



How to network effectively for research collaboration

Professor Jane Walsh
School of Psychology, University of Galway



Who am I?

- Professor of Psychology
- Director mHealth Research Group
- Funded research:
 - Horizon Europe **€14.4 million**
 - Industry funded **€1 million**
 - Health Research Board **€587k**
 - Science Foundation Ireland **€568k**
 - Irish Research Council **€190k**
 - Irish Cancer Society **€102k**

Scope of topics and EU funding

Topics covered include:

- Dementia
- Nutrition
- Healthy Ageing
- Cancer survivors
- Supporting SMEs
- Malaria in Africa

Calls/Pillars include:

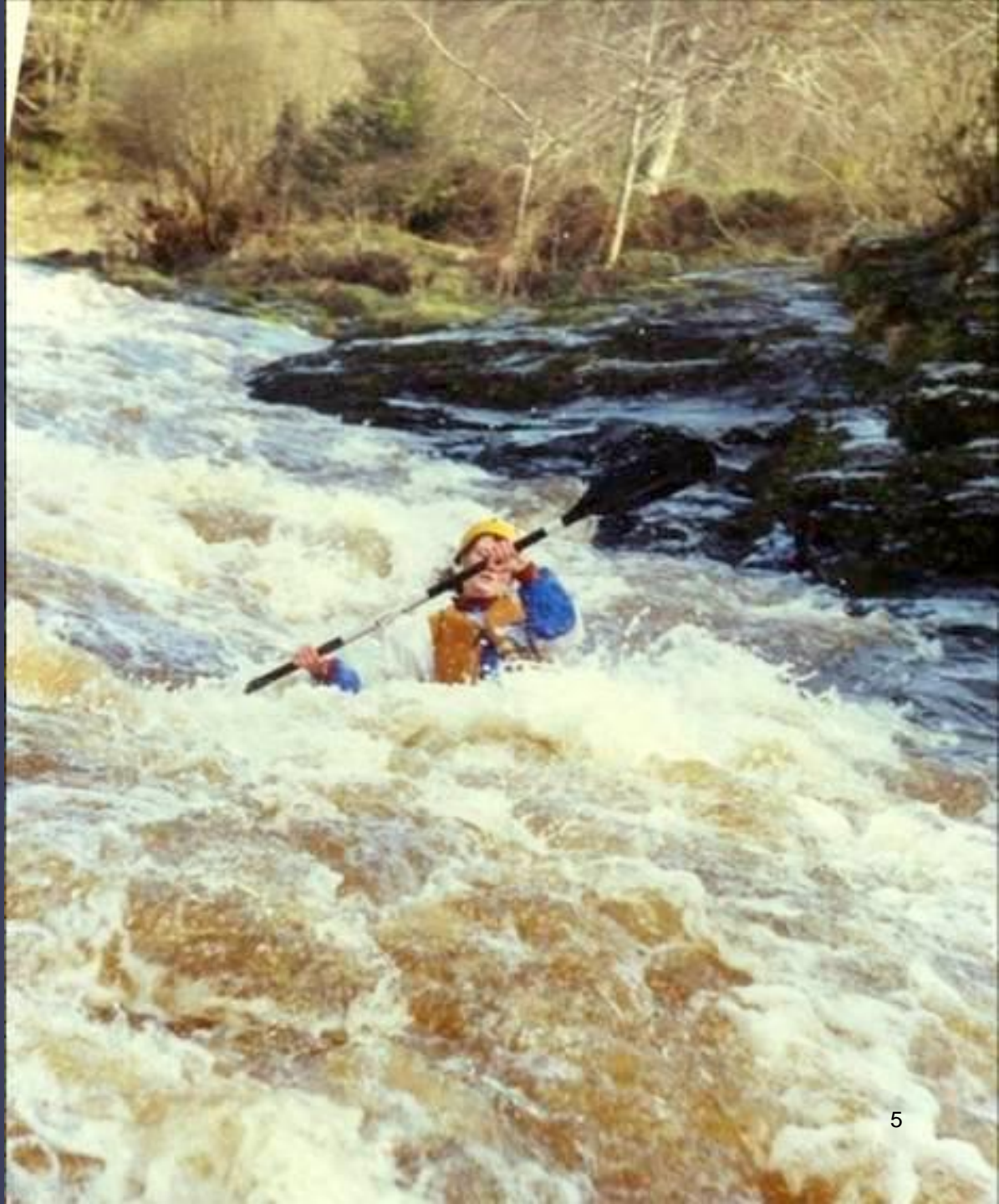
- Marie Curie Actions
- Industrial Leadership
- Research & Innovation Actions
- AAL Programme

Let's consider context...

- Horizon Europe - game changer
- Focus on 'global challenges' and 'problem solving' approach
- Targets complex issues; migration, pandemics, environment, disruptive technologies.
- Highlights need for *new collaborations* between multiple disciplines
- Key role for 'human-centric' SSH approach
- ***All disciplines pushed outside 'comfort zones'***

**BEFORE WE GO
ON....**

**There is no
such thing as a
smooth career
path!**





I had a few hiccups myself...



The Illusion of Success



WHY?

European collaborations are exciting, challenging, innovative, global and impactful

EC embraces creativity & blue skies approach

Generous budgets and flexible oversight

Opportunity to travel and work across several disciplines, industries, institutions & countries

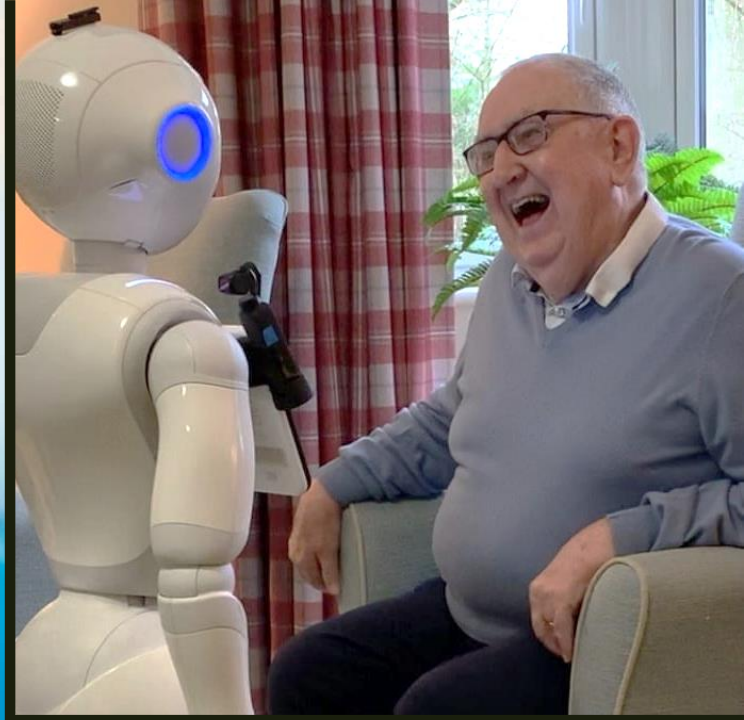
HOW?

Establish your niche

Engage with NCP/EI

Create strong public profile

Network, pitch, sell!



My journey...

Establishing a niche:

**Psychology's role in
digital health innovation:**



Identify your Niche

- User acceptability
- Stakeholder engagement
- Design
- Efficacy
- **BEHAVIOUR CHANGE**



An OPEN
MIND is KEY

"Failure is an
opportunity to grow"

GROWTH MINDSET

"I can learn to do anything I want"

"Challenges help me to grow"

"My effort and attitude
determine my abilities"

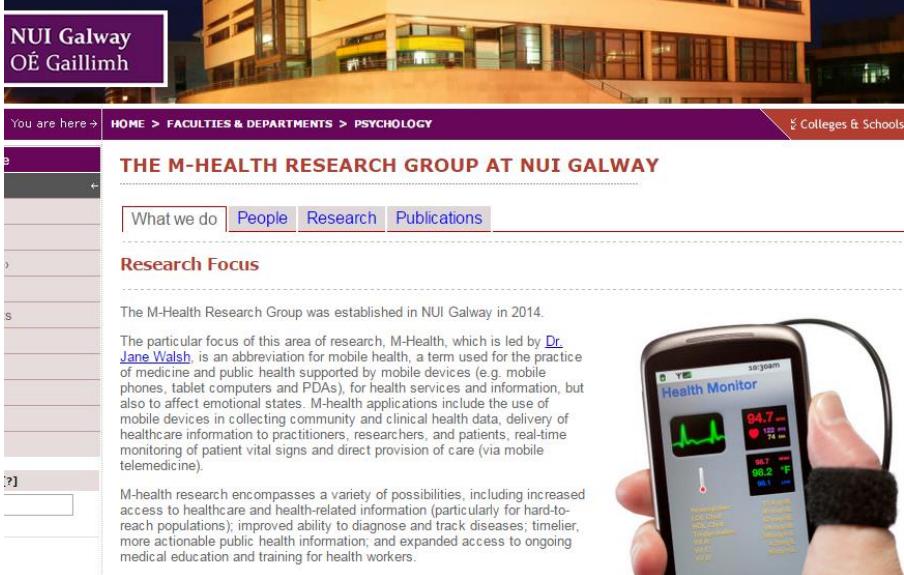
"Feedback is constructive"

"I am inspired by the success of others"

"I like to try
new things"

-Establish an Identity

-Create an Online Profile



The screenshot shows the website for the M-Health Research Group at NUI Galway. The header includes the NUI Galway logo and a navigation menu with 'HOME > FACULTIES & DEPARTMENTS > PSYCHOLOGY'. The main heading is 'THE M-HEALTH RESEARCH GROUP AT NUI GALWAY'. Below this is a navigation bar with 'What we do', 'People', 'Research', and 'Publications'. The 'Research Focus' section contains text about the group's establishment in 2014 and its focus on mobile health. To the right, there is an image of a hand holding a smartphone displaying a 'Health Monitor' app with various health metrics.

NUI Galway
OÉ Gaillimh

You are here → HOME > FACULTIES & DEPARTMENTS > PSYCHOLOGY > Colleges & Schools

THE M-HEALTH RESEARCH GROUP AT NUI GALWAY

What we do | People | Research | Publications

Research Focus

The M-Health Research Group was established in NUI Galway in 2014.

The particular focus of this area of research, M-Health, which is led by [Dr. Jane Walsh](#), is an abbreviation for mobile health, a term used for the practice of medicine and public health supported by mobile devices (e.g. mobile phones, tablet computers and PDAs), for health services and information, but also to affect emotional states. M-health applications include the use of mobile devices in collecting community and clinical health data, delivery of healthcare information to practitioners, researchers, and patients, real-time monitoring of patient vital signs and direct provision of care (via mobile telemedicine).

M-health research encompasses a variety of possibilities, including increased access to healthcare and health-related information (particularly for hard-to-reach populations); improved ability to diagnose and track diseases; timelier, more actionable public health information; and expanded access to ongoing medical education and training for health workers.



Then, I travelled to Europe - 2014

ICT Proposers Day – Networking Event



2015, created...

Profile and partnerships

Applied to IRC to host 1st mHealth conference in Ireland

Strategic aim of developing strong international collaborations

Invited key international stakeholders to Galway

External profile - mHealth group

Leveraged network to secure funding





Focus on strong Social Media Promotion



The Numbers

 @MHealthRank	2.047M	Impressions
 @MHealthConf	913	Tweets
 @DrJaneWalsh	131	Participants
 @nuigalway	38	Avg Tweets/Hour
 @HealthPsychNUIG	7	Avg Tweets/Participant

Outcomes & Impact

(since 2014)



€20+ million funding (PI/Co-Applicant)



40+ peer-reviewed publications in Digital Health



9 PhD & 5 Post-Docs (funded)



70+ Invited talks & workshops



Several **Research Awards**



Two promotions since 2017



4 steps to effective networking

1. Introduce yourself

In less than one minute, outlining:

- Position
- Experience
- Expertise



Step 2 Find out more

- Ask them 'What do you'
- Listen carefully to their priorities and for possible synergies



Step 3

Identify a gap that fits your expertise

- Oh, that's *very interesting*
- *have you ever considered including....*
- It could add a valuable contribution to your study by....



Step 4 - Seal the deal

- I have done some work in this area/send papers that you might find useful
- Happy to help, get in touch, here's my number.



Remember...

- You have a very short window to make an impression
- Know when to move on
- Stay focused, goal is to develop collaboration
- Refine and Target your pitch.



Useful Tip
Use a question as
an opportunity to
pitch!

Some other tips

UNDERSTAND – what is the problem being addressed

LEARN – Shared language

COMMUNICATE - your knowledge and skills

SHARE – adopt a team-based, problem-solving mindset

BRAVERY- work outside comfort zone, think outside the box.





To conclude

- Identify your niche value(s)
- Learn the lingo
- Create your elevator pitch
- Create a strong public profile
- Target successful groups
- Engage with NCP/EI
- Keep a flexible open mind
- Network, use every opportunity to pitch
- Be brave!

GOOD LUCK!