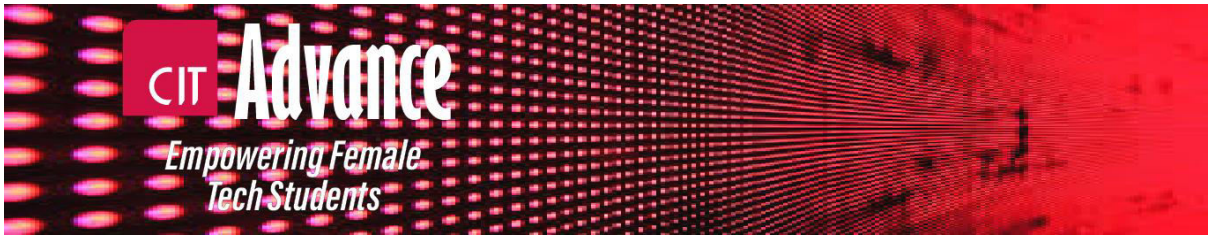

Cork Tech Community Come Together to Encourage CIT's Female Students to Strive for Career Longevity and Excellence

On Friday 1st February, 2019 at CIT, tech giants, DellEMC, VMware, IBM, McKesson, Poppulo and Apple are teaming up with the Cork Institute of Technology for a unique Irish event, CIT Advance, that is designed to encourage and empower young women along their technology career path. Forty of CIT's finest female tech students, (Undergrad and Master level), will be attending this two-day seminar at CIT, where they will be provided with expert mentorship by experienced tech professionals.

The idea for the event came into being when Dr. Ramona Marfievici (Nimbus Research Centre, CIT) was invited to San Francisco last year to participate in the Computing Research Association's Committee on the Status of Women in Computing Research (CRA-W) multi-day mentorship workshop for women graduate students called Grad Cohort.

The US-based Grad Cohort Workshop, initiated in 2004, is a progressive mentoring programme that builds and mentors communities of women throughout the US and Canada. The programme brings together female students and successful senior researchers from academia, industry and government laboratories for discussions on how to succeed in graduate school and in a research career. The successful US programme attracts major sponsors to its cause, including Microsoft, Google, Intel, Facebook, Bloomberg and IBM.

In 2018, CRA-W decided to expand its shores and, as a result, Dr. Marfievici was invited, as the Irish representative of an international group of observers from Europe (France, Greece, Ireland, Italy, UK), India and Brazil, to participate in the workshop with a view to learning how to replicate the event in each of their home countries in 2019.

On her return to Ireland, Dr. Marfievici teamed up with CIT colleagues, Oonagh O'Brien, from CIT's Department of Computer Science and Catherine Murphy from the Department of Accounting and Information Systems, who soon brought the wider Cork tech community into the fold and, thus, CIT Advance became a reality.

According to Dr. Marfievici, "The response from CIT and the wider tech community in Cork has been phenomenal. Events like this are crucial in highlighting the unseen obstacles that women face daily in a male dominated tech world. With recent research[1] indicating that women's marginalised presence in computing may result in women psychologically disengaging, and ultimately dropping out, it is now time to do everything we can to support and encourage this new generation of women to strive for career longevity and excellence."

The CIT Advance event promises to be hugely informative for female techies and a great boost to their future careers. In addition to top class speakers, the event includes a series of workshops in the areas of CV preparation, interview techniques, tips for entering the career market, and advice on how to successfully build a brand. The event will be opened by Dr. Orla Flynn, Vice President for External Affairs at CIT and strong advocate of Women in STEM initiatives.

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[1] Jane G. Stout, Burçin Tamer, Heather M. Wright, Lori A. Clarke, Sandhya Dwarkadas and Ayanna M. Howard, *The Grad Cohort Workshop: Evaluating an Intervention to Retain Women Graduate Students in Computing*; Front. Psychol., 10 January 2017. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2016.02071 [Accessed 26-01-19]

For further information on the event, see CIT Advance or contact:

Nimbus Research Centre: Ramona.Marfievici@cit.ie
Department of Computer Science: Oonagh.OBrien@cit.ie
Department of Accounting and Information Systems: Catherine.Murphy@cit.ie

Editor Notes:
For further press information, images etc., please contact Emily.Twomey@cit.ie or Tel. +353 87 2247132

Images attached:

Organisers of CIT Advance. From Left: Dr. Ramona Marfievici (Nimbus Research Centre, CIT), Catherine Murphy (Department of Accounting and Information Systems Department, CIT), Oonagh O'Brien (Department of Computer Science, CIT).

Workshop organization and support: