

# **The crossover book writing research for the general public**

## **Schedule**

14.30 Welcome: Ruth Hegarty, Managing Editor, Royal Irish Academy

14.40 Panel 1 | What makes a good crossover book?

Chair: Ronan Colgan (Wordwell)

Speakers: Mark Richards (Swift Press), Rose Anne Kenny (TCD), David McCullagh (RTÉ), Aoife Roantree (Dubray)

15.40 Coffee break

16.00 Panel 2 | Production challenges and keys to success

Chair: Ruth Hegarty (RIA)

Speakers: Sarah Liddy (Gill Books), Neil Burkey (freelance editor), Joanna Smyth (Hachette Ireland)

17.00 Closing remarks: Caoimhe Fox, President, Publishing Ireland

17.15-19.00 Wine reception



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## About the speakers

**Ronan Colgan** (Chair) is the Managing Director of the Wordwell Group, publishers of Eastwood Books, Wordwell Books and the magazines, *History Ireland*, *Books Ireland* and *Archaeology Ireland*. He is a former President of Publishing Ireland, the Irish Book Publishers' Association, and the current Chair of the Dublin Book Festival.

**Neil Burkey** has been in the publishing industry for two decades, working as a project manager, editor, author and picture researcher for clients including Thames & Hudson, Harper Collins and Gill Books. He served as Production Editor for the Royal Irish Academy's 2022 title *Irish Art 1920–2020: Perspectives on change*, and is the author of *Writers' Retreats* (2021), an exploration of fifty writers and the places in which they wrote some of their best-known works. He lives in Howth with his wife and two sons.

**Rose Anne Kenny** is Regius Professor of Physic (Medicine) and holds the Chair of Medical Gerontology at Trinity College Dublin. She is the founding Principal Investigator of The Irish Longitudinal study on Ageing (TILDA) and Director of the Mercer's Institute for Successful Ageing at St. James's Hospital, where she is also director of the Falls and Syncope Unit. She is a Member of the Royal Irish Academy and a Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh, London and Ireland, a Fellow of Trinity College Dublin, a Fellow of the European Society of Cardiology, Honorary Fellow of the Faculty of Public Health Medicine Ireland, and was recently awarded an Honorary Doctorate from the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland. She has received a number of international awards and has published widely, authoring over 600 publications, including her recently published book *Age Proof: The New Science of Living a Longer and Healthier Life*, which was shortlisted for the Royal Society Science Book Prize 2022. In 2020, she was elected President of the Irish Gerontological Society. In 2022 she was nominated 24th Regius Professor of Physic at TCD (1637), the first female nominee.

**David McCullagh** is a journalist with RTÉ, and was political correspondent for 12 years and a presenter of Prime Time for seven years. He is currently a co-presenter of the 6.1 News. He has written five books, including a biography of John A. Costello, *The Reluctant Taoiseach*, a two-volume biography of Éamon de Valera, *Rise 1882-1932*, and *Rule: 1932-1975*, and, most recently, a book for children, *The Great Irish Politics Book*.

**Ruth Hegarty** (Chair) is Managing Editor of the Royal Irish Academy's publishing house. In 2006 she established the Prism imprint of the RIA, which produces beautiful accessible books that encourage readers to return to the primary source and are rooted in scholarship. Books include *A history of Ireland in 100 words*, the 'Judging' series, *Dublin 1911* and *A history of Ireland in 100 objects*. She is a member of the Expert Working Group for the public history project Grangegorman Histories.

**Sarah Liddy** is the publisher of the Gill Life list, an imprint of Gill Books. She has been working in Irish publishing for over 20 years, mostly in commissioning roles. In that time, she has worked with many best-selling authors including Luke O'Neill, Ray Goggins, Niall Breslin and Dermot Whelan. Other chart-topping books she has commissioned include Richie Sadlier's acclaimed memoir *Recovering* and Daniella Moyles' *Jump*. She has acquired books across all genres including history, cookery, children's and memoir. Sarah is a graduate of Trinity College, Dublin (BA, Sociology and Italian) and University College Galway (MA, English Literature and Publishing) and, apart from a mercifully short stint in the complaints department of a bank, has spent her whole career in publishing.

**Mark Richards** started his career in editorial at Fourth Estate, before moving to John Murray, where he became publisher. In 2020 he left to co-found the independent Swift Press, which publishes both fiction and a wide range of non-fiction.

**Aoife Roantree** is the manager of Dubray Liffey Valley and Chair of Bookselling Ireland. She has worked for four different booksellers, and in five of the eleven branches of Dubray, and she thinks it's fair to say that she knows her customers, and Irish readers, quite well. She is an organiser of the Irish Book Trade Conference, and has been involved with Irish Book Week, the Irish Book Awards, the Ireland Reads campaign, and has been a juror for Best Fantasy Novel at the British Fantasy Awards.

**Joanna Smyth** is Marketing and Publishing Operations director at Hachette Ireland, a company she joined as an editorial assistant in 2010. At Hachette Ireland, she has worked on a large number of bestselling titles across a range of genres including fiction, self-help, history, sport and memoir. She was a board member of Publishing Ireland for four years, and was President of the board from 2020 until 2021, and has also volunteered with SYP Ireland, Fighting Words and the Dublin Rape Crisis Centre.



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