



RCSI



Catherine Sullivan
Head of Operations

“We cannot only find and share their work more effectively amongst those audiences, but also measure the outcomes of that activity, and quantify the potential influence of the research”

Key points

- RCSI is a research intensive university, aiming to be in the Top 200 of the Times Higher Education Global Rankings
- Adopted Altmetric to track and help them build strategies to maximise the dissemination of outputs
- See the data as central to providing their researchers with more evidence and increasing understanding of the outcomes of their research

RCSI is an Irish University of Medicine and Health sciences. It hosts about 3,000 undergraduate students and runs a small Postgrad school (made up mostly of PhDs), all of whom focus on areas of medicine, pharmacy and physiotherapy.

The university produces a lot of high impact research, and indeed this has become an increasing focus over the last 5 years. As a research intensive organization, the university has made efforts to invest in recruitment at all levels to support this, and ensured that research time is protected.

With a goal to be in the Top 200 of the Times Higher Education global rankings, the university has made big progress in recent years - and was recently ranked number one in the world for research that focuses on Health and Wellbeing, the 3rd UN Sustainable Development Goal. This is partly reflected in the close ties and collaboration that the university has with the local and more international health services, working alongside frontline staff in different regions.

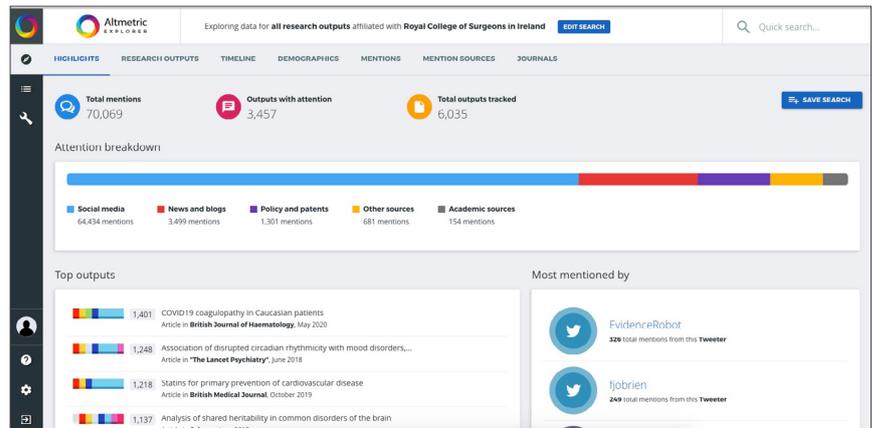
We spoke with Head of Operations, Catherine Sullivan, from the university's Institutional Research and Planning team, where they have been amongst the first to use Altmetric.

Altmetric as an indicator of reach and influence

RCSI adopted the Altmetric Explorer in 2019, making it available first within the research office. A lot of their decision to do was driven by what Catherine described as the 'changing culture' of research - their recognition of the need to disseminate their scholarly work more broadly, and to reach new audiences.

In using Altmetric, Catherine says, they can not only find and share their work more effectively amongst those audiences, but also measure the outcomes of that activity, and quantify the potential influence of the research.

“Hope to introduce their faculty to altmetrics as a complementary measure to citations”



Practical applications of the data

To date, Catherine notes, they have been using the Explorer at a fairly basic level - checking the attention data for certain papers, or at the departmental level.

If they find something that looks interesting (a piece of research they weren't aware of that seems to be worth promoting more broadly, for instance) they'll run an outreach campaign around the research and then check to see what difference in the level of engagement this has made.

Although they don't currently share the results with the departments and researchers, Catherine says they would like to in future.

Along with this focus on individual pieces of research, Catherine says she can see big potential for the use of Altmetric data in the annual reports that they deliver to their departments on their research output, both at the departmental and individual level.

In doing so, she says, they'd hope to introduce their faculty to altmetrics as a complementary measure to citations, which can help them demonstrate the value and potential impacts of their work to internal management and external review bodies.