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Troubles web archive CAIN at UU saved by Irish Government



Support: Martin Melaugh

By **Lauren Harte**

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An acclaimed Troubles web archive that was earmarked for closure has been saved after the Irish Government announced funding for a new project.

For years academics around the world - as well as journalists, writers and historians - have used the Conflict Archive on the Internet (CAIN).

The comprehensive resource at Ulster University's Magee campus in Londonderry was to close but the Irish Government has now provided €66,561 in funding through its reconciliation fund. However, additional resources will still need to be found to secure its long-term future.

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As one of the most important academic and civic resources on Northern Ireland's Troubles, CAIN has been expertly curated by a team of two full-time researchers and an ICT officer since March 1997.

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The website contains a large archive of materials and information related to

Last year the site was granted a 12-month reprieve following the outcome of a consultation carried out by Ulster University with CAIN securing short-term funding to cover staff costs from August 2019.

In May 2020, the university carried out a final funding review and decided that the CAIN archive would move into a transition phase from May 1 to October 30 during which time the archive and website would become an unstaffed, static resource.

As a result the three staff members would be made redundant with online access only available by making CAIN a special digital collection within the university library.

In the absence of dedicated staff, this meant that no new material or updates would be carried out or queries and permission requests dealt with.

CAIN applied for funding for a new project from the reconciliation fund of the Department for Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) in Dublin and was recently informed its application had been successful.

An Ulster University spokesperson said: "We are delighted to have received funding from the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade to complete the final phase of the Chronology of the Troubles project.

"We continue to seek funding for this important work and are committed to completing all funded initiatives as we work to secure the valuable assets in the CAIN archive for future generations of researchers."

CAIN Director Martin Melaugh added: "This confirms support for the work that CAIN undertakes.

"This project will begin on August 1, 2020. CAIN is still seeking further financial support and project funding."

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