on the exact diagnosis involved, the socio-demographic characteristics of both parties, and the specific context of the social interaction. This presentation will review the available evidence on the conditions that predict positive vs. negative experiences of publicly self-identifying as neurodivergent.

5.55-6.05pm - Amanda Kirby – 'Missed and misdiagnosed: Where people come from and where people go'

Bio: Prof Amanda Kirby is Honorary Professor at Cardiff University and Emeritus Professor at the University of South Wales. A Medical Doctor with lived and personal experiences relating to neurodiversity, Prof Kirby is Chair of the ADHD Foundation and Movement Matters in the UK.

Topic: Not everyone gets a diagnosis or the correct one. People may get missed or misdiagnosed for a number of reasons. This presentation explores some of the reasons, the impact for the person and society, and the evidence behind this. The presentation discusses a whole person model of practice to consider in education and employment.

6.05-6.15pm - Juwayriyah Nayyar – 'Social consequences of adult autism diagnoses: Balancing community belonging and cultural stigma'

Bio: Juwayriyah Nayyar is a PhD candidate in the School of Psychology, University College Dublin, Ireland. Her research investigates the lived experience of receiving an autism diagnosis in adulthood.

Topic: This presentation will present the results of a systematic literature review exploring the lived experience of receiving an autism diagnosis in adulthood. An adult autism diagnosis can affect one's social experiences in diverse ways. Some report feeling that their diagnosis exacerbates social marginalisation they already experienced, leading to reluctance to disclose their new diagnosis to others. Yet others are happy to reveal their autism status and often find it leads them into valued new communities of other people who share their experience. This presentation considers how one's social world can shift when diagnosed with autism as an adulthood.

6.15-6.25pm - Charlotte Valeur – 'Lived experience of being a late diagnosed neurodivergent professional.'

Bio: Charlotte Valeur is an experienced FTSE Chair, Non-Executive Director and corporate governance expert with extensive investment banking background in Denmark and the UK. She has been a non executive director of eight London Stock Exchange public companies, including three appointments as the Chair. In addition she has board experience with a range of unlisted companies including international engineering firm Laing O'Rourke, BT Pension Fund, Chair of Institute of Directors U.K. and Founder and Chair of Board Apprentice and the Institute Of NeuroDiversity ION.

Topic: Charlotte Valeur will share her insights and lived experience of disclosing being autistic as a senior leader and public figure. She will talk about the professional opportunities and challenges she has experienced before and after publicly disclosing her neurodifference.

6.25-6.45pm - Javier Peris – Principal CEO en NeurodiverSi

Bio: In 2018, Javier received his ADHD diagnosis and his professional reinvention towards neurodiversity and social innovation began: coach, neuroeducation, mindfulness, emotional management, educational inclusion… CEO of the Redtdah Association (ADHD) and Founder of the NeurodiverSí project, he has won several awards for his work around the employability of neurodivergent people.

Topic: This pre-recorded presentation will give a unique insight into the journey of an adult with a late ADHD diagnosis. Javier Peris will discuss his experiences searching for solutions to protect himself from adversity without understanding the source of his experiences, and how his life has changed since his ADHD diagnosis has clarified his unresolved questions.

6.45-7.15pm - Q&A – all-panel discussion moderated by Prof Fiona McNicholas

Bio: Prof Fiona McNicholas is a Consultant in Child and Adolescent Psychiatry in Lucena Clinic, Rathgar and Our Lady's Hospital for Sick Children, Crumlin, Ireland. She is Full Professor of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry in University College Dublin.