**Full title of the workshop:**

**Comics as Pedagogy: Ways of Knowing, Expressing, and Communicating**

**Presenters:**

**Jane Burns, MBA, MLIS, MPhil, FLAI,**

**Director of Education & Public Engagement Faculty of Engineering and Informatics, TUS**

Jane has been a librarian since 1996 with a range of employment experiences from a number of Irish Higher Education Institutions, Research Bodies, the Private Sector She is an experienced University Lecturer and CPD facilitator. Jane is a member of the Technology Education Group (TERG). Jane is currently a PhD candidate at Dublin City University where she is exploring the areas of Education, Graphicacy & Graphic Medicine.

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**Deaglán Campbell BA(Hons) MSc MIDI**

**Design Lecturer, TUS**

Deaglán is a multidisciplinary designer and has worked in the design industry since 2002. Over the last 12 years he has made a commitment to design education primarily within graphic design and more recently in teacher education specifically contributing to the BEd in Technology, Engineering and Graphics programme at TUS.

**Clodagh Reid B.Tech (Ed), Ph.D,**

**Lecturer in Technology Teacher Education**

Clodagh completed her PhD in Engineering Education at the Technological University of the Shannon (TUS), Ireland, in 2022, followed by a postdoctoral research position at TUS/ University of Cincinnati, USA. Clodaghs research to date has focused on the influence of spatial skills and cognitive load on problem solving experiences in technology and engineering education. She is currently an Assistant Lecturer in Technology Education at TUS.

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**Niall Seery, B.Tech (Ed), Ph.D,**

**Director Technology Education Research Group and Chair of Technological Education, TUS**

Niall has a PhD in Engineering Education and a background in Engineering and Technology Teacher Education. He has a specialist interest in pedagogical practice in Technology Education. He has served as director of studies at undergraduate and professional masters level, and also directs the activities of the Technology Education Research Group.

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**Overview of the workshop:**

The workshop has arisen from our shared perspectives as a technology Educator, a Designer, and a professional librarian that endeavours to capture the power of comics as a representative, narrative, and speculative medium to support future thinking.  With a focus on developing an environment where ideas can be encouraged and sparked by imagination the intersection of these disciplines has identified the medium of comics as an ideal format. This will be introduced in this workshop.

Being able to visualise and also communicate ideas that can be understood and engaged by others is a function of designing. From the perspective of design education, an alternative mode of engagement which removes barriers of textual literacy is ideal. The format of comics where the emphasis is on the visual components supported by text presents a way to connect with students on various levels as amplifiers and filter of meaning and meaning making. For all learners the use of comics presents a fun and engaging way to view the world from multiple dimensions and perspectives. Difficult or complex information presented in this visual way has the potential to create greater engagement with ideas. The organisation of information and more importantly the accessibility of information is a key goal of librarians. Due to the limited text content in comics it is possible to translate key text without minimal time and expertise so that the content can be more broadly accessible. The visual content allows the learner to engage with the information and develop their own perspectives in the storytelling narrative of the content.

There are several paths when considering teaching comics and teaching with comics. The first is teaching students how to create comics from an artistic literary perspective. The next is to use comics format as mechanism for teaching a variety of subjects for a range of ages and literacy levels. The other is the scholarship/technical structure level of comics as an association to understand content. Kirtley, et al. (2020) examines these ideas in *With Great Power comes Great Pedagogy*. Topics covered in this book have informed the variety of approaches, pedagogical techniques, and uses of novels and graphic novels that will be explored in this workshop.

Smyth (2022) goes to great lengths to defend comics as a curriculum resource for teaching and describe a resource that can open the minds of educators to the use of comics as meaningful and engaging literature that helps all levels of readers. Smyth further suggests that comics are social artefacts that, provide an alternative resource from the standard textbook and provide new ways to engage with a diverse society. In his defence of comics Smyth highlights some interest facts to appeal to educators to use these resources, for example, Comic books average 53.5% of rare works per 1000, Children's books average 30.9, Adult books average 52.7 (based upon Jarret Lerner's vocabulary study <http://jarrettlearner.files.wordpress.com/comic-book-vocab.pdf>). The workshop will present interesting facts and stats while also sharing useful and practical resources for participants to bring with them and explore the power of the visual medium. For example, Smyth supplements *Teaching with Comics and Graphic Novels* with an engaging website History Comics <https://www.historycomics.net/>filled with lesson plans and teaching ideas on how to integrate comics in to many levels of teaching.

As comics leap between time, space, and point of view, the reader must apply experience, skill and knowledge to both complete the story and to convert it to a coherent narrative. The act of reading comics critically can make explicit the processes by which the reader is an active participant in the story (Brozo, 2014). Comics are the one visual medium where you can create a sense of the multi-layered experience of consciousness This workshop will provide attendees with examples of these different disciplinary approaches using the common format of comics to demonstrate the inter-relationship of these perspectives.

**References**

Brozo, W. G., Moorman, G. B., & Meyer, C. K. (2014). *Wham! Teaching with graphic novels across the curriculum*. Teachers College Press.

Kirtley, S. E., Garcia, A., & Carlson, P. E. (Eds.). (2020). *With great power comes great pedagogy: Teaching, learning, and comics*. University Press of Mississippi.

Smyth, T. (2022). *Teaching with comics and graphic novels: Fun and engaging strategies to improve close reading and critical thinking in every classroom*. Routledge.