



GRAPHIC MEDICINE REVIEW

Draíocht: Sparking Creativity

Proceedings of the 2024 International Graphic Medicine Conference

Jane Burns, MLIS, MBA, MPhil, **Guest Co-Editor**

Director of Education & Public Engagement
Faculty of Engineering & Informatics
Technological University of the Shannon
Midlands Campus, Athlone, Ireland

jane.burns@tus.ie 



Jane Burns
Conference Ambassador

ABSTRACT

Graphic Medicine Review partners with the Graphic Medicine International Collective to publish selected conference proceedings. This issue highlights some of the novel ideas, programs, and perspectives presented at the 2024 Annual Conference at the Technological University of Shannon, Athlone, Ireland.



Graphic Medicine Review is proud to collaborate with and publish selected content from the Graphic Medicine International Collective Annual Conference, July 16-18, 2024, held at the Technological University of Shannon, Athlone, Ireland. We thank those participants who contributed to these proceedings.

Received: January 15, 2025 **Accepted:** January 16, 2025 **Published:** January 27, 2025

Competing Interests: The author declares that they have no competing interests.

Graphic Medicine Review is a peer-reviewed open access journal. © 2025 The Author(s). This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC-BY 4.0), which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited.

See <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0>.  OPEN ACCESS

INTRODUCTION

The Graphic Medicine Community is Global. Conferences are a significant way to bring colleagues together to share art, writing, research, new ideas, and projects. It also provides a venue for networking, enhancing, and developing new collaborations, but most importantly to gather community members who all share an interest in Graphic Medicine based on the primary philosophy that Graphic Medicine is inclusive and gives voice to those who are often not heard.

The 15th International Graphic Medicine Conference took place at the Technological University of the Shannon in Athlone, Ireland from July 16th- 18th 2024. The three-day conference kicked off with specialist workshops, based in TUS (Athlone) and in the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland. The pre-conference workshop entitled *Graphic Medicine for Health Care Professionals* led by Dr. Williams was awarded Irish College of General Practitioners CPD credits and the *Developing a Graphic Medicine Collection* workshop led by Matthew Noe was awarded CPD Credits by the Library Association of Ireland.

The infographic below provides a summary of attendees, speakers and events:



RANGE OF SPEAKERS

Speakers represented a range of countries and organisations, and many were independent presenters. This was also reflected in the makeup of the conference attendees. It was amazing to have creators of Graphic Medicine material in person to meet with the readers of their work, for librarians and researchers to meet the creators of the works they review, organise and promote for a broad range of users and

applications. The feelings of excitement and engagement really connected to the theme of the conference which was *Draíocht: Sparking Creativity*. *Draíocht* is the Irish word for Magic!

THE CONFERENCE ECO-SYSTEM

There is so much potential that emerges from a conference at this scale. Prior to the Conference there were intensive traditional media and online social media driven by the local conference committee and the Graphic Medicine International Collective. During the conference there was coverage by Irish news outlets, especially a prime-time national news report on RTE news on Day 1 of the conference. *The Irish Times* (National Newspaper of Ireland) ran a special feature in advance of the conference highlighting topics and exhibitions, see here <https://www.irishtimes.com/health/your-family/2024/06/25/where-comic-books-meet-healthcare-a-graphic-approach-to-medicine/>

Throughout the Conference a series of podcasts of speakers were undertaken and these available on the Graphic Medicine Website. (<https://www.graphicmedicine.org/2024-athlone-ireland-conference/>) A number of speakers were invited to make submissions to blogs and forums This level of broad engagement helped to raised awareness about Graphic Medicine which is an emerging discipline and a relatively new concept to Irish audiences. An invitation by the *Graphic Medicine Review* journal to publish the conference proceedings was warmly welcomed. This issue reflects articles based on conference proceedings by the speakers who have developed them further for the peer review process of the GMR. This special edition adds a further element to the portfolio of outputs from the Conference; it provides another way for those interested in Graphic Medicine to learn more about the field and for those involved in the field to have another avenue to disseminate and engage with their work.

Many thanks to the *Graphic Medicine Review* Editorial team for making this endeavour a reality.