

# Airfinance Journal and CDBALF launch scholarship to promote diversity

The course will nurture the next generation of aviation finance talent and enhance the diversity in the industry.

**A**irfinance Journal and CDB Aviation Lease Finance have joined forces to set up a scholarship for the MSc Aviation Finance programme at UCD Smurfit Graduate Business School.

The inaugural *Airfinance Journal* scholarship, sponsored by CDB Aviation, will award 50% of tuition fees to a female student, starting September 2018 at UCD. The scholarship is designed to achieve two core aims:

1. Nurture the next generation of aviation finance talent, and
2. Develop women in aviation to broaden and enhance diversity in the industry.

The programme was launched in 2016 by Willie Walsh, chief executive officer of International Airlines Group, and came about because the major aircraft financing businesses based in Dublin were very keen to develop a further stream of high-quality graduate intake into the business, and create a teaching research and learning environment to support those looking at careers in aviation finance.

Patrick Blaney, UCD's chairman, aircraft leasing, finance and law, says the programme targets 30 students a year, with up to five students on a part-time basis over two years.

"Our target demographics are 50% non-EU and 50% EU (including UK), with the non-EU part having an Asian focus given that the main source of air traffic growth in the next 20 years will be from Asian countries, particularly India and China," he says.

## Gender balance

Blaney says the target gender balance is to get to 50% female participants on the course.

"Over the two years, we have grown the participation from three females in the academic year 2016/7 (one of whom took up an appointment in MIT during the beginning of the year) to nine in 2017/8 and have a strong list of applications from female students for 2018/9.



"I am hopeful that we will get to 50% within three years, but that depends very much on the strength of the applications received. Our existing female students are strong performers, and come from Canada, Nepal, France and China, so augurs well for the future."

CDB Aviation says the notion of achieving gender balance within the work environment is among the most important and critical aspects of building the workforce of the future.

"This initial scholarship programme seeks to do just that by promoting and raising the visibility of women in aircraft leasing and aviation finance," says CDB Aviation chief executive officer and president Peter Chang.

"This *Airfinance Journal* and CDB Aviation Lease Finance scholarship will greatly assist us in reaching out to highly skilled female students interested in a career in aviation finance," he adds.

CDB Aviation asserts that it is imperative for the aviation industry, particularly the aircraft leasing and aviation finance sector, to focus on the development of the next generation of professionals, who will contribute to the industry's future growth and success.

A highly skilled workforce is a prerequisite for the leasing company's

future growth because it continues to broaden global reach from its Chinese roots and appeal to customers who represent diverse cultures and backgrounds.

Chang is a stalwart supporter of promoting young people's interests in aviation and all aspects of the business. He sees advancing educational opportunities specific to aviation and supporting the next generation of industry workers, as well as increasing gender and cultural representation as a pivotal component of business success and his interest for globalising CDB Aviation.

The lessor says funding education through scholarships is a logical means to expand and offer opportunities to those who may not view the aviation industry as a career option. Scholarships have historically been essential to the majority of students who want to graduate with a college degree. By supporting this scholarship programme, CDB Aviation is seeking to award a person's interest in aviation and facilitate not only their educational pursuits, but also create an aviation enthusiast that may well find themselves supporting the leasing of a spaceship someday.

"We believe this initial scholarship programme will only continue to gain momentum, both in terms of the number of student scholarships offered, as well as the geographic spread of university participants," says Chang.

"Initiatives like this one, which CDB Aviation and *Airfinance Journal* envisaged together, are at the heart of a broader industry education movement in which talented, exceptional individuals are able to find the prerequisite support to pursue their interests in aviation, while building careers that will become the girders of the future success of our industry. We recognise and applaud the many other current industry efforts in support of education, including the initiatives by the ISTAT Foundation and many of our peer competitors." A



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# Airfinance Journal Scholarship

As sponsored by  CDB AVIATION  
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The Inaugural Airfinance Journal Scholarship, as sponsored by CDB Aviation, will award **50%** of tuition fees to a female aviation finance student, starting September 2018 at the UCD.

The **MSc in Aviation Finance** aims to advance students' understanding of all aspects of aviation finance, with a specific focus on the practical features of global aviation markets.

## The scholarship is designed to achieve two core aims

- Ⓐ Nurture the next generation of aviation finance talent
- Ⓐ Develop women in aviation to broaden and enhance diversity within the industry

## Industry Partners

