Dr Eilís Dowd’s research is focused on developing and validating novel pharmacological, cell, gene and biomaterial therapies for Parkinson’s disease. She received her PhD at the University of Edinburgh, UK, after which she completed post-doctoral research at the University of Cambridge, UK, McGill University, Canada and Cardiff University, UK. She then returned to her home country of Ireland in September 2005 to take-up a tenured position as Lecturer in Pharmacology at National University of Ireland, Galway.

Dr Dowd is Immediate Past President of Neuroscience Ireland, Ireland’s official neuroscience society, and Immediate Past President of the Network for European CNS Transplantation and Restoration (NECTAR), and she sits on the Governing Councils of both the Federation of European Neuroscience Societies (FENS) and the International Brain Research Organisation (IBRO). She is also Associate Editor of Neuronal Signaling, Section Editor of the European Journal of Neuroscience, and Editorial Board member at British Journal of Pharmacology and Scientific Reports.

In her presentation, Dr Dowd will share some of her group’s latest work showing that biomaterials, specifically collagen hydrogels, can dramatically improve the outcome of cellular reparative for Parkinson’s disease, research that was picked-up by the BBC Science Focus Magazine as one of “[five incredible advances in brain disease treatment](https://www.sciencefocus.com/the-human-body/five-incredible-advances-in-brain-disease-treatment/)”. She will also show excerpts of a short documentary on this work entitled “Feats of Modest Valour” which contextualises her research to the patient experience. Feats of Modest Valour recently won The Scientist Award (awarded by AAAS and Science Magazine) and Runner-Up People’s Choice Award at the Imagine Science film Festival in New York, and also the Professional Documentary Award at the Raw Science Film Festival in California.

