Queen's University Belfast is leading a major new international initiative into modern cancer care medicine which was announced today in Washington D.C.

Researchers from Queen's University's world-class Centre for Cancer Research and Cell Biology (CCRCB) in partnership with researchers at the National Cancer Institute (NCI) in Washington are working together to deliver a £2.5M 4 year PhD programme in Precision Cancer Medicine.

Precision Cancer Medicine utilises our increased biological understanding of cancer to drive a more selective approach, ensuring patients receive therapeutically effective treatment based on their genetic make-up, while avoiding treatment-related side effects. CCRCB has established an innovative Academia-Industry-Healthcare Precision Cancer Medicine pipeline that is delivering new diagnostics and new therapies for cancer patients.

The innovative **Doctoral Training Programme in Precision Cancer Medicine** will initially provide 12 Queen's students with an unrivalled opportunity to perform cutting edge research at a world renowned cancer institution, positioning them as future leaders in an area that is revolutionising how we deliver 21st century medicine to cancer patients.

Vice-Chancellor of Queen's University Belfast, Professor Patrick Johnston said: "It is extremely exciting to be announcing this initiative here in Washington. It provides significant opportunities for students to be exposed to state-of-the-art technologies and receive quality mentorship from researchers both at the NCI and at Queen's and it is further evidence of how Queen's researchers are continuing to advance knowledge and change lives at a global level."

Dr Stephen Chanock, Chief, Division of Cancer Epidemiology and Genetics, NCI said: "We welcome this opportunity for Northern Ireland students to come to the National Institutes of Health. They will join with fellow graduate students from many parts of the world in an academic milieu that will encourage research excellence."

In this Doctoral Training Programme, PhD students will not only acquire specialist research skills, but will also be exposed to entrepreneurship, innovation and leadership training, as part of a collaboration between the School of Medicine, Dentistry and Biomedical Sciences, the Queen’s University Management School and the William J Clinton Leadership Institute at Queen’s.

“This cross faculty, interdisciplinary PhD Programme is an excellent example of the type of modern postgraduate degree that we are now offering to students attending Queen’s.” said Professor Margaret Topping, Dean of Queen’s Graduate School.

Professor David Waugh, Director, CCRCB said: “Doctoral training is a key component of our Precision Cancer Medicine Programme. Partnering with researchers at the NCI not only enhances the student experience, but also provides significant opportunities for future research collaborations with CCRCB scientists.”

Professor Mark Lawler, Associate Director of Postgraduate Studies at CCRCB and chief architect of the programme said: “This vibrant Doctoral Training Programme actively encourages excellence with impact, delivering a cadre of innovative, business-aware and socially responsible scientists who will compete successfully in the evolving global research and bio-industry communities. It provides Northern Ireland students with a “once-in-a-lifetime opportunity” to further their careers at a world famous cancer institution and deliver research with global impact.”