

1.Can you tell the readers a little bit about your background?

I'm Paula Roseingrave, a counselling psychologist, and married with two wonderful children. I did my undergraduate BA in Psychology at University College Dublin (UCD), and I did my MSc. in Counselling Psychology at Trinity College. I have further specialised in psychological trauma in the universities of Chester and Oxford. After leaving UCD, I worked in the US with children with pervasive developmental delay disorders. After returning to Ireland, I set up the first national counselling service for cystic fibrosis (CF) patients and their families in St Vincent's Hospital. I was the chair of the Counselling Psychology Special Interest Group when it became a division in 1997. Afterwards, I moved to the UK, where I was the Director of Counselling Studies at Keele University, from which I hold a postgraduate certificate in higher education (HE). After 9/11, I studied global security and international relations and spearheaded a psychology-focused symposium at Chatham House, London, after the 07/07 bombings. I founded the Special Interest Group in Political and Environmental Psychology in PSI in 2006. Finally, I ran as a Green Party candidate in the 2020 General Election.

2.What are the main factors that influenced your decision to seek election to the Seanad?

My father, Tomas Roseingrave, instilled in me a duty to serve the people of Ireland any chance I would get. However, one of the main reasons I am running in this by-election is my experience of sexual harassment as a student. I developed full blown PTSD, and I want to ensure that NOBODY goes through what I experienced! Every woman needs to feel safe no matter where she is! I spoke at the PSI Conference a few years ago and told my colleagues about my experience. I also outlined the latest research on the widespread evidence of sexual harassment in HE, as well as a framework for reporting to ensure that abusers are held to account. I have since campaigned to improve reporting of misconduct in HE and beyond. I believe we need to strive for gender equality and protection in our profession, to ensure the safety and development of woman psychologists throughout their careers.

I have been a specialised psychologist in politics and the environment over the last 20 years. I view our profession of psychology as vital in highlighting the way politics, international relations, economics, and all forms of government interface, with the associated fallout for human beings, such as the horror we are witnessing in the human tragedy unfolding in Ukraine. I believe the Seanad is a very important chamber wherein many critical debates about Irish society take place. Having a psychologist with my background there will, I believe, help to bring important psychological perspectives on the many issues facing Irish society today. I want to see, as I am sure so many of you do, action happen NOW to address the climate emergency. I am a member of a newly formed PSI Special Interest Group for Addressing Climate and Environmental Emergency (SIG ACEE) and I am working with other psychologists to bring psychological perspectives in addressing this issue.

3.What aspects of your experience in psychology have prepared you for working in the Seanad?

My 30 years of experience in psychology have given me the ability to assess information and I would look forward to applying this expertise to scrutinising legislation and motions put forward in the Seanad. As somebody who has worked in a number of team settings, I am a skilled team player. I believe in

everybody's right to be heard ,and believe my skills as a facilitator and counselling psychologist could be essential in helping bring members together in the Seanad. As an experienced practicing psychologist, I have never seen anybody who could not be helped in some way, independently of their circumstances. As a senior psychologist working with young people with CF, I always felt no matter how much time was left, there were things we could do together to help make living with CF more manageable. I think this is something that would hold me in good stead if I were privileged enough to become a member of the Seanad.

4.If elected, how will the experience of political life influence your work as a psychologist?

I think that the constant exposure I would have to all aspects of the political system here in Ireland will greatly enhance the way in which I will approach my life as a psychologist while serving in the Seanad. I would like to think that the Seanad's ability to influence the workings of the Dail, and the outcomes therein, would help me feel that I can play a dual role at both the societal and the individual level with all my clients. As I said before, I believe that the role of both political and environmental psychology is a key area to be developed within the profession of psychology both nationally and internationally. This would be a major objective for me should I be elected. By applying the principles embedded in research and practice of psychology across many contexts, I hope to improve the way we understand wars, such as the one in Ukraine, review economic systems, such as capitalism, and facilitate change on a mass level, such that is needed to combat the climate emergency, like we did in the pandemic.

If you are a Trinity graduate, please join me on Zoom (link below) for psychologists on Tuesday March 15 at 7pm. <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87593125069?pwd=VWVpSk05Zk9ZT251RnZOQ0Jka09vdz09>