



ARISE

Activity and Recreation in an Inclusive Sensory Environment

The Issue

The needs of young people and adults with disabilities, people recovering from illness, and older people are not sufficiently considered in the design of outdoor spaces. Physical activity has positive impact on health, wellbeing and social connections (Active Disability Ireland 2022).

The Vision

We will develop a proposal for a first-of-its-kind outdoor activity and recreation space designed for all members of our society. This space will offer opportunities for exercise and to connect with nature. The space will feature state of the art interactive interfaces, installations, visualisations and ambient displays.

The Project

Phase 1: Engage with stakeholders and domain experts to gather requirements and insights on their experiences of outdoor activity.

Phase 2: Host a design workshop, with experts in architecture, design, sport science, speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, disability neurodiversity, older age and alternative and augmentative communication.

Phase 3: Re-engage with stakeholders to review and comment on the draft design proposal.

The Team

Project ARISE brings people with a variety of expertise and backgrounds together to co-design this inclusive outdoor space. The project has been developed in partnership between the Autism@UL Special Interest Group, Dóchas Midwest Autism Support and UL's Age Friendly University Committee. Niall Collins, TD for Limerick County, is a supporter of the ARISE project.

Project Team Members: Dr. Michelle O'Donoghue (Speech and Language Therapy), Dr. Cristiano Storni (Interaction Design), Dr. Sean Healy (Physical Education and Sports Sciences), Prof. Rose Galvin (Physiotherapy), Tanya McGarry (Occupational Therapy), Cyril Killen (Centre Manager for Dóchas Midwest Autism Support), Michaela Downey (Parent representative from Catherine McAuley School).

The Results

Detailed design proposal to be presented to Limerick City & County Council for an inclusive outdoor activity and recreation space that outlines the functional, financial, legal and social requirements of this much-needed space.

Additional Outputs:

- Academic paper & infographic on engagement with stakeholders in Phase 1;
- Seminars from Phase 2 available to members of the public;
- Findings and details available in an open access format for others to utilize;
- Policy brief that is directly relevant to Healthy Ireland.