

Mission-based Performance Compact

2018-2021

between

Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology

and

The Higher Education Authority

Date: 06/02/2019

Context

This Compact is an agreement between the Higher Education Authority and Higher Education Institution and is the outcome of a process of strategic and performance dialogue between the two bodies.

The purpose of strategy and performance dialogue is to align the missions, strategies and profiles of individual higher education institutions with national priorities, and to agree strategic objective indicators of success against which institutional performance will be measured and funding allocated.

This Compact demonstrates a shared sense of the balance that is required between institutional autonomy and public accountability and a recognition that a diverse range of strong, autonomous institutions is essential for the overall higher education system to respond effectively to evolving and unpredictable societal needs.

The Compact recognises that Higher Education Institution is an autonomous institution with a distinctive mission, operating within a regional, national and international higher education environment.

The Compact recognises that there is a tension between providing a transparent framework of public accountability for performance in relation to funding, and risks of unintended behaviours related to measurements. It addresses this tension by requiring higher education institutions themselves to propose the qualitative and quantitative indicators against which their performance should be assessed by the Higher Education Authority.

The purpose of this Compact is to provide a strategic framework for the relationship between the Higher Education Authority and Higher Education Institution. It sets out how Higher Education Institution's mission and goals align with national goals for higher education.

This Compact also contributes to creating a transparent and accountable system of administration of State funding. To support this purpose, the Higher Education Authority and Higher Education Institution agree that this Compact will be published.

The principles of State funding support

The principles under which State funding for higher education is provided are:

- Institutional autonomy balanced with public accountability for high quality outcomes; and
- Core funding allocations that are predictable, fair and transparent, and that provide reasonable stability from year to year and in which funding follows the student.

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Where necessary, this includes additional material supplied by Higher Education Institution, including details of how objectives might be objectively verified. This appendix will include a quantitative data sets developed by the HEA and HEIs over the coming months. Institutions will be required to validate and finalise these institutional baselines by September.	

1. Establishment of the Compact

The Higher Education Authority and Higher Education Institution agree that:

- This Compact consists of this document and the accompanying data report on the performance
- The term of this Compact is from September 2018 to September 2021 unless terminated earlier by agreement

Higher Education Institution acknowledges that policy underlying some or all of this Compact is subject to review by the Minister for Education and Skills or by the Higher Education Authority from time to time. The Higher Education Authority and Higher Education Institution agree that if changes need to be made to the Compact because of such a review, the Higher Education Authority will notify Higher Education Institution of this in writing and will consult with Higher Education Institution accordingly.

2. Performance Funding Framework

Higher education Performance Funding will provide incentives for higher education institutions to improve overall performance in accordance with their own strategies and with their place in the overall system.

Performance Funding will be allocated by the HEA based on performance by reference to high level targets set out in the Framework. Targets must be agreed in strategy and performance dialogue with the HEA. The intention is both to improve the performance of the institution in key areas and to steer the institution closer to its agreed mission and profile and to its position in the overall higher education system. The degree of challenge and of realism inherent in the targets proposed will be evaluated and discussed in strategy and performance dialogue.

The Higher Education Authority and Higher Education Institution agree to review annually the effectiveness of implementation of the strategies and goals for achieving the agreed national and institution outcomes.

3 Mission and Strategy Statement

Higher Education Institution's mission and strategy sets out its values and aspirations, what it does and how it can best serve the interests of its students, staff and key stakeholders. The Higher Education Authority and Higher Education Institution acknowledge that Higher Education Institution's mission and strategy may evolve.

Higher Education Institution and the Higher Education Authority recognise that Higher Education Institution is an autonomous institution that is responsible for determining its mission, its aspirations and its strategies for their achievement.

However, the Higher Education Authority must ensure that together the missions and profiles of the different institutions will lead to overall coherence of the higher education system as a whole and to completeness, ensuring that national needs are being met and without unnecessary duplication.

Changes to the mission and strategy statement

The Higher Education Authority acknowledges that Higher Education Institution may adjust its mission and strategy from time to time. Higher Education Institution agrees that the following will be the subject of strategy and performance dialogue with the Higher Education Authority and may result in a change to the Compact:

- Any significant change that it proposes to make to its mission during the term of the Compact
- Any significant change that it intends to make to its activities that could affect either the content or the practical application of its mission.

Enter a short summary of your mission and strategy statement here along with a link to your institution's published strategy.

The Values of GMIT (Penultimate Draft)

The core values underpin the ethos of GMIT and they guide our thinking and actions. These are the values against which we judge ourselves. We are:

- Nurturing;
- Innovative;
- Impactful;
- Respectful;
- Egalitarian;
- and we act with Integrity.

The Vision of GMIT (Penultimate Draft)

GMIT will provide our students with a transformative university experience, empowering our graduates to fully contribute to the social, economic and cultural betterment of society.

We aim to invest in excellent applied learning, teaching and research environments reflecting the real needs of business, enterprise and the professions in our region.

We aim to be a preferred partner for research and an enterprise innovator that attracts, supports and encourages students and staff from all over the world enabling them to reach their full potential.

The Mission of GMIT (Penultimate Draft)

GMIT is a nurturing institution maintaining positive staff-student interactions that help to foster the capabilities and creativity of a diverse student and staff community in their intellectual, personal and social endeavours.

In providing students with this transformative university experience GMIT:

- Enables access and opportunity for a diverse student community (individual);
- Attracts, supports and encourages highly talented staff (individual);
- Maintains positive staff-student interactions (community);
- Invests in innovative research and applied teaching and learning (community);
- Collaborates with government, agencies, enterprise and the community (impact);
- Develops confident, professional, knowledgeable and skilled graduates equipped to contribute as global citizens (impact).

These six strategic objectives map into three strategic pillars of individual, community and impact. The Institute is finalising its own strategic position and strategy after extensive consultation on its mission, vision and values. The final version of the Strategic Plan will be presented to Governing Body at the December meeting.

Ambition to become a Technological University

The Institute is continuing to pursue the achievement of the criteria for designation as a Technological University together with the CUA partners of LYIT and IT Sligo. Recognising the challenging nature of achieving the TU criteria, the CUA will continue to commit significant resources to the support and development of applied research, invest in the enhancement of academic staff qualifications at doctoral level and in initiatives to support the student experience.

In 2018 the CUA has started to accelerate and deepen this collaborative development, through the work of four dedicated working groups, supported by seconded senior staff. The CUA Steering Group, Working Groups and CUA Personnel with external support are developing a distinctive TU vision and mission; planning to achieve the TU criteria; developing collaborative projects and initiatives; addressing issues of governance and organisation structure; and working towards quality enhancement and academic governance.

There is a consensus emerging amongst the GMIT Academic Council, GMIT Executive and Management Team, and the GMIT Governing Body that the Institute progress to designation as a Technological University. On the achievement of the metrics the Governing Body of GMIT will make a decision to submit for designation as a Technological University. The GMIT Governing Body remains open to engaging with all potential partners with a similar ambition to seek designation as a TU.

4. Development Plans and Key System Objectives

Section summary

Institutions are required to set out a description of their proposed approach to deliver on each of the six key system objectives, with reference to the national targets as set out in the Framework.

- Institutions should detail a maximum of two institutional strategic priorities under each of the six framework headings.
- Each strategic priority should be accompanied by a description of the strategic initiatives, currently being implemented, or to be implemented over the three-year timespan of the compact (academic years 2018–2021).
- These strategic initiatives should be described with reference to the high-level targets as set out in the framework.

Objective 1	Providing a strong talent pipeline combining knowledge, skills & employability which responds effectively to the needs of our enterprise, public service and community sectors, both nationally and regionally, and maintains Irish leadership in Europe for skill availability
Objective 2	Creating rich opportunities for national and international engagement which enhances the learning environment and delivers a strong bridge to enterprise and the wider community
Objective 3	Excellent research, development and innovation that has relevance, growing engagement with external partners and impact for the economy and society and strengthens our standing to become an Innovation Leader in Europe.
Objective 4	Significantly improves the equality of opportunity through Education and Training and recruits a student body that reflects the diversity and social mix of Ireland's population
Objective 5	Demonstrates consistent improvement in the quality of the learning environment with a close eye to international best practice through a strong focus on quality & academic excellence
Objective 6	Demonstrates consistent improvement in governance, leadership and operational excellence.

4.1 Key System Objective 1

Providing a strong talent pipeline combining knowledge, skills & employability which responds effectively to the needs of our enterprise, public service and community sectors, both nationally and regionally, and maintains Irish leadership in Europe for skill availability.

High Level Targets:

1. Increase to 10% the number of those aged 25-64 engaged in lifelong learning by 2020 and to 15% by 2025 National Skills Strategy Target; current base line is 6.7%;
2. Increase the numbers of HE entrants studying on a flexible basis by 25% by 2021 (baseline 2016/17 20% or 45,018 of total enrolments are flexible learners);
3. Increase tertiary attainment among 30-34 years olds to 60% by 2020 (52.9% 2016);
4. All students will have the opportunity to undertake a work placement or work-based project as part of their course by 2025 (baseline to be established and tracked);
5. Introduce Employability Statements for all disciplines in all HEIs by 2020 (baseline to be established and tracked);
6. Increase number of available Springboard places by 30% by 2021 in both universities and institutes of technology;
7. Double target to 9,000 annual new apprenticeship registrations by 2020 (over 4,500 in 2017) with 78 separate apprenticeships in place;
8. Increase the proportion of the higher education cohort studying a foreign language, in any capacity, as part of their course to 20% by 2026 (new baseline to be established and tracked);
9. Achievement of the targets in the new ICT Action Plan.

Strategy summary

Please provide details of a maximum of two institutional strategic priorities Higher Education Institution has identified under Key System Objective 1. Each strategic priority should include a description of the strategic initiatives, with reference to the above high-level targets, that Higher Education Institution is currently implementing or will implement over the three-year timespan of the compact (academic years 2018-2021).

This should reference the benchmarks by which the objectives have been set. Further supporting evidence, with regard to the means of verification, should be provided in the appendices.

Please note any external factors or assumptions that might affect institutional progress towards stated development objectives.

Strategy summary:

Strategic Priority 1.1: Employability

GMIT is and will continue to be proactive in developing the employability of all our graduates. Both the curriculum and teaching, learning and assessment strategies are designed with this as a core aim.

Employability is about knowledge and skills development, but is also about developing well-rounded graduates who are confident, resilient problem solvers, and lifelong learners.

GMIT Careers Service is available to all students and recent graduates of GMIT. It facilitates the transition from education to employment and engages in the recruitment process between students and potential employers. It runs an annual careers fair providing students with the opportunity to engage with a wide range of employers. The Careers Service produces a report annually as to the first destination of graduates. The most recent published report focusses on students who graduated in 2016. It found that 57% were in employment, 33% had proceeded onto further study, 2% were seeking employment and a further 2% were not available for work or further study, while the destination of 6% of graduates was unknown. Comparing figures with 2015, there was a significant increase in the number of students going into full-time employment from 51% in 2015 to 57% in 2016. This is in line with the national trend of growth in the demand for graduates from employers.

We actively engage with employers in designing our programmes. The close academic-industry collaboration that exists in GMIT is evidenced by the collaboration between RPS and the Department of Building and Civil Engineering. RPS is Ireland's leading planning, design, engineering, environmental and communications services consultancy. Two national awards in 2017 alone have resulted from the co-creation of a new programme: the Higher Diploma (Level 8) in Engineering in Building Information Modelling (BIM), using an innovative educational outreach approach.

This new level 8 BIM course aims to assist the construction sector in reviewing their business models and practices to facilitate a move away from adversarial relationships to more collaborative ones and to identify cost reduction and innovation opportunities within the supply chain to provide better value for money. The course is designed as a direct response to the skill and competency needs of the construction industry.

GMIT is committed to developing and enhancing the employability of graduates, and in doing so recognises that employability is an institute wide responsibility, encompassing a range of activities. GMIT targets the five employability themes as identified by Australia's Office for Teaching and Learning illustrated in figure 1:

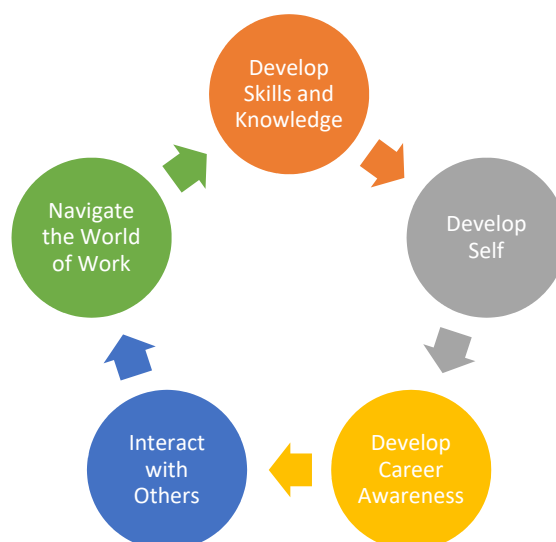


Figure 1. Employability Themes

Ireland's National Skills Strategy 2025 (2016)

states that people working in Ireland over the next ten years will need a mix of sectoral, cross-sectoral and transversal skills. Disciplines which were once distinct have now converged, and some disciplines such as ICT are important across many disciplines. Ireland's National Skills Strategy 2025 (2016) notes that the key cross sectoral skills identified by the EGFSN are ICT skills, data analytics, foreign language and cultural awareness, business skills (sales and marketing) and engineering. These skills will be considered during programmatic review and included in new programme development.

GMIT is proactive in ensuring that our programmes are current, relevant and sustainable. We engage in staff development to maintain lecturer knowledge of industry, the contemporary workplace, new methods of working, and modern technologies. Staff also need to be skilled in pedagogy and technology enhanced learning to facilitate the development of employable graduates.

We are committed to enhancing the relationships between GMIT and employers in the region to benefit our students. These relationships exist and will be nurtured through encouraging and facilitating staff involvement with external committees and organisations, through interactions involved in providing work placements and research consultancy for companies.

The National Employers Survey (2015) found that there was lower level of satisfaction for 'foreign language capability, entrepreneurial skills and business acumen/awareness' than for other workplace and personal attributes. GMIT offers, and will continue to offer languages across a large number of our degrees, particularly in the business discipline. The development of graduate entrepreneurial skills and business acumen/awareness is intended to be a distinguishing feature of GMIT graduates and will be audited during our forthcoming programmatic review. Appropriate amendments will be made to curriculum and learning, teaching and assessment strategies to ensure that these skills and characteristics are appropriately nurtured in our students.

The strategic initiative will therefore substantially address:

- High Level Targets 1,2 4 and 5 specified under Key System Objective 1.

It will also address:

- High Level Target 7 under Key System Objective 2; and
- High Level Target 1 under Key System Objective 3.

Measures will be implemented to:

- Provide an opportunity for every student to engage in work-based learning (WBL) on at least one occasion over a four-year programme;
- Develop further HE apprenticeship programmes in conjunction with industry partners;
- Enhance the 'Transition Out' module through the development of an Employability Toolkit covering a range of activities to enhance students' competency for employment;
- Engage with industry to develop and deliver relevant labour market activation programmes;
- Develop a strategy for enhancing CPD and Lifelong Learning Programme Provision;
- Introduce Employability Statements for all disciplines.

Success will be measured as:

- Increase the number of programmes with WBL or alternative following programmatic review;
- Centre for Graduate and Professional Development established with a 15% growth in part-time / flexible student numbers;
- Graduate Employment rate maintained as per the Graduate Destination Survey.

Key milestones for implementation of the initiative will be:

- Establishing a Centre for Graduate and Professional Development;
- CPD and LLL Programme Development strategy approved;
- GMIT is approved as a consortium member of a new HE apprenticeship;
- Development of an OER for the Transitions Out module;
- Discipline-based employability statements introduced by 2020.

Strategic Priority 1.2: Flexible / Blended Delivery

The motivations for flexible/blended delivery/e-learning include flexibility of learning provision; enhanced efficiency of classroom time; more and better learning opportunities for distance learning and resident students; a means of inter-institutional collaboration regionally, within the country and with other international higher education institutions.

The potential benefits of engaging in the digital revolution in education are many: students can acquire knowledge from sources other than their lecturers and institutions, often for free; it facilitates greater access to a bigger and more diverse student cohort as learning is no longer confined to the classroom; staff may share and create content with colleagues from different institutions, either nationally or internationally; and a much wider range of educational resources can be accessed.

Most staff use ICT to prepare their lectures. 21st century students expect more personalization, collaboration and better links between formal and informal learning, most of which is possible through digital supported learning. However, there is a lack of good quality educational content and applications in specific subjects.

The benefits of broadening access to education, wider use of new technology and open educational resources (OER) can contribute to alleviating costs for educational institutions and for students, especially among disadvantaged groups. The geographical region of the West/North-West (W/NW) cluster and Connacht Ulster Alliance (CUA) Technological University (TU) consortium contains the highest percentage of students from lower socio-economic backgrounds in the country. To address this inequity requires sustained investment in educational infrastructure and human resources.

GMIT plans to develop and publish a policy on online/blended/distributed learning that potentially could be adopted by other HEIs in the region. The policy will be aligned to QQI's *Statutory Quality Assurance guidelines for blended learning (2017)* and will include the objectives to:

- a. provide a framework for staff to engage with online or blended programme delivery;
- b. ensure compliance with GMIT Quality Assurance Framework in approval, delivery and monitoring of online or blended programme delivery;
- c. ensure that the learning environment has the necessary operational supports for online or blended programme delivery;
- d. ensure that the technical infrastructure is available for online or blended programme delivery;
- e. ensure that staff are provided with the necessary training and support for online or blended programme delivery according to the relevant academic standard for programmes and awards;
- f. provide guidance on instructional design for online or blended programme delivery;
- g. ensure the legal responsibilities of the Institute have been met for online or blended programme delivery.

Investing in and supporting this strategic priority will allow the Institute grow its part-time and flexible student numbers in line with the National Skills Strategy target. GMIT is currently performing well in this high-level target with 14% in this category compared to 6.7% nationally.

In addition to the above GMIT plans to establish a unit to support the development of postgraduate programme provision and student enrolment and has recently recruited a Director for Graduate and Professional Development to steer this initiative. The Director will be charged with developing a strategy and implementation plan for increasing the number of students on blended delivery programmes.

The strategic initiative will therefore substantially address:

- High Level Targets 1 and 2 specified under Key System Objective 1.

Measures will be implemented to:

- Enhance staff capacity to develop and deliver online/blended programmes including a suite of online resources to support staff.
- Enhance support available to staff developing and delivering online/blended programmes.
- Development of policies and guidelines related to the quality assurance of online/blended programmes.
-

Success will be measured as

- Centre for Graduate and Professional Development established with a 5% annual growth in part-time / flexible student numbers;

Key milestones for implementation of the initiative will be:

- Instructional Designer to be recruited at GMIT to support this initiative in 2018. Further Instructional Designers to be recruited to support growth in part-time / flexible student registrations;
- GMIT plans to develop and publish a policy on online/blended/distributed learning that potentially could be adopted by other HEIs in the region;
- When the policy is approved, an implementation plan will be developed and resourced for mainstreaming across the Institute.

4.2 Key System Objective 2

Creating rich opportunities for national and international engagement which enhances the learning environment and delivers a strong bridge to enterprise and the wider community.

High Level Targets:

1. Increase the output value of internationalisation to €1.15bn per annum by 2020 (International Education Strategy baseline €819m in 2014/15);
2. International students to represent 15% of full-time students by 2020. (In 2016/17, 11.6% of all fulltime students in HEA-funded higher education institutions were international students);
3. Progress towards Bologna target of at least 20% of those who graduate in 2020 to undertake a study or training period abroad;
4. Number of innovation vouchers project agreements with industry to increase by 12% by 2020 (487 in 2016);
5. Increase number of commercially relevant technologies (licences, options, assignments) by 20% by 2020 (163 in 2017);
6. Increase number of spin-outs established during the year by 40% by 2020 (Innovation 2020 target, 29 in 2014);
7. Improve Employer satisfaction rates with HEI collaboration with enterprise by 25% as tracked in National Employer Survey (companies < 50 employees – 55% rated collaboration as good/very good; companies with 51 – 250 employees – 60% and companies > 251+ employees – 75%);
8. Participation in Erasmus+ in Higher Education and other Study and Work Placements Abroad to reach 4,400 by 2022 (3,135 in 2016) in accordance with international strategy.

Strategy summary

Please provide details of a maximum of two institutional strategic priorities Higher Education Institution has identified under Key System Objective 2. Each strategic priority should include a description of the strategic initiatives, with reference to the above high-level targets, that Higher Education Institution is currently implementing or will implement over the three-year timespan of the compact (academic years 2018-2021).

This should reference the benchmarks by which the objectives have been set. Further supporting evidence, with regard to the means of verification, should be provided in the appendices.

Please note any external factors or assumptions that might affect institutional progress towards stated development objectives.

Strategy summary:

Strategic Priority 2.1: Internationalisation

GMIT made a strategic decision in early 2016 to evaluate the role of International engagement across the Institute. This review considered the resources available to support and develop a sustainable, long term vision for International Engagement while recognising past experiences, potential opportunities and future ambitions.

The Institute will strategically plan and action an Institute wide Erasmus + programme, which will surpass any previous arrangements in addition to addressing any fallout from Brexit. A series of Institute wide events engaging staff, students and researchers with new and ambitious opportunities will promote the benefits for engagement and will also align with ambitions to Internationalise curricula and campuses. .

GMIT is becoming more internationally oriented and has benefited through a small increase in the outward mobility of faculty and students however more needs to be done between now and 2021.

This programme will specifically address high level target 8. As outlined in the International higher education strategy a review of access to international mobility for all students will form part of this action plan. Mechanisms to incentivise staff to better engage with EU and non-EU partners will be developed and monitored. As the Institute continues to improve its financial performance surplus funds to support this activity will be made available. The development of joint projects and partnerships will also support this high-level target and engaging all stakeholders will assist in reaching targets agreed.

Some of this activity will also support key objective 1 high level target 4 where the International Engagement Team will work with schools and staff to identify European and International opportunities and potential work placement partners to support long term quality engagements as outlined in the International HE strategy 'Irish Education, Globally Connected'.

The strategic initiative will therefore substantially address:

- High Level Target 2 specified under Key System Objective 2.

Success will be measured by:

- An increase in the number of International students by 5% annually;
- The achievement of the International Education Mark (IEM).

Measures will be implemented to:

- develop and implement an Internationalisation plan to support the Institute strategic plan.
- increase study abroad and training mobility opportunities for students, staff and researchers focusing on the potential fallout of Brexit and development of new partnerships;
- connecting our Schools and Faculty with European and global partners to enhance employment opportunities;
- internationalise the curricula;
- establish long term global partnerships as part of the overall Institute Strategic Plan, for example with partners in the US and Malaysia;
- Develop a CUA International Strategy.

Parallel Measures of success:

- Further develop an Institute wide Work Placement Policy and Implementation Plan;
- Develop opportunities for GMIT students to gain an international exchange experience as part of their studies;

4.3 Key System Objective 3

Excellent research, development and innovation that has relevance, growing engagement with external partners and impact for the economy and society and strengthens our standing to become an innovation Leader in Europe.

High Level Targets:

1. Increase of 500 new postgraduate research enrolments in disciplines aligned to enterprise and other national needs by 2020. (baseline 2,235 in 2014/15);
2. Increase by 30% the number of funded postdoctoral positions in disciplines aligned to enterprise and other national needs by 2020. (Innovation 2020 target);
3. Double overall Higher Education research income derived from industry to €48m (Innovation 2020 target - €24m in 2014);
4. Increase research projects between enterprise and the public research system by 20% by 2020 (2014 Baseline is 878);
5. Secure HEI Horizon 2020 target of €550m in funding by 2020 (over €200m secured by end of 2016);
6. Increase applied research in the Institutes of technology.

Strategy summary

Please provide details of a maximum of two institutional strategic priorities Higher Education Institution has identified under Key System Objective 3. Each strategic priority should include a description of the strategic initiatives, with reference to the above high-level targets, that Higher Education Institution is currently implementing or will implement over the three-year timespan of the compact (academic years 2018-2021).

This should reference the benchmarks by which the objectives have been set. Further supporting evidence, with regard to the means of verification, should be provided in the appendices.

Please note any external factors or assumptions that might affect institutional progress towards stated development objectives.

Strategy summary:

Strategic Priority 3.1: Graduate and Professional Development Programmes

GMIT will establish a new function for Graduate and Professional Development to innovatively and strategically lead the development, delivery and quality assurance of the Institute's postgraduate and accredited Professional Development (PD) programmes. A newly appointed Director for Graduate and Professional Development will direct postgraduate programme development Institute-wide, and will be responsible for ensuring GMIT's postgraduate and PD programmes meet the:

- Standards stipulated by QQI and other external professional bodies;
- Needs of stakeholders including students, society, enterprise and the region; and,
- QA standards required at GMIT, and implemented by its academic Programme Boards.

GMIT's Graduate and Professional Development function will deliver supports to Programme Boards to expedite their development of postgraduate and PD programmes. The Graduate and Professional Development function will liaise with Programme Boards, and external stakeholders to maximise postgraduate programme relevance and co-funding opportunities. This will be achieved through interaction with European and international bodies, state and semi-state agencies, industrial and civic stakeholders. A key priority is the development of industry-based postgraduate and PD programmes that meet changing labour market and stakeholder needs, whilst also satisfying the requirements of Technological University designation criteria

The strategic initiative will therefore substantially address:

- High Level Targets 1 and 6 specified under Key System Objective 3.

It will also address, at postgraduate level:

- High Level Targets 1, 2, 3, and 4 specified under Key System Objective 1; and,
- High Level Target 7 specified under Key System Objective 2;

Success will be measured as substantial increases in GMIT's enrolment of:

- Postgraduate research students, as specified by the Technological Universities Act 2018
- Taught postgraduate students;
- Students on programmes delivered on a flexible basis.

Parallel measures of success will include increases in the:

- Suite of GMIT's postgraduate programme offerings;
- Number of programmes operated in collaboration with industry and external agencies;
- Number of R,D&I projects conducted with industry and external agencies.

Key milestones for implementation of the Graduate and Professional Development programme initiative will be:

- Appointment of the Director for Graduate and Professional Development;
- Implementation of a strategic plan for postgraduate programme development;
- Development of existing, new and trans-disciplinary postgraduate programmes;
- Establishment of a successful Department of Graduate Studies and Professional Development;

Strategic Priority 3.2: Enhanced Research Collaboration with Enterprise

GMIT's primary structure for research collaboration with enterprise is via its Medical and Engineering Technologies (MET) Technology Gateway, co-funded by Enterprise Ireland. The MET Technology Gateway's interdisciplinary supports provide cutting edge, industry focussed solutions for the MedTech and general manufacturing sectors. By actively engaging with clinical and industry partners, the MET Technology Gateway produces both scientific knowledge and technology outputs across a range of sectoral specialisations. These engagements enable enterprises to develop technology solutions to meet market needs, providing client companies with more seamless and cost effective design improvements, and assessments of their new products. In addition to helping companies accelerate their product development, MET enables companies to generate the new knowledge and competitive differentiation required to access International markets.

GMIT will utilise the MET Gateway as a key instrument in the delivery of this strategic initiative, building on MET success to date by continued promotion of the Gateway's strengths and expansion of its offerings to other segments of the Life Sciences sector. GMIT will also capitalise on the opportunities afforded by the current €3 million extension to its Dublin Road enterprise Innovation Hub, co-funded by Enterprise Ireland. The iHub building extension facilitates GMIT specialisation of its enterprise development supports for the MedTech sector. This facility, and its synergy with the MET Technology

Gateway, better enables GMIT to accelerate health technology innovation, development and intellectual property commercialisation opportunities with industry.

The strategic initiative will therefore substantially address:

- High Level Targets 3, 4 and 6 specified under Key System Objective 3.

It will also address:

- High Level Targets 4, 5 and 6 specified under Key System Objective 2.

Success will be measured as substantial increases in the:

- Number of R,D&I projects conducted with industry;
- Total Value of R,D&I projects conducted with industry;

Parallel measures of success will include increases in the:

- Number of researchers engaged in research collaboration with enterprise;
- Number of postgraduate research projects operating in collaboration with enterprise;
- Number of innovation voucher projects completed with industry;
- Amount of formal activity (e.g. licences, options, assignments, spin-out companies) implemented to commercialise relevant technologies.

Key milestones for this initiative will be:

- Appointment of additional externally funded business development staff to the MET Gateway;
- Appointment to the MET industry steering group of new members representing other segments of the Life Sciences sector;
- Commencement of construction of the iHub building extension;
- Delivery of events for other segments of the Life Sciences sector showcasing the expanded capabilities of the MET Gateway and iHub;
- Completion and opening of the iHub building extension.

4.4 Key System Objective 4

Significantly improve the equality of opportunity through education and training and recruits a student body that reflects the diversity and social mix of Ireland's population.

High Level Targets:

1. All HEIs will have a Student Success Strategy in place by 2020 which will embed whole-of-HEI approaches to institutional access strategies;
2. Implement new data initiatives and indicators to support the development and implementation of evidenced based National Plans for Equity of Access by 2019;
3. Implement the strands of the Programme for Access to Third Level (PATH) Fund to support the implementation of the National Plan for Equity of Access 2015-2019;
4. Sustain the expansion from underrepresented groups with 2,000 additional enrolments from socioeconomically disadvantaged groups and 1,000 from Further education access programmes;
5. Increase in enrolments from DEIS schools by ensuring that every such school will be participating in a HEI led access programme;
6. Completion rates for students from disadvantaged cohorts will be specifically targeted for improvement.

Strategy summary

Please provide details of a maximum of two institutional strategic priorities Higher Education Institution has identified under Key System Objective 4. Each strategic priority should include a description of the strategic initiatives, with reference to the above high-level targets, that Higher Education Institution is currently implementing or will implement over the three-year timespan of the compact (academic years 2018-2021).

This should reference the benchmarks by which the objectives have been set. Further supporting evidence, with regard to the means of verification, should be provided in the appendices.

Please note any external factors or assumptions that might affect institutional progress towards stated development objectives.

Strategy summary:

Strategic Priority 4.1: Widening Access

GMIT continues to review, revise and improve our access initiatives in order to achieve the specific strategic priority of widening participation. Facilitating access through alternative entry routes is a core part of this work. However, we have also made significant changes to our post entry support services. It is our intention to align our proposed new strategies with the principles outlined by AHEAD.

Scholarships

GMIT is operating in a competitive marketplace and, like other colleges, uses its scholarship scheme as part of a strategy to widen participation, to facilitate equality of access, and to attract more students. There are four main categories of scholarship on offer, academic, mature, access, and sport. Under access there are also two memorial scholarships. The sports' scholarships are administered by the Students' Union.

The Programme for Access to Higher Education (PATH II & III)

Consistent with the vision, goals and target groups in the National Plan for Equity of Access to Higher Education (NAP) 2015-19, the PATH II 1916 Bursary Fund will provide financial support to students identified by regional clusters of higher education institutions as being most economically disadvantaged from specified target groups, and it will complement existing student supports and access initiatives.

The W/ N-W Cluster was successful in attracting 25 scholarships per year until 2019/20. The allocations between the four HEIs is agreed and recruitment along HEA guidelines has concluded for the 2017/18 and 2018/19 academic years.

Strand 3 of PATH is intended to provide funding to support the objectives associated with Goal 5 in the National Access Plan, namely to develop regional and community partnership strategies for increasing access to higher education by specified groups. The funding is intended to facilitate the attraction and retention of an additional 2,000 new undergraduate students from the target groups identified in the National Access Plan over the next 3 years.

The Cluster has been successful in obtaining funding for its project for PATH III entitled: Attract-Transition-Succeed (ATS). The ATS methodology addresses the full lifecycle of access targeting the pre-entry, transition and success phases of higher education by working in partnership with communities. The proposal consists of six work packages, some of which will be completed collectively within the cluster. Details of GMIT's specific project - work package 4: The ATS "Pathway to College" are included in the attached appendix.

Joint Access Programme (GMIT + NUIG)

In the mid-1990s NUIG and GMIT were both concerned about disadvantage in the region, and the need to provide enhanced tertiary educational opportunities for mature students. It was recognised that provision of an educational response to meet regional needs would require integrated efforts on the part of both NUI Galway and GMIT to ensure reasonable educational provision and opportunities for the wider community. Both Institutions were planning pilots targeting access and mature students, so it was proposed that a jointly developed Access programme would be commenced for those wishing to pursue Science and Engineering programmes at either Institution. This was commenced in 1998, and subsequently a programme targeting people who wished to pursue business programmes was developed.

Latterly, the management and delivery of these programmes became predominantly based in NUIG. Both institutes are anxious to reinstate the joint nature of the programme, and this has resulted in the Access Programmes Office (NUI Galway) and the Department of Business, Humanities and Technology (Mayo Campus, GMIT) working on the redevelopment and validation of two access programmes, in Business and Science, Technology and Engineering, to be delivered jointly in Galway and Mayo. The programmes aim to provide mature students with the opportunity to prepare, personally and academically, for an undergraduate course of study. The programmes are designed to meet the learning needs of the adult student and to provide individual attention and assistance where appropriate. A core aim of the programmes is to provide an access route to higher education programmes in NUI Galway and GMIT for students who have successfully completed the access programme, who otherwise may not have the necessary entry requirements.

Further Education Access and Progression Opportunities

Equity of access to higher education is a core objective nationally. The vision for the Higher Education Authority's National Plan for Equity of Access to Higher Education 2015-19 is to ensure that the student body entering, participating in and completing higher education at all levels reflects the diversity and social mix of Ireland's population. This is a vision shared by GMIT and the local Education and Training Boards (ETB). Therefore, GMIT has signed memorandums of understanding with both Galway and Roscommon ETB and Mayo, Sligo, Leitrim ETB, to endorse cooperation and explore further areas of collaboration. The first measure being undertaken under these new agreements is the mapping of advanced progression opportunities for level 6 Further Education graduates, where appropriate. Discussions have been held with both ETBs as to how current and future programmes can be aligned, and how all parties can work to improve the transition experience of students. Initial talks have also taken place with Limerick Clare ETB. Subject to legislation we would welcome involvement in validating programmes across the NFQ.

The strategic initiative will therefore substantially address:

- High Level Targets 1, 3, 4, 5 and 6 specified under Key System Objective 4.

Success will be measured as:

- Increases in the number of Further Education students accessing progression opportunities. GMIT will actively target FE L6 graduates for advanced entry to cognate higher education programmes;
- Sustaining and Supporting the current suite of scholarships, including the new PATH II 1916 Bursaries;
- 10% increase annually in advanced entry enrolments from the FE sector.

Parallel measures of success include:

- The development of a HE Foundation programme for students in target disadvantaged cohorts.

Key milestones for this initiative will be:

- Completion of MOUs and mapping of advanced progression opportunities with all three ETBs – Galway Roscommon, Mayo Sligo Leitrim and Limerick Clare;
- GMIT will participate in The Programme for Access to Higher Education (PATH II & III) as part of the regional cluster;
- GMIT will launch a new joint Access Programme with NUIG;

Strategic Priority 4.2: Supporting the student experience

Literacy and Numeracy Initiative

Numeracy and Literacy for Learning and Life (2011) published by the Department of Education and Skills is the national strategy to improve literacy and numeracy among children and young people in the education system covering the years 2011 to 2020. The strategy document emphasises the importance of numeracy and literacy skills in ensuring that young people participate fully in the education system, live satisfying and rewarding lives, and participate as active and informed citizens in our society.

A section of the document specifically deals with how providers of Initial Teacher Education (ITE) programmes are to incorporate numeracy and literacy strategies into their teaching practice and to develop competencies and resources for staff and students (Pg. 30-31).

In 2017 and 2018, the HEA has granted GMIT a fund of €30,000 per annum to support initiatives in this area within the Teacher Education programme. A range of areas will be targeted to support the development of numeracy and literacy skills that would help deliver improvements as envisaged by the strategy:

- Series of workshops from experts in the field to supplement existing curriculum;
- Identify our own students (with dyslexia/dyscalculia) and allocate additional resources (small group tutorials/one to one tuition) to support their own learning and help them develop strategies for their own School Placements;
- Expand the library resource to add breadth and depth to specialist texts in N&L;
- Expand journal subscriptions, e.g. *Journal of Scientific and Applied research, Teaching in Higher Education*;
- Support for staff development in this area;
- Develop initiatives under the Teacher Educators Together Network with NUIG.

In addition to the above, it is proposed to use some of this funding to support a Masters student through the GMIT RISE Scholarship scheme to identify specific topics (in the JC and LC syllabi) that could deliver measurable improvements in numeracy and literacy. This would include a review of the technology subjects (TG, MTW, DCG and Construction Studies) to identify where students encounter the most difficulty with respect to N&L and the development of resources to support numeracy and literacy in the classroom. This research will be carried out in conjunction with NUIG under the Teacher Educators Together Network.

HEAR and DARE Schemes

GMIT is engaging for the first time in 2019/2020 in both the HEAR and DARE schemes. The Disability Access Route to Education (DARE) and Higher Education Access Route (HEAR) are higher education admissions schemes, which aim to achieve equality of access to higher education in Ireland for two under-represented cohorts identified in the National Access Plan 2015-2019. DARE offers reduced points places to applicants, who, as a result of having a disability, have experienced additional educational challenges in second level education. HEAR applicants must meet a range of financial, social and cultural indicators of socio-economic disadvantage to be eligible for reduced points places and extra college support.

GMIT has successfully ran its own supplementary access scheme, similar to the HEAR/DARE scheme where we admitted applicants on a reduced points basis having the minimum entry requirements and delved further to look at those applicants that didn't have the minimum entry requirements and determined if their disability was a factor in them not obtaining the minimum entry requirements. We also assessed those from socio-economic disadvantaged backgrounds and awarded reduced points places for eligible applicants.

In 2017, GMIT decided to participate in the HEAR/DARE schemes for a number of reasons, mainly to make it easier for the applicants in that they only have to apply to one scheme going forward. We also

want to increase our applications to both schemes and to give those applicants the best chance at third level education. We will continue to assess those that don't have the minimum entry requirements as a separate admissions route as we have done previously.

There has been a progressive increase in applications to both the HEAR/DARE schemes in recent years, with the growth in numbers from 2015 to 2016 up 20% for DARE and increased by 4.1% for HEAR.

In GMIT in 2015 we had a total of 70 places accepted through our supplementary disability access scheme and 14 places from Socio-disadvantaged backgrounds, in 2016 we had a total of 79 places for our supplementary disability access scheme and 8 places from Socio disadvantaged backgrounds. We are hoping to grow these figures arising from participation in the HEAR/DARE schemes.

Access and Disability Support Unit

At GMIT, we believe in equality of access and participation for all students. We provide a range of supports and services for students with physical and sensory disabilities and specific learning difficulties.

The Access and Disability Officer works with a team of professionals, including Learning Support Lecturers and Tutors, Academic Tutors, Educational Support Workers and In Class and Electronic Note takers to assess the needs of students and to provide the appropriate supports. The Access and Disability Support Unit also offers support to students in the use of assistive technology and provides students with a range of electronic devices appropriate to their needs (e.g. laptops and iPads) along with a bank of assistive technology software to support their learning.

GMIT also provides reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities and specific learning difficulties in accordance with its *Policy on the Provision of Reasonable Accommodations for Examinations and Assessments*.

Over the timeline of the compact we intend to benchmark the structure of our Access and Disability Support unit against comparable sized institutions.

The strategic initiative will therefore substantially address:

- High Level Targets 1, 3, 4, 5 and 6 specified under Key System Objective 4.

Success will be measured as:

- Increases in the number of students entering through the HEAR and DARE schemes.
- Remain in top percentile for FSD funding
- Continue to exceed national average for new entrants from target SEGs.

Parallel measures of success include:

- A number of support initiatives in Literacy and Numeracy will be delivered linked to the teacher education programme;
- MSc student enrolled on a literacy and numeracy research initiative;
- Benchmarking of Access and Disability Support Unit complete and plan developed based on the findings.

Key milestones for this initiative will be:

- HEAR and DARE Schemes will be employed from September 2019;
- A GMIT Student Success Strategy will be in place by 2020.

4.5 Key System Objective 5

Demonstrate consistent improvement in the quality of the learning environment with a close eye to international best practice through a strong focus on quality & academic excellence.

High Level Targets:

1. Implement from 2018 Continuous Professional Development Framework for all academic staff in all HEIs;
2. All HEIs to engage in International benchmarking by 2020;
3. Improve problematic non-progression rates by 10% (overall baseline of 15% for 2014/15);
4. Improve non-progression rates in STEM disciplines by 10% (differing discipline baselines);
5. All HEIs to have in place policies for digital teaching and learning by 2019;
6. The HEA will develop guidelines to steer the process of total quality management, in line with best international practice.

Strategy summary

Please provide details of a maximum of two institutional strategic priorities Higher Education Institution has identified under Key System Objective 5. Each strategic priority should include a description of the strategic initiatives, with reference to the above high-level targets, that Higher Education Institution is currently implementing or will implement over the three-year timespan of the compact (academic years 2018-2021).

This should reference the benchmarks by which the objectives have been set. Further supporting evidence, with regard to the means of verification, should be provided in the appendices.

Please note any external factors or assumptions that might affect institutional progress towards stated development objectives.

Strategic Priority 5.1: Knowledge Sharing

For most institutions of higher education, the desire to learn from each other and to share aspects of good practice is almost as old as the university concept.

The development of benchmarking in higher education, arising as it does from other initiatives concerning both the assurance and enhancement of quality and the drive to increase the effectiveness of management. Benchmarking within higher education seeks to answer some of the following questions:

- how well is the university or college doing compared to others?
- how good, and in what areas, does the institution we want to be?
- across the institution as a whole which part of it is doing best, and how do they do it?
- how can institutions introduce into their own practice what is done well in others?
- how does an institution improve its performance while retaining its unique features?
- and - more competitively - in the longer term how an institution might become better than the best in the context of its own mission?

EUA Institute Evaluation Programme

In embarking upon the EUA IEP evaluation (2015), GMIT had as its objectives, the following:

- To demonstrate confidence in its Quality Assurance Framework by engaging in this Institute Evaluation Programme (IEP) by a European agency, the EUA;
- To allow a more focused perspective on programmes of learning during the programmatic review by having the strategic element separated out into the IEP;
- To enable the Institute to reflect on its strategic plan and how well it was being implemented through the SWOT process;
- To provide confidence to our stakeholders, including QQI, that quality assurance enhancement is systematically prioritised in GMIT;
- To serve as preparation for the next institutional review and to further demonstrate to QQI that preparatory work has commenced for the next institutional review;
- To provide a model for other institutions, including our Connacht Ulster Alliance Partners, Cluster partners and collaborators, to follow depending on the perceived benefit of the evaluation;
- To provide a forum and an opportunity to discuss strategic issues in a relaxed and open manner.

The evaluation is guided by four key questions, which are based on a “fitness for (and of) purpose” approach:

- What is the institution trying to do?
- How is the institution trying to do it?
- How does the institution know it works?
- How does the institution change in order to improve?

The EUA concluded its evaluation by stating that:

“GMIT is a very self-aware institution and this is reflected in the SER. Emphasis should now be put on implementation with clear priorities, milestones and effectiveness checks based on evidence. GMIT has experienced an extremely turbulent period since 2008, particularly in terms of the external environment and the impact of the government’s austerity measures.”

A total of 26 recommendations are included in the report and these formed the basis of an implementation plan. Due to the Institute’s positive experience with the EUA IEP a decision was taken for GMIT to become a member of the EUA as this will likely lead to more benchmarking opportunities.

U-Multirank

U-Multirank is a multidimensional, user-driven approach to international ranking of higher education institutions. It compares the performances of higher education institutions in the five broad dimensions of activity: (1) teaching and learning, (2) research, (3) knowledge transfer, (4) international orientation and (5) regional engagement. The U-Multirank web tool enables comparisons at the level of the institution as a whole and at the level of specific fields of study. Based on empirical data U-Multirank compares institutions with similar institutional profiles (‘like-with-like’) and allows users to develop their own personalised rankings by selecting indicators in terms of their own preferences.

GMIT has participated in U-MultiRank for a number of years with a view to benchmarking its activities internationally against institutions with a similar profile. It participates in the institution level survey annually and in the surveys relating to specific fields of study where relevant.

Irish Survey of Student Engagement (ISSE)

GMIT has increased its response rate to the ISSE survey year on year since the survey was piloted in 2013, achieving a response rate of 33% in 2018. Results from the 2017 survey, the latest available, show GMIT scoring better than the IOT average in 7 of the 9 indicators.

The Institute has developed a data model to allow the visualisation of the ISSE data with a view to facilitating access across the college community. An over-arching goal in the visualisation is to facilitate the flow of information from high-level indicators to detailed responses to individual survey

questions. The data is presented in a number of ways including Indicator plots benchmarking academic units against each other and against the picture nationally with similar comparisons for individual survey questions.

A pivot table showing free text comments has also been developed.

Schools and Functions within GMIT are encouraged to use ISSE data, inter alia:

- To benchmark against other academic units within GMIT and all IOTs and HEIs nationally;
- To highlight good practice that might be shared and to learn from each other to improve engagement with students across the Institute;
- To inform programme development and programme review;
- To highlight areas where students are being challenged and may need additional supports;
- To review trends over time to see where actions have led to more positive responses from students;
- To provide information that might be useful in implementing additional retention measures.

HEInnovate

HEInnovate is an initiative of the European Commission, DG Education and Culture and the OECD LEED Forum, and supported by a panel of six independent experts. HEInnovate is a free self-assessment tool for all types of higher education institution. It allows you to assess your institution using a number of statements related to its entrepreneurial activities, including leadership, staffing and links with business.

HEInnovate is intended for higher education institutions (Universities, University Colleges, Polytechnics etc) who are interested in assessing themselves against a number of statements related to the entrepreneurial and innovative nature of their higher education environment.

GMIT completed this assessment during the lifecycle of the last compact and plans to conduct this assessment a further time during the lifecycle of this compact.

The strategic initiative will therefore substantially address:

- High Level Target 2 specified under Key System Objective 5.

It will also address:

- Underpin the achievement of High Level Targets under all Key System Objectives.

Success will be measured by:

- EUA benchmarking project identified;
- Using the U-Multirank tool to benchmark the institution with other participating HEIs within Ireland. Identify 3 European/international universities with a similar profile to GMIT; conduct a benchmarking exercise, and identify collaborative opportunities;
- Use ISSE data to benchmark GMIT student engagement with the IoT sector.

Parallel measures of success:

- To interrogate and identify area(s) for the institute to focus on produced by the ISSE survey, such as the “You said we did” project piloted in academic year 2017-2018.
- Continue to benchmark the entrepreneurial culture of the institution by participating in the HEInnovate framework to embed a spirit of entrepreneurship in the curricula.

Key milestones for this initiative will be:

- Securing EUA membership and identifying an appropriate benchmarking project.

Strategic Priority 5.2: Learning, Teaching and Assessment (LTA)

As a student-centred institution, GMIT aims to provide an optimal learning environment providing our students with a transformative university experience. Students and their success is core to our mission. Our institutional culture provides an open and supportive student environment, and our teaching is focussed on meeting the intellectual, personal and social needs of students.

GMIT is committed to engaging students as partners in programme design, monitoring and evaluation. Students are represented on all Programme Boards, and Programmatic Review panels. GMIT is involved in the National Student Engagement Programme (NStEP), and aims to embed the GMIT version of this programme (Step Forward) across all campuses.

We are aware that our student body, and their requirements are changing. We have increased cohorts of students who would not have attended college in the past, and we are proactive in amending our teaching delivery and support services to ensure that all students have the opportunity to succeed. In addition to services focused on students with special needs, we have taken a number of measures to increase student engagement, retention and success. All students may access supports such as the Academic Writing Centre, Maths Learning Centre and information literacy workshops. Our newly appointed Teaching & Learning Officer coordinates a range of workshops and accredited modules/programmes to enhance lecturer pedagogy. Increasingly technology is integrated into both teaching and learning, as our digital native students expect this, and it offers many benefits to students.

Our staff are committed to supporting students to success, and to developing and delivering programmes which prepare students for the world of work and to become lifelong learners. Our Staff Development Office supports staff reskilling and upskilling through funding formal qualifications, and provides a range of continuing professional development workshops across all campuses.

The maintenance and further development of a quality culture requires a shared vision, a willingness to question what we do and how we do it, a clear Quality Assurance and Enhancement Framework (QAEF), open communication and the provision of information, a focus on improvement which requires self-evaluation, feedback and learning from our mistakes.

New staff induction and annual quality assurance roadshows help disseminate the key components of our Quality Assurance Framework. Innovative practice in teaching, learning and assessment is showcased internally annually, and best practice is awarded through the President's Award for Teaching Excellence.

We involve external experts in many aspects of our operations including assessment, new programme design, programmatic review and institutional review. We proactively engage in international benchmarking e.g. EUA Institutional Evaluation Programme, U-Multirank.

We are transparent in relation to our quality assurance and enhancement processes, publishing all reports online. Internally, all academic policies and procedures are published and accessible to staff.

In 2017, GMIT scored higher than the Institute of Technology average for all ISSE indices with the exception of Reflective and Integrative Learning and Learning Strategies. These are key areas that we aim to improve upon.

While student progression rates are increasing marginally, this is a key focus for the Institute. A range of pre-entry and entry initiatives have been undertaken including pre-arrival student engagement, extended induction, and a transition module in first year on all programmes. Learning and learner support includes staff development, staff showcases, a peer mentoring scheme, and a range of academic and pastoral support services.

The strategic initiative will therefore substantially address:

- High Level Target 1, 3, 4, 5 and 6 specified under Key System Objective 5.

It will also address:

- Underpin the achievement of High Level Targets under all Key System Objectives.

Success will be measured as:

- Remaining above sector average in relation to ISSE indices.
- Incorporating findings from ISSE survey into programme review and design.
- Developing and supporting of a culture of continuous professional development;
- Building digital capacity and develop a technology enhanced learning environment;
- Increase the number of flexible and remote learners;
- Improve retention;
- Increase in staff capability and capacity to teach online/remotely;
- Increase in staff capability and capacity to teach and supervise postgraduate students.

Parallel measures of success will include increases in the:

- Pilot student involvement in co-creation of curricula.

Key milestones for this initiative will be:

- New LTA strategy approved. Implementation plan developed and resourced;
- Facilitating all new staff to pursue elements of the Masters in Learning & Teaching.

4.6 Key System Objective 6

Demonstrate consistent improvement in governance, leadership and operational excellence.

High Level Targets:

1. Implementation of the 2018 Higher Education Gender Equality Task Force Action Plan and the 2016 Expert Group recommendations;
2. HEIs to have attained an Athena SWAN bronze institutional award by 2019 (TUs within 3 years of establishment);
3. All HEIs to submit their annual Governance Statements to HEA on time;
4. 100% compliance by HEIs with public procurement rules;
5. Draft annual financial statements to be submitted by HEIs to C&AG within stipulated C&AG guidelines;
6. Full transparency in HEI financial statements about accounting for Trusts and Foundations;
7. 100% compliance by HEIs with public pay policy;
8. 100% compliance by HEIs with public sector numbers controls;
9. Implementation of recommendations from rolling governance reviews;
10. HEA will develop individual compacts with the HEIs which reflect the overall ambitions of the System Performance Framework and local/regional opportunities;
11. Institutional strategic compacts will be assessed by a panel of experts, including international participants, to assess their coherence and capacity for delivery.

Strategy summary

Please provide details of a maximum of two institutional strategic priorities Higher Education Institution has identified under Key System Objective 6. Each strategic priority should include a description of the strategic initiatives, with reference to the above high-level targets, that Higher Education Institution is currently implementing or will implement over the three-year timespan of the compact (academic years 2018-2021).

This should reference the benchmarks by which the objectives have been set. Further supporting evidence, with regard to the means of verification, should be provided in the appendices.

Please note any external factors or assumptions that might affect institutional progress towards stated development objectives.

Strategic Priority 6.1: Institutional Governance

GMIT is committed to implementing and maintaining the highest standards of corporate governance which protects our core values. Our Core values underpin the ethos of GMIT and they guide our thinking and actions. These are the values against which we judge ourselves. We are:

- Nurturing;
- Innovative;
- Impactful;
- Respectful;
- Egalitarian;
- and we act with Integrity.

“Corporate governance involves a set of relationships between a company’s management, its board, its shareholders and other stakeholders. Corporate governance also provides the structure through which the objectives of the company are set, and the means of obtaining those objectives and monitoring performance are determined. Good corporate governance should provide proper incentives for the board and management to pursue objectives that are in the interests of the company and its shareholders and should facilitate effective monitoring”. (OECD, 2004., P11)

GMIT is currently conducting a gap analysis between the current governance practices in the Institute and the requirements of the ‘THEA Code of Governance for Institutes of Technology’ January 2018, from which, GMIT will develop and implement a plan to comply with the code. This governance framework includes:

1. Role of the Governing Body
2. Role of the Chairperson
3. Role of Members of the Governing Body
4. Governing Body Effectiveness
5. Codes of Conduct, Ethics in Public Office, Additional Disclosure of Interests by Governing Body Members and Protected Disclosures.
6. Business and Financial Reporting
7. Risk Management, Internal Control, Internal Audit and Audit and Risk Committee
8. Relations with Oireachtas, Minister and Department of Education and Skills, and HEA
9. Remuneration and Superannuation

GMIT will also review and update all existing policies over the three years of the compact.

“Good governance requires that the notion of risk be embedded into an entity’s culture, with governing body members, together with managers at all levels, recognising that risk management is integral to all of their activities and must be regarded as a continuous process. It is about being risk aware rather than risk averse” The Institutional Framework: Good Governance in the Public Sector (July 2014)) DPER.

GMIT will implement a risk management framework that will embed risk awareness into the culture of the Institute and all of its activities.

The output will be a risk management framework that adopts a holistic approach to address all elements of risk management including:

- Culture
- Governance
- Methodology
- Processes
- Infrastructure

The outcome will be an organisational transformation whereby risk awareness and risk management will be embedded in the culture, governance and management of GMIT.

The strategic initiative will therefore substantially address:

- High Level Targets 3, 4, 5, 7, 8 and 9 specified under Key System Objective 6.

It will also:

- Underpin the achievement of High Level Targets under all Key System Objectives.

Success will be measured as follows:

Good corporate governance will be assessed across a number of governance indicators. These indicators will be grouped into the following broad categories:

- Board effectiveness;
- Audit and risk / external accountability;
- Relations with funders;
- Stakeholder relations;
- A strategic plan which is recognised by all stakeholders as being both desirable and achievable with measureable objectives.

Parallel measures of success will include:

- A risk appetite statement which enables reasoned and reasonable risk taking;
- A risk management policy which is understood by governing body members and managers at all levels;
- A risk register which becomes a living document.

Strategic Priority 6.2: Gender Equality

“Gender equality is more than a good in itself. It is a precondition for meeting the challenge of reducing poverty, promoting sustainable development and building good governance”. – Kofi Annan.

As ‘Equality and Inclusion’ is one of the core values of GMIT we commit ourselves to the implementation of the 2018 Higher Education Gender Equality Task Force Action Plan.

GMIT commits itself to contributing to the national vision articulated by the Expert Group for the HEA National Review on Gender Equality in Irish Higher Education Institutions which is:

“By investing in gender equality, Irish higher education institutions will maximise their pursuit of excellence and successfully meet the many social, economic and cultural challenges of the future”.

GMIT will develop and implement a strategic plan that will embed gender awareness and foster a culture of gender equality throughout the Institute.

The output will be a clear action plan and measurable targets to achieve each of the ‘21 recommendations which will include:

- Governance;
- Leadership;
- Recruitment and Promotion;
- Family friendly work arrangements.

The outcome will be that GMIT will be recognised as having delivered on the national vision for gender equality by visibly demonstrating that 'Equality and Inclusion' is a core value of the Institute.

The strategic initiative will therefore substantially address:

- High Level Targets 1 and 2 specified under Key System Objective 6.

It will also:

- Underpin the achievement of High Level Targets under all Key System Objectives.

Success will be measured as follows:

- The Appointment of a VP with responsibility for Gender Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (potentially as the first joint appointment with a Connacht Ulster Alliance (CUA) partner);
- Achievement of timeline targets for the implementation of the 21 recommendations of the 'Report of the Expert Group HEA National Review of Gender Equality in Irish Higher Education Institutions, June 2016'
- We will have established a clear 'roadmap' and achieved the milestones for the attainment of an Athena SWAN 'bronze' Institutional award for GMIT on its 50th Anniversary in 2022.

Parallel measures of success will include:

- The embedding of gender awareness among all stakeholders in GMIT;
- The development of a culture of gender equality in the governance, management and operations of GMIT;
- More inclusive and better decision making.

6. Annual Compliance Statement

The HEA will take into account ongoing compliance with important foundational requirements such as:

- Statutory quality assurance processes
- Providing an annual statement required under their Code of Governance and with all other requirements of that Code
- Providing details of satisfactory financial outturn, budget and financial plan
- Employment control framework
- Data returns to the HEA.

Where significant or urgent governance or compliance issues arise, such as unacceptable financial deficit, weakness in financial plans or major omissions or delays in returns, an institution may be deemed not to have met the minimum requirements of strategy and performance dialogue.

7. Agreement

To be completed following the conclusion of the strategy and performance dialogue process.

The HEA and Higher Education Institution agree that the mission, planned profile and targets, as set out in the foregoing sections of this Compact, are consistent with the objectives set for the higher education system and are appropriate to the place of Higher Education Institution within the system.

Signed:



Date:

14/2/2019

Chief Executive, Higher Education Authority

Signed:



Date:

7-02-2019

Deputising

President, Higher Education Institution

(GMIT)

Signed:



Date:

7th FEB 2019

Chair, Governing Body, Higher Education Institution

(GMIT)

Performance Compact 2018 - 2021

	Objective 1									Objective 2								Objective 3						Objective 4						Objective 5						Objective 6												
High Level Targets	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11		
Strategic Initiatives																																																
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6.1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
6.2	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

- 1.1 = Employability
- 1.2 = Flexible / Blended Delivery
- 2.1 = Internationalisation
- 3.1 = Graduate and Professional Development Programme
- 3.2 = Enhanced Research Collaboration with Enterprise
- 4.1 = Widening Access
- 4.2 = Supporting the Student Experience
- 5.1 = Knowledge Sharing
- 5.2 = Learning, Teaching and Assessment (LTA)
- 6.1 = Institutional Governance
- 6.2 = Gender Equality

Institution Objectives and Performance Indicators

Key Strategic Initiative 1: Providing a strong talent pipeline combining knowledge, skills & employability which responds effectively to the needs of our enterprise, public service and community sectors, both nationally and regionally, and maintains Irish leadership in Europe for skills availability.						
Institution Objective	Critical Success Factors	Performance Indicators	Baseline 2017-18	Interim Target 2018-19	Interim Target 2019-20	Final Target 2020-21
Strategic Priority 1.1: Employability	A. Programmes with an applied focus.	A1. Engagement with industry throughout the programme lifecycle.	A1. Industry input into all programme design and approval.	A1. Academic Units review effectiveness of industry input as part of unit strategic review.	A1. Programme Boards consult with industry to enhance programmes as integral part of programmatic review	A1. Enhanced evidence base for participation of enterprise in all aspects of programme development and review
		A2. New HE apprenticeship programmes.	A2. Lead on one apprenticeship programme.	A2. Identify new target area for HE apprenticeship.	A2. Make a submission for new HE apprenticeship as part of consortium.	A2. Progress approval process of apprenticeship.
		A3. Centre for Graduate and Professional Development	A3. None.	A3. Centre established with Director appointed.	A3. Reconfiguration of Lifelong Learning area with Centre Strategy approved.	A3. Increase number of postgraduate students to 378 FTE
		A4. Flexible learning students.	A4. 1085 (499 FTE)	A4. Increase by 5%.	A4. Further Increase by 5%.	A4. Further Increase by 5%.
	B. Professional practice and employability.	B1. Professional Practice Experience	B1. 43 programmes.	B1. Include in Programmatic Review Guidelines for Programme Boards	B1. Develop a range of resources to support professional practice.	B1. 86 programmes.
		B2. Employability statements	B2. Zero	B2. Institute level statements.	B2. Statements for all disciplines.	B2. Statements for Institute and all disciplines.
Strategic Priority 1.2: Flexible/Blended Delivery	C. Blended and online learning.	C1. QA policies for online and blended learning.	C1. Zero	C1. Develop and publish a policy on online/blended learning. C1. Workgroups established to undertake measures required to implement the Online/Blended Policy.	C1. Identify gaps in policies. C1. Resource allocation model for online/blended provision approved	C1. QA for online and blended learning embedded across QAF.
		C2. CPD for Online provision	C2. Features as part of annual Staff Development.	C2. Training needs analysis and provision of relevant workshops. C2. Recruitment of Instructional Designer.	C2. Development of online resources to support development and delivery of online/blended programmes. Provision of relevant workshops.	C2. Development of online resources to support development and delivery of online/blended programmes. Provision of relevant workshops.

Institution Objective	Critical Success Factors	Performance Indicators	Baseline 2017-18	Interim Target 2018-19	Interim Target 2019-20	Final Target 2020-21
		C3. Online and Blended programmes	C3. Four Programmes	C3. Development/conversion of 2 additional programmes to online/blended delivery mode.	C3. Development/conversion of 2 additional programmes to online/blended delivery mode.	C3. Development/conversion of 2 additional programmes to online/blended delivery mode.
		C4. Supporting online student experience.	B3. Minimal	C4. Identification of resources/supports available and gaps in support of online students.	C4. Development of standard interface for online students.	C4. Development of standardised induction resources for online students.

Key Strategic Initiative 2: International strategy aligned to Institute strategy which encompasses inter alia European programmes, international recruitment and internationalising the curricula.

Institution Objective	Critical Success Factors	Performance Indicators	Baseline 2017-18	Interim Target 2018-19	Interim Target 2019-20	Final Target 2020-21
Strategic Priority 2.1: Internationalisation	A. International strategy aligned to Institute strategy which encompasses inter alia European programmes, international recruitment and internationalising the curricula.	A. International strategy approved.	A. International pillar from previous strategic plan	A1. All schools/functions areas will engage in the Self Evaluation Review process during this period. School/Function managers will use this review to consider how internationalisation can be embedded in departments/units International Strategy approved.	A1. Roll out of implementation plan. A1. Preparation for IEM submission	IEM achieved.
	B. CUA International strategy in place.	B. CUA international strategy approved	B. Discussions around development of a joint CUA strategy.	B. Working group from three institutions established.	B. CUA International strategy approved to inform TU submission	B. Implementation of the CUA international strategy
	C. Number of international students	No. of international students	C. 199 (173 FTE)	C. Increase by 5%	C. Further increase by 5%	C. Further increase by 5%

Key Strategic Initiative 3: Excellent research, development and innovation that has relevance, growing engagement with external partners and impact for the economy and society and strengthens our standing to become an Innovation Leader in Europe.

Institution Objective	Critical Success Factors	Performance Indicators	Baseline 2017-18	Interim Target 2018-19	Interim Target 2019-20	Final Target 2020-21
Strategic Priority 3.1: Graduate and Professional Development Programme	A. Graduate and Professional Development Programme	A1. Enrolment numbers of level 9 & 10 research students, as specified by the Technological Universities Act 2018	A1. 71 (67 FTE)	A1. 76 (71 FTE)	A1. 95 (89 FTE)	A1. 120 (113 FTE)
		A2. Enrolment of taught postgraduate programme students	A2. 219 FTE	A2. 233 FTE	A2. 249	A2. 265 FTE
		A3. Enrolment numbers of students on programmes delivered on a flexible basis.	A3. Reported under Objective 1, A4.			
Strategic Initiative 3.2: Enhanced Research Collaboration with Enterprise	B. Enhanced Research Collaboration with Enterprise	B1. Number of R,D&I projects conducted with industry	B1. 38	B1. Increase by 15% per annum, i.e. to: 44	B1. Increase by 15% per annum, i.e. to: 50	B1. Increase by 15% per annum, i.e. to: 58
		B2. Total Value of R,D&I projects conducted with industry	B2. €216,3500	B2. Increase by ~11% per annum, i.e. to: €2,400,000	B2. Increase by ~11% per annum, i.e. to: €2,670,000	B2. Increase by ~11% per annum, i.e. to: €2,970,000

Key Strategic Initiative 4: Significantly improve the equality of opportunity through Education and Training and recruits a student body that reflects the diversity and social mix of Ireland's population.

Institution Objective	Critical Success Factors	Performance Indicators	Baseline 2017-18	Interim Target 2018-19	Interim Target 2019-20	Final Target 2020-21
Strategic Priority 4.1: Widening Access	A. Widening Access	A1. Increases in the number of Further Education students accessing progression opportunities. GMIT will actively target FE L6 graduates for advanced entry to cognate higher education programmes	A1. MOUs signed with 2 ETBs and advanced entry opportunities identified for colleges within these ETBs. 53 students advanced entry from FE	A1. MOU signed with additional ETB and advanced entry opportunities identified for colleges within this ETB. 10% increase students advanced entry from FE	A1. Annual Meeting with ETBs to identify further progression opportunities and cooperative projects. 10% increase students advanced entry from FE	A1. Annual Meeting with ETBs to identify further progression opportunities and cooperative projects. 10% increase students advanced entry from FE
		A2 Implementation of PATH III	A2. No mentoring for non-traditional entry (Matures, HEAR, DARE, GMIT access scheme) No pre-entry access programme for Leaving Certificate Applied, Maths Foundation and English Foundation.	A2. Recruit a PATH III coordinator. Develop a mentoring programme for non-traditional entry students, and train staff, student and graduate volunteers. Establish pre-entry access programme for second level students. Develop a foundation programme for school leavers who have undertaken the Leaving Certificate Applied or Foundation Maths/English.	A2. Admit 140 students through HEAR and DARE scheme. Mentor 70 non-traditional students. Deliver pre-entry access programme to 120 Leaving Certificate Applied, Maths Foundation and English Foundation students. Offer foundation programme to target school leavers.	A2. Admit 180 students through HEAR and DARE scheme. Mentor 70 non-traditional students. Deliver pre-entry access programme to 120 Leaving Certificate Applied, Maths Foundation and English Foundation students. Offer a foundation programme to target school leavers.
		A3. Continue to exceed the national average of new entrants from target SEGs.	A3. 33% (2016-17)	A3. 30% +	A3. 30% +	A3. 30% +
		A4. Remain in the top quartile for FSD funding	A4. Top quartile	A4. Top quartile	A4. Top quartile	A4. Top quartile

Institution Objective	Critical Success Factors	Performance Indicators	Baseline 2017-18	Interim Target 2018-19	Interim Target 2019-20	Final Target 2020-21
Strategic Initiative 4.2: Supporting the Student Experience	Supporting the Student Experience	B. Support our diverse student body	B. Wide range of academic and non-academic student supports available.	B. Benchmarking of Access & Disability Support Unit PATH III initiatives above	B. Development of Student Success Strategy PATH III initiatives above	B. Implementation of Student Success Strategy PATH III initiatives above

Key Strategic Initiative 5: Demonstrate consistent improvement in the quality of the learning environment with a close eye to international best practice through a strong focus on quality and academic excellence.						
Institution Objective	Critical Success Factors	Performance Indicators	Baseline 2017-18	Interim Target 2018-19	Interim Target 2019-20	Final Target 2020-21
Strategic Priority 5.1: Knowledge Sharing	A. Benchmarking Initiatives	A1. EUA benchmarking project identified;	A1. Not currently members but have engaged with IEP programme previously.	A1. Application to become member of EUA	A1. Project identified in pursuit of TU ambition.	A1. Engagement with project
		A2. Using the U-Multirank tool to benchmark the institution with other participating HEIs within Ireland. Identify 3 European/international universities with a similar profile to GMIT; conduct a benchmarking exercise, and identify collaborative opportunities;	A2. Completing surveys annually	A2. Improve participation in surveys	A2. Identify 2 relevant HEIs to benchmark against the 5 dimensions of the survey	A2. Engage with HEIs identified from the benchmarking exercise
Strategic Priority 5.2: Learning, Teaching & Assessment	B. Learning, Teaching & Assessment	B. Use of ISSE data to drive enhancement of T&L	B. ISSE visualisation available to all staff Remain above sector average in the following indices: Effective Teaching Practices; Student/Faculty Interactions; Quality of Interactions.	B. Use ISSE data to inform academic unit review and plan Remain above sector average	B. Use ISSE data to inform programmatic review Remain above sector average	B. Implement changes post programmatic review Remain above sector average

Institution Objective	Critical Success Factors	Performance Indicators	Baseline 2017-18	Interim Target 2018-19	Interim Target 2019-20	Final Target 2020-21
	C. Learning Environment	C. Quality of learning space. Space allocation per student per campus.	<p>C1. Capital Investment Plan approved - see appendix</p> <p>C2. 7.3 metres squared per student at Galway campuses.</p> <p>C3. IT labs on average 10 years old.</p>	<p>C1. Projected €0.75m devolved grant for fabric upgrade. €2m secured for capital infrastructure investment on Mayo campus.</p> <p>C2. Progression of STEM building on Dublin Road Campus</p> <p>C3. Commence IT investment plan</p>	<p>C1. Capital investment secured for CCAM.</p> <p>C2. Progression of STEM building on Dublin Road Campus. Progression of the iHub extension, Dublin Road Campus, to completion. Progress amenity plans in terms of sports and recreation for the user cohort, across all campuses.</p> <p>C3. Ongoing implementation of IT plan</p>	<p>C1. Space quality standards (heating, ventilation, insulation) to be aligned with 2020 standards.</p> <p>C2. Progression of STEM building on Dublin Road Campus.</p> <p>C3. IT investment plan fully implemented.</p>

Key Strategic Objective 6: Demonstrates consistent improvement in governance, leadership and operational excellence.

Institution Objective	Critical Success Factors	Performance Indicators	Baseline 2017-18	Interim Target 2018-19	Interim Target 2019-20	Final Target 2020-21
Strategic Priority 6.1: Institutional Governance	A. Effective Governance	A1. Approval of Institute Strategic Plan and Implementation of Plan	A1. Draft Strategic Plan	A1. Approval of Institute Strategic Plan and development of supporting Implementation Plans	A1. Implementation of the Institute Strategic Plan in accordance with the timelines outlined therein.	A1. Implementation of the Institute Strategic Plan in accordance with the timelines outlined therein.
		A2. Full compliance with Code of Corporate Governance 2018	A2. Established key gaps in compliance with Code of Corporate Governance 2018	A2. Implement the plan to resolve all key gaps identified in compliance with the Code of Corporate Governance 2018. A2. External assessment of Governing Body to establish a baseline of Board Effectiveness and clearly identifiable areas for improvement	A2. Internal assessment of implementation of recommendations based on the external assessment.	A2. New Governing Body April 2020 will do an internal review of Board Effectiveness.
		A3. Risk Management Framework which is understood by Governing Body and Management at all levels and becomes a living document. Have a risk management culture embedded in the organisation.	A3. Approved Risk Management Policy including Risk Appetite Statement	A3. Audit and Risk Committee undertake a review of committee effectiveness. A3. GB annual review of Internal controls and risk management and implementation of recommendations A3. Training of governing body members and managers at all levels in risk management including risk appetite statement, risk register completion and risk management policy. A3. Confirmation in the annual report that the Governing Body has carried out an assessment of the Institutes principal risks and the associated mitigation measures or strategies A3. Review and update of Risk Registers in each semester. A3. KPI's on risk provided to the Audit and Risk committee once per semester detailing: The most significant risks and their trajectory, Significant control failures/improvements identified during the semester and updates on mitigating actions within the Institute Risk register which have missed their deadlines. A3. Annual Review and update Risk Management Policy including Risk Appetite Statement.	A3. Audit and Risk Committee undertake a review of committee effectiveness and implement any improvements required. A3. GB annual review of Internal controls and risk management and implementation of recommendations A3. Confirmation in the annual report that the Governing Body has carried out an assessment of the Institutes principal risks and the associated mitigation measures or strategies A3. Review and update of Risk Registers in each semester. A3. KPI's on risk provided to the Audit and Risk committee once per semester detailing: The most significant risks and their trajectory, Significant control failures/improvements identified during the semester and updates on mitigating actions within the Institute Risk register which have missed their deadlines. A3. Annual Review and update Risk Management Policy including Risk Appetite Statement. A3. External review of effectiveness of risk mgt process and implementation of recommendations. Training of governing body members and managers at all levels in risk management including risk appetite statement, risk register completion and risk management policy.	A3. Audit and Risk Committee undertake a review of committee effectiveness and implement any improvements required. A3. GB annual review of Internal controls and risk management and implementation of recommendations A3. Confirmation in the annual report that the Governing Body has carried out an assessment of the Institutes principal risks and the associated mitigation measures or strategies A3. Review and update of Risk Registers in each semester. A3. KPI's on risk provided to the Audit and Risk committee once per semester detailing: The most significant risks and their trajectory, Significant control failures/improvements identified during the semester and updates on mitigating actions within the Institute Risk register which have missed their deadlines. A3. Annual Review and update Risk Management Policy including Risk Appetite Statement. A3. External review of effectiveness of risk mgt process and implementation of recommendations. Training of governing body members and managers at all levels in risk management including risk appetite statement, risk register completion and risk management policy.

Institution Objective	Critical Success Factors	Performance Indicators	Baseline 2017-18	Interim Target 2018-19	Interim Target 2019-20	Final Target 2020-21
Strategic Priority 6.2: Gender Equality	B. Gender Equality	B1. Appointment of appropriate resources to implement the 21 recommendations of the 'Report of the Expert Group HEA National Review of Gender Equality in Irish HEIs' and to ensure that GMIT foster a culture of gender equality	B1. VP for EDI arrangements in place. Executive committee for gender equality established.	B1. Appointment of appropriate staff resource to achieve strategic objectives set out in the Institute and HR Strategic Plans. B1. Have an approved plan in place for the implementation of the 21 recommendations of the 'Report of the Expert Group HEA National Review of Gender Equality in Irish Higher Education Institutions June 2016'. B1. Implementation of the following 'Expert Group HEA National Review of Gender Equality in Irish Higher Education Institutions June 2016' recommendations: (Note: numbers relate to recommendations numbered on IoT sector response to the Expert Group Report) 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3 Policy development for implementation during next president and vice-president recruitment processes 1.4 Development of gender equality policy (including recruitment) and provision of training related to the implementation of this. 1.5 Appointment of VP with responsibility for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion. 1.8 Establishment of gender equality sub-committee of GB, with minutes published. 1.10 Establishment of cross-institutional working group for structure of family leave. 1.12 Gender dimension considered as part of review of academic units	B1. Implementation of the following 'Expert Group HEA National Review of Gender Equality in Irish Higher Education Institutions June 2016' recommendations: (Note: numbers relate to recommendations numbered on IoT sector response to the Expert Group Report) 1.6 Gender balance on key decision making bodies. 1.9 Establishment of gender equality forum 1.11 Measures to implement gender awareness among staff implemented 1.12 Gender dimension considered as part of Programmatic Review process 1.13 Training for research staff on integrating gender dimension 1.14 Workload allocation models are transparent and monitored annually for gender bias. 1.17 Mandatory quotas introduced for academic promotion . 1.19 Positive action interventions for non-academic staff	B1. Implementation of the following 'Expert Group HEA National Review of Gender Equality in Irish Higher Education Institutions June 2016' recommendations: (Note: numbers relate to recommendations numbered on IoT sector response to the Expert Group Report) 1.7 40% of chairs of key decision-making bodies be of each gender 1.13 Gender dimension integrated into all research content. 1.14 Workload allocation models are transparent and monitored annually for gender bias. 1.20 Greater gender balance at all career levels.
		B2. We will include in our strategic plan a clear strategy to achieve our vision of an Athena SWAN 'bronze' Institutional award for GMIT on its 50th Anniversary	B2. Draft Strategic Plan includes objective to achieve Athena SWAN bronze designation	B2. Approved institute strategic plan in place with commitment to Athena SWAN. An approved HR Strategic Plan with commitment to Athena SWAN. A clear roadmap for the attainment of an Athena SWAN 'Bronze' Institutional award for GMIT.	B2. Submit application for achievement of Athena SWAN bronze designation	B2. Achievement of Athena SWAN Bronze

Appendices

We GMIT include the following appendices with our performance compact.

List the appendices here:

<input type="checkbox"/>	Appendix 1: Providing a strong talent pipeline combining knowledge, skills & employability which responds effectively to the needs of our enterprise, public service and community sectors, both nationally and regionally, and maintains Irish leadership in Europe for skill availability
<input type="checkbox"/>	Appendix 2: Creating rich opportunities for national and international engagement which enhances the learning environment and delivers a strong bridge to enterprise and the wider community
<input type="checkbox"/>	Appendix 3: Excellent research, development and innovation that has relevance, growing engagement with external partners and impact for the economy and society and strengthens our standing to become an Innovation Leader in Europe
<input type="checkbox"/>	Appendix 4: Significantly improves the equality of opportunity through Education and Training and recruits a student body that reflects the diversity and social mix of Ireland's population <i>Cluster submission for PATH III call: "Attract – Transition – Succeed"</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Appendix 5: Demonstrates consistent improvement in the quality of the learning environment with a close eye to international best practice through a strong focus on quality & academic excellence
<input type="checkbox"/>	Appendix 6: Demonstrates consistent improvement in governance, leadership and operational excellence
<input type="checkbox"/>	Appendix 7: Institutional quantitative data return (September 2018)

ATTRACT - TRANSITION - SUCCEED

West/ North-West Path Three Submission

A Collaborative proposal from the West/North-West Higher Education Cluster submitted under the PATH 3, National Plan for Equity of Access to Higher Education



NUI Galway
OĒ Gaillimh



GMIT

INSTITIÚD TEICNEOLAÍOCHTA NA GAILLIMHE-MARSH EO
GALWAY-MAYO INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY



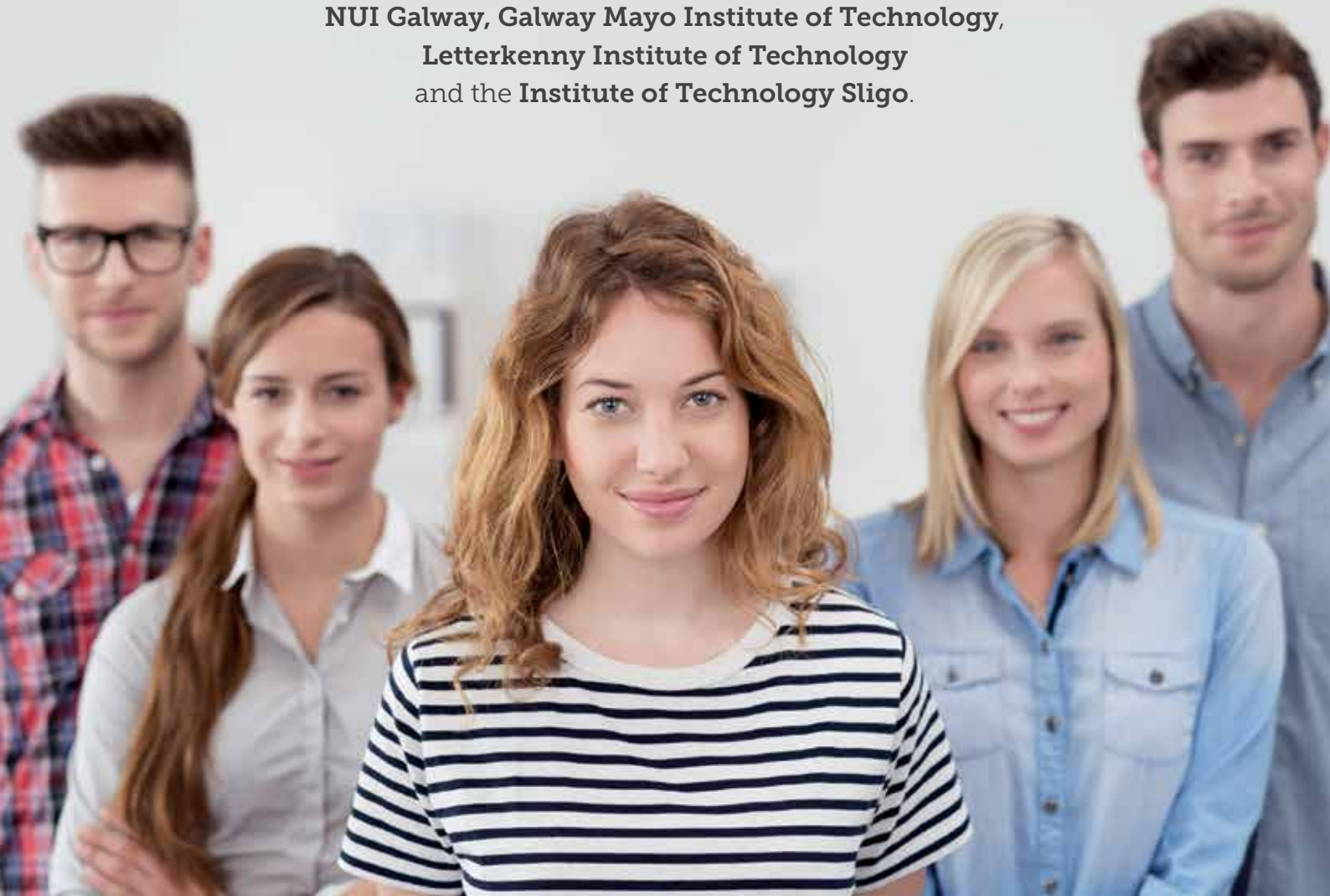
lyit

Institiúid Teicneolaíochta
Leitir Ceanáin
Letterkenny Institute
of Technology

IT Sligo

An Institiúid Teicneolaíochta, Sligo

The West/ North-West Cluster of Higher Education institutions comprises
NUI Galway, Galway Mayo Institute of Technology,
Letterkenny Institute of Technology
and the **Institute of Technology Sligo.**





Introduction

The National Plan for Equity of Access to Higher Education 2015-2019 seeks to address the underrepresentation of particular groups in Irish higher education. (HEA, 2015) Priority goal five challenges regional higher education clusters with the development of “regional and community partnership strategies for increasing access to higher education with a particular focus on mentoring” (HEA, 2015).

The Attract- Transition- Succeed (ATS)

(ATS) project addresses priority goal five with the development of an innovative, inclusive and sustainable model of regional access in order to increase the diversity and social mix of the student population within the higher education institutions (HEIs) in the West and North-West of Ireland. (Appendix One)

The ATS methodology addresses the full lifecycle of access targeting the **pre-entry, transition and success** (including retention) phases of higher education by working in partnership with communities. ATS recognises the complexity of access to higher education and the challenges of improving progression and retention rates for students

from under-represented socio-economic groups across our region. Our proposed approach also recognises the diversity of under-represented groups in Irish Higher Education and proposes a range of initiatives to widen successful participation.

ATS will target the following disadvantaged groups:

- Socio economic groups that have low participation in higher education (SEG)
- First time, mature student entrants
- Students with a disability
- Irish travellers
- Further Education award holders (FET)
- Lone parents
- Ethnic minorities (including programme refugees)
- Part-time learners

Partnership Approach

The ATS model embodies the commitment of the West/ North-West cluster to leverage the expertise and innovative capacity within and beyond our HEIs to enhance the full cycle of access to higher education in our region by specified groups. In so doing the cluster partners are committed to developing stronger regional and community partnership, working closely with our regional stakeholders to ensure that:

The student body entering, participating in and completing higher education in each of the higher education institutions in the West and North-West reflects the diversity and social mix of Ireland's population.

(West/ North-West Higher Education Cluster Equity of Access Policy 2017-2021) Appendix Two

ATS builds on the work referred to in the Higher Education Authority's Mission Based Performance Compacts, in particular regional programme mapping, student pathways and the mutual recognition of access programmes for entry into higher education.

The six elements of the ATS proposal are as follows:

Work package 1: Mentoring for ATS (Cross cluster with LYIT led liaison to ATS Steering Group)

Work package 2: Breaking the SEAL for ATS (NUIG lead)

Work package 3: Reach for ATS (LYIT lead)

Work package 4: The ATS Pathway to College (GMIT lead)

Work package 5: ATS Enhancement and Sustainability (Cross cluster with GMIT led liaison to ATS Steering Group)

Work package 6: ATS Monitoring (Cross cluster with NUIG led liaison to ATS Steering Group)



ATS Proposal

Mentoring for ATS – Work package 1

Mentoring for ATS proposes an innovative approach to support students across the cluster institutions through access and transition to success. Each cluster HEI will work in partnership with community organisations and collaborate across our region enhancing the mentoring experience for mentors and mentees.

ATS proposes multiple approaches to mentoring, tailored to the needs of each target group, with the following goals:

- > To alleviate the effects of prior educational disadvantage.
- > To foster peer learning by bringing students from diverse backgrounds together in ways that support learning.
- > To assist students to succeed to their full capacity.

Mentoring for Access - building social and cultural capital and raising awareness of the value of higher education.

Working with Donegal ETB, LYIT will provide **peer mentoring** to 600 Leaving Certificate Applied students, Foundation Maths and English students and students with disabilities in DEIs school in County Donegal. The peer mentoring will be provided by students who have progressed from LYIT's access programmes. The mentors will be supported with tailored training and their participation may be recognised through LYIT's accredited special purpose award in Civic Engagement.

IT Sligo will work with the Cranmore Regeneration Education Working Group which seeks to support young people with socio-economic disadvantage. **Formal mentoring** will be provided by a trained mentor programme co-ordinator to 90 young people in community and school settings. The young people are currently students in Ballinode Community College, Mercy College and Summerhill School.

NUI Galway will provide **peer mentoring** to 400 participants on the Breaking the SEAL programme: senior cycle students in DEIS Schools and NUI Galway Access Linked schools and ethnic minorities linked to Galway City and County Partnership's activities with ethnic minorities including Irish Travellers.

GMIT will work with the GRETB, MSLETB, DEIS schools and youth centres in Galway and Mayo to provide **formal mentoring** to 360 SEG students studying the leaving certificate applied through the Get Ready Education programme. The programme is designed to support transition to third level by focusing on critical and creative thinking, digital literacy and communication, responsible citizenship and reflection. The mentoring within this programme will be delivered by teaching and professional services staff.



Mentoring for Transition and Success - preparing students for higher education and supporting progression.

NUI Galway will provide **peer mentoring** to 900 first year access and HEAR students, first time low income mature entrants, students progressing from FET, part time students, Irish Travellers, lone parents, ethnic minority students and participants of 'Breaking the SEAL'. These students will have entered NUI Galway through one of the alternative pathways: Pre-Tertiary Access Programmes Pathway; QQI/FET pathway; HEAR Pathway; Mature Student Direct Pathway or directly through the CAO. The peer mentors will themselves be non-traditional entrants, access programme alumni and participants of Breaking the SEAL. Training will be provided through 'Student Connect', an existing NUI Galway peer mentoring programme. Mentor participation may be recognised through the university's ALIVE programme.

GMIT will offer **formal mentoring** for 200 non-traditional entry route students. These

students will be will from SEG, lone parents, first time mature and Irish traveller groups. The trained mentors will be drawn from GMIT academic and professional services staff, GMIT graduates and final year students. Mentors and mentees will receive a certificate of completion and may be eligible to apply for accreditation under the existing civic engagement module.

LYIT will offer **peer mentoring** for 100 students from ethnic minority groups to provide culturally appropriate support as they progress through their studies. Mentoring will be provided by students drawn from relevant LYIT SU clubs and societies such as the Afro Caribbean Society and the International Society. **Peer mentoring** training will be provided by LYIT in partnership with the Donegal Intercultural Forum.



ATS Proposal

Breaking the SEAL – Work package 2

Initial development of critical transitional skills required for engagement with third level institutions.

The Breaking the SEAL (Student Engagement with Archives for Learning) pilot was developed by NUI Galway as an innovative approach to the development of collaboration, critical engagement, academic writing and digital skills. This work package will extend the pilot to target groups within the National Access Plan.

Initial work using this methodology focused on the history research project which is a compulsory element of the history leaving certificate. Participants identified their chosen research topics, visited NUI Galway library archives and participated in three workshops: selection of primary and secondary sources; interpretation of selected source; and academic writing skills. Further support was provided during visits to each school and the provision of a digital template for the development of their academic poster presentation. During the school visit students used iPads, provided by the university, to develop their academic poster content and refine their image selections. Participants' families and friends were invited onto campus for a formal academic poster session.

Breaking the SEAL and Attract

This work package extends the Breaking the SEAL pilot to target access groups by working with DEIS school students and NUI Galway Access Linked School students in senior cycle and ethnic minority groups linked to Galway City and County Partnership activities. Breaking the SEAL for ATS will have the following components:

- Supported pedagogical skills development related to Leaving Certificate History Research Project (senior cycle DEIS) or a research project based on own history (Ethnic Minority Groups)
- University based study camps (senior cycle DEIS and NUI Galway Access Linked Schools)
- Community based study camps (Ethnic Minority Groups)
- NUIG will provide library and research support
- Poster Exhibition of all students' work at NUI Galway Hardiman library and Galway City Library with launch for family and friends
- Publication of student research in both digital and hardcopy

NUI Galway will build on its current work with DEIS schools and NUI Galway Access Linked Schools through its 'University Trail Activities' and with Galway City and County Partnership's to provide a unique opportunity for over 300 students from DEIS schools and NUI Galway Access Linked Schools and 100 participants from Ethnic Minority groups including Irish travellers, those in direct provision and refugees.

Breaking the SEAL and Transition

The project will raise awareness of third level and enhance the skills required for successful transition to Higher Education via the CAO or one of the university's seven Diploma in Foundation Studies access programmes delivered in the region. Two programmes are delivered on NUI Galway Campus, two are delivered jointly with GMIT, one is delivered with GRETB in Ballinasloe, one delivered through Irish in Carraroe and one in St. Angela's College Sligo.

Breaking the SEAL and Succeed

ATS Peer mentors will work with Breaking the SEAL participants as positive role models to support the development of academic aspirations and performance of students from under-represented groups to help them prepare for, gain access to and succeed in college.

Reach for ATS – Work package 3

'Access without support is not an opportunity' (Tinto, 2007)

Reach for ATS is designed to raise awareness of third level, increase student preparedness for third level and support student success through their third level studies. LYIT has designed this project in partnership with Donegal ETB, the Donegal Intercultural Forum and Youthreach to support three target groups:

1. SEG students studying the Leaving Certificate Applied, Foundation Maths and Foundation English
2. Students with disability, studying the Leaving Certificate Applied, Foundation Maths and Foundation English
3. Ethnic minority students.

Reach for ATS will provide effective support for 600 SEG students and students with disability and 100 ethnic minority students. This work package will operate at the attract, transition and success phases and links to work package 1 on Mentoring for ATS.

Reach and Attract

LYIT will deliver an outreach programme of maths and study skills to target groups within partner schools and youth centres. The workshops will be supported by bespoke on-line resources and activities. Our work to support students with disability will be strengthened by the delivery of workshops focusing on life as a third level student with disability. These workshops will be delivered to both students and school staff.

Reach for Transition

LYIT will deliver college awareness workshops in ETB schools and at the Donegal Intercultural Platform, promoting an understanding of third level opportunities. In addition, LYIT will provide summer schools to support transition to third level study (either to our dedicated Access programme for leaving certificate applied students or to CAO programmes).

Reach for Success

Over 18% of first year students in LYIT do not identify English as their first language. ATS Reach aims to support the academic success of our ethnic minority students through the provision of additional support for English as a second language within the LYIT Communications and Learning Centre.

ATS Proposal

Reach and Attract

ETB Schools, Youthreach, Donegal Intercultural Forum

- ATS Peer mentors (working with LCA group) (work package 1)
- Deliver a programme to develop maths and study skills (school and youth centre workshops augmented by on-line support)
- College support for students with disability workshops (students and school staff/ including career guidance staff)

Reach for Transition

SEG, Students with Disability, Ethnic Minority

- Summer Schools providing awareness of college opportunities and supporting transition into LYIT's dedicated Access programme for LCA entry students (Level 6 NQF) and to CAO programmes
- College awareness workshops (ETB Schools/ Donegal Intercultural Forum)

Reach for Success

- Tailored English as a second language support through LYIT Communications and Learning Centre
- ATS Academic Mentoring (work package 1)
- ATS Peer mentoring for cultural support (work package 1)

ATS Pathway to College – Work package 4

ATS Pathway to College is a school based pre-entry access programme designed to inspire, support and create alternative pathways to third level education. GMIT will work with 360 SEG students studying the leaving certificate applied, Maths Foundation Studies and English Foundations Studies. This project is run in partnership with DEIS schools in Galway and Mayo, Galway Rural Development, Pavee Point, GRETB and MSLETB (Education and Training Boards) and Youthreach.

This work package also supports students at each phase of the ATS journey and works with the mentoring supports at access and success stages described in work package 1.

ATS Pathway to College is a 6 week programme with the following elements:

1. **Maths and study skills workshops delivered by GMIT in schools and youth centers**
2. **An on-line programme, Get Ready Education, designed to support transition to third level by focusing on critical and creative thinking, digital literacy and communication, responsible citizenship and reflection.**
3. **College preparation and awareness workshops delivered in GMIT with support from volunteers from industry, schools and our partner Education and Training Boards. The workshops will focus on application process, grants, confidence building and career awareness. Students will also have the opportunity to participate in taster modules for a range of GMIT programmes.**

ATS pathway participants will be encouraged and supported in applying to the new Certificate in Foundations Studies (which will be developed for the academic year 2019-20).

ATS Collaboration for Enhancement – Work package 5

ATS for the target groups across the cluster will be enhanced by the following collective actions:

- An annual community based symposium on ATS including mentoring for access and pilot project reviews
- The creation of a digital badge in Mentoring for ATS mentors and mentees developed by LYIT.
- Shared training on digital badge for mentoring (Academic Staff)
- Sharing learning from pilot projects with cluster partners
- Shared data, project monitoring and evaluation

ATS Proposal

ATS Monitoring and Evaluation – Work package 6

The Cluster institutions believe that a commitment to widening participation as described in the West/ North-West Cluster Equity of Access Policy must include a robust mechanism for monitoring progress against actions and evaluation against targets.

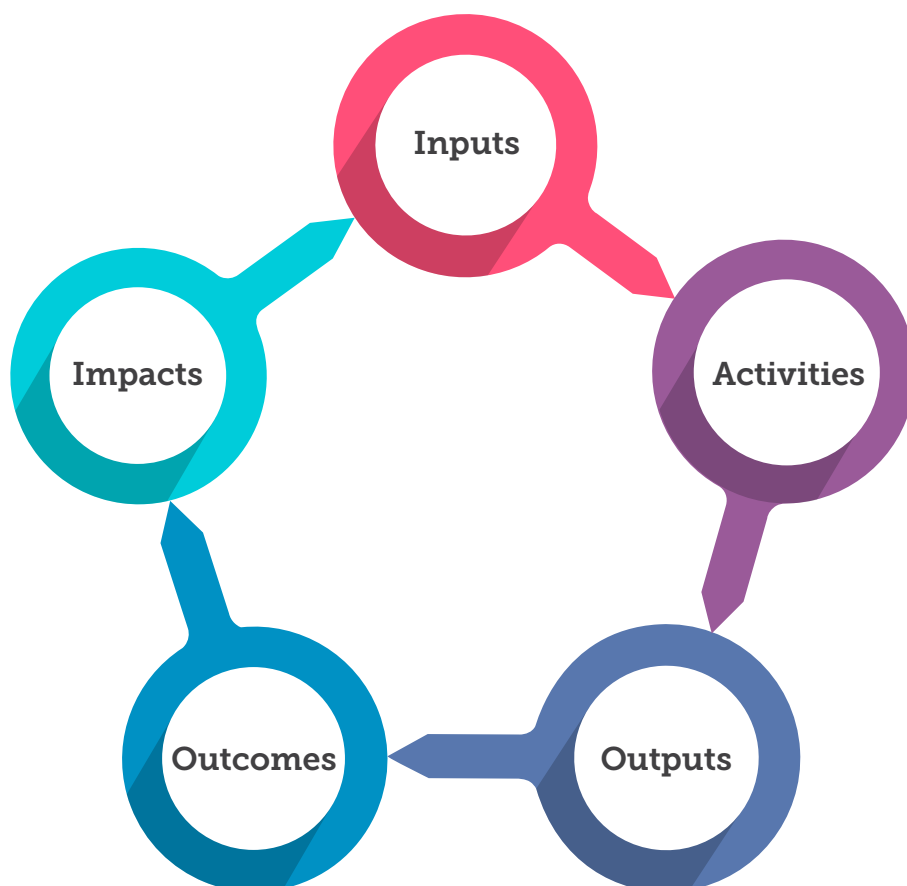
Governance

Governance for the project will be provided through the ATS Steering Committee, comprised of the Registrars from each institution. Each work package has an identified institution lead with responsibility for providing an annual report to the ATS Steering Committee. The ATS Steering Committee will meet on an annual basis as part of the ATS Symposium to consider progress against targets, including a review of the annual ATS evaluation report (described below).

Monitoring and Evaluation

The ATS pilot projects will develop new collaborative approaches for equity of access which will enhance our work and ensure sustainability of outcomes through sustained regional and community partnership.

- > Inputs (qualitative and quantitative data)
- > Activities (actions under work packages 1- 5)
- > Outputs (immediate responses?)
- > Outcomes (have the planned objects been met?)
- > Impacts (how will ATS affect what our institutions do in the future?)



The evaluation will involve both internal and external dimensions with monitoring of ATS students and data generation within each HEI. This data will then be externally reviewed within the context of institutional/ HEA Mission Based Performance Compacts and national access targets. The external analysis will produce an annual report for review within institutions and more broadly at the annual ATS Symposium.

Monitoring of inputs and activities will include:

- All PATH 2 bursary students tagged in our student records system and supported with regular meetings with academic staff and peer mentors
- All HEIs will develop common methodology for data capture and share data relating to student engagement, progress and success in each target group
- The annual ATS Symposium will provide an opportunity to meet and review progress against targets.
- Level of participation in mentoring programs
- Level of awareness of ATS programmes/ projects among community organisations, schools and within HEIs
- Extent of 'reach': number of participating schools and community organisations, and the basis for their inclusion; frequency and intensity of relationships.
- Tracking via exit surveys of students who leave during first year.
- The number of students entering through each pathway.
- Regular review of the awareness among stakeholder groups of available entry programs.

- Qualitative evaluation of participant (student, teacher, parent, lecturer) satisfaction through questionnaires.
- Project costs, both direct and indirect.

Measuring outcomes and impact will include:

- A change in the number of applications and registrations from targeted schools/ Youthreach to ATS institutions access and CAO programmes
- A change in the number of applications and registrations from students in each target group to ATS institutions
- Changes in the retention, academic success and completion rates of students admitted through ATS/ participating in ATS activities

Funding and Sustainability

The budget requested is for €1,000,000 representing excellent value for money across the West/ North-West Region. The ATS proposal would provide mentoring to 2,500 participants from the most disadvantaged groups from Donegal to Galway and support transition to third level and academic progression for over 1,350 students. The ATS mentoring will create a sustainable model of mentoring for access across the ATS institutions beyond the PATH 3 funding cycle by creating established training, developing a pool of mentors and creating both formal and informal methods of recognising the value of mentoring. The ATS pilot projects will develop new collaborative approaches for equity of access which will enhance our work and ensure sustainability.

Appendix One

Undergraduate Student Profile in West/ North-West Cluster

W/NW HE Cluster	SEG	1st time mature	Students with disabilities	PT/flexible	FET holders	Irish Travellers	Lone parents	Ethnic minorities (including refugees, migrant and asylum seekers)
GMIT	65%	161	208	1085	171	1	17%	35
IT Sligo	60% (SUSI)	152	128	6	170	-	17%	160
LYIT	65%	265	275	597	58	-	17%	18% based on LYIT student survey
NUIG	24% based on EAS 41% based on SUSI	240	966	1089	50	9	17%	11% based on the Equal Access Survey

Where possible the data presented is based upon the Equal Access Student Survey. There is variation in completion rates across institutions. Institutions with low returns have used different data sources eg students in receipt of a SUSI grant.

The institutions propose to use PATH 3 projects to harmonise and develop systematic capture of students within the target groups. This would include lone parents where no data currently exists.

Byrne and Murray's 2017 study estimates that 17 per cent of undergraduate students are parents. (<https://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Education-Reports/supports-barriers-lone-parents-accessing-HEd.pdf>)

Appendix Two

West/ North-West Higher Education Cluster Equity of Access Policy 2017-2021

Vision

The West/ North-West Cluster of Higher Education institutions comprises NUI Galway, Galway Mayo Institute of Technology, Letterkenny Institute of Technology and the Institute of Technology Sligo. The four institutions came together under the aegis of the Higher Education Authority and in the context of a series of reforms of Ireland's higher education landscape.

The partner institutions adhere to a comprehensive policy of equity of access, recognising it as a fundamental principle of Irish Higher Education. The Cluster Equity of Access Policy recognises the uniqueness of our region and the impact of rurality on social and economic disadvantage. In so doing, the partners commit fully to collaboration through the West/ North-West Regional Cluster to build upon our institutional access policies to develop and promote innovative and sustainable action which seek to counter disadvantage in our region. The Cluster partners express a strong willingness to contribute to the enhancement of equity of access nationally and will engage openly with other regional clusters.

The Cluster Equity of Access Policy commits the higher education institutions in the West and North West of Ireland to work collaboratively to uphold the vision of the National Plan for Equity of Access to Higher Education 2015-2019 within our region. Our vision is:

To ensure that the student body entering, participating in and completing higher education in each of the higher education institutions in the West and North West reflects the diversity and social mix of Ireland's population.

Thematic Priorities

Building on relationships developed in the West/ North-West Higher Education Cluster, the partners will work collectively to develop, maintain and support a comprehensive policy of equity of access in higher education for our region. Central to a regional model of student access, transition and success is our relationship with regional stakeholder and advocacy groups, in particular, County Councils, Local Community Development Committees, Schools and Education and Training Boards. The partners will develop innovative ways of engaging regional stakeholders and advocacy groups to connect with and support target groups.

Appendix Two

The thematic priorities for the West/ North-West Cluster Equity of Access Policy 2017-2021 are:

1. Increase student participation in higher education in the target groups through pre-entry outreach
2. Improve the experience of transition to third level, increase retention and enhance student success for the target groups
3. Maximise the potential of data to enhance pre-entry outreach, transition to third level, increase retention and enhance student success for the target groups
4. Strengthen collaboration with regional stakeholders and advocacy group to support equity of access in the West/ North-West.

Target groups include:

- Socio-economic groups that have low participation in higher education;
- First- time, mature student entrants
- Students with a disability
- Irish Travellers
- Further education award holders
- Lone parents in receipt of a means tested social welfare payment
- Ethnic minorities (including programme refugees)

Appendix Three

ATS budget

Work Package	Item	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total
Mentoring for ATS (NUIG)	Mentor leaders	10,000	10,000	10,000	30,000
	Part time administrator	8,000	8,000	8,000	24,000
	Promotion and marketing	3,200	3,300	3,500	10,000
	Student Hospitality	2,000	2,000	2,000	6,000
	Mentor training	5,000	5,000	5,000	15,000
	Materials	2,000	2,000	2,000	6,000
	Research	3,000	3,000	3,000	9,000
Mentoring for ATS (LYIT)	ATS/ Mentoring Programme Co-ordinator	25,000	25,000	25,000	75,000
	Resources, travel and training	7,500	7,500	10,000	25,000
LYIT liaison with ATS Steering Committee on WP1	Travel and expenses related to annual report	1,500	1,500	2,000	5,000
Mentoring for ATS (GMIT)	Mentoring Programme Manager	30,000	30,000	30,000	90,000
	Materials	3,000	3,000	4,000	10,000
Mentoring for ATS (IT Sligo)	Mentor Programme Coordinator	25,000	25,000	25,000	75,000
	Activities, training Travel and materials	7,500	7,500	10,000	25,000

Appendix Three

Work Package	Item	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total
Breaking the SEAL	Project	25,000	25,000	25,000	75,000
	Coordinator	25,000	25,000	30,000	80,000
	Tutors	5,000	10,000	15,000	30,000
	Staff increments	2,000	2,000	2,000	6,000
	Event Launch	1,000	2,000	3,000	6,000
	Materials (Ipads)	19,000			19,000
	Travel for participants	1,000	2,000	3,000	6,000
	On-site events	1,000	2,000	3,000	6,000
	Awards nights	2,000	4,000	5,000	11,000
	Off-site events	2,000	3,000	4,000	9,000
	Dissemination	2,000	2,000	2,000	6,000
	Staff travel and subsistence	2,000	4,000	6,000	12,000
	Materials and promotion	3,000	3,000	3,000	9,000

Reach for ATS	Maths and Study skills tutor	28,000	28,000	28,000	84,000
	Language support tutor	25,000	25,000	30,000	80,000
		10,000	10,000	10,000	30,000
	Summer schools (LCA and students with disability)	5,000	5,000	5,000	15,000
	Summer schools (Ethnic minority)	5,000	5,000	5,000	15,000
	Awareness raising and information workshops (LCA and students with disability)	5,000	5,000	5,000	15,000
	Awareness raising and information workshops (ethnic minority)	5,000	5,000	5,000	15,000
	Promotion and materials	2,000	2,000	2,000	6,000

Work Package	Item	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total
Pathway to College	Coordinator	30,000	30,000	30,000	90,000
	Tuition and travel to schools	8,000	8,000	8,000	24,000
	Promotion costs	1,000	1,000	1,000	3,000
	College awareness workshops	1,000	1,000	1,000	3,000
ATS Collaboration for Enhancement	Symposium costs-hosting, materials, promotion, hospitality	5,000	5,000	5,000	15,000
	Digital badge development and training	5,000	2,500	2,500	10,000
GMIT liaison with ATS Steering Committee on WP5	Travel and expenses related to annual report	1,500	1,500	2,000	5,000
ATS Monitoring and Evaluation	External assessor	20,000	20,000	20,000	60,000
NUIG liaison with ATS Steering Committee on WP6	Travel and expenses related to annual report	1,500	1,500	2,000	5,000
Total project costs					1,000,000

Letters of Support



TechInnovate,
College of Engineering
& Informatics,
Alice Perry Engineering Building,
Galway,
Rep. of Ireland.

9th May 2018

Re: West/North West HE Cluster Submission to HEA Path 3 Call for Proposals

To whom it may concern,

It is with pleasure that I write this letter of support in relation to the collaborative submission of NUI Galway, GMIT, LyIT & ITSligo to the HEA Path 3 call for proposals.

It has been the mission of the Access Centre at NUI Galway to develop, support and execute innovative student and community initiatives to help address the educationally marginalised within our society. The Path 3 proposal put forward through this submission process seeks to leverage the expertise within this centre and build a sustainable pipeline for progression into post-compulsory education. Building this pipeline within the second level Senior Cycle programme is challenging, however, opportunities exist. Awarded the 2016 Conul Award for Excellence in Teaching and Learning, Breaking the SEAL primarily creates awareness and proficiency in a range of important transitional skills among senior cycle second-level students undertaking History at Leaving Certificate. Critical skills such as: collaboration, engagement with each other and content, narrative construction and technological proficiency are considered some of the biggest challenges that new entrants to further education will face.

Those who choose to progress to further education will, as a result of participating in the Breaking the SEAL programme, will have had the opportunity to begin to establish the 21st century skills sets required for meaningful participation. However, supporting students as they transition into further education is critical to student success. To this end, the mentoring strand of this Path 3 proposal, will create a vital link between Breaking the SEAL participants and a successful transition into further education and towards the world of professional practice.

As a Director of Breaking the SEAL, I am delighted to support this proposal which fuses together the core components of existent, successful models into a targeted and theoretically informed model that has the capacity to attract non-traditional students, help them transition into further education and build a sustainable pathway to success.

I trust that this letter of support serves to highlight the potential for this Path 3 proposal to develop a sustainable pipeline for progression into further education and beyond.

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Paul Flynn'.

Dr. Paul Flynn
Lecturer & Programme Manager
TechInnovate
College of Engineering & Informatics
NUI Galway
paul.flynn@nuigalway.ie
Tel: +353 91 493929

Bio: Dr. Paul Flynn is a Fellow of the International Society of Design & Development in Education. Co-PI STARTED Project (Erasmus+), Co-Director of Breaking the SEAL Programme - Received national awards and international recognition for the pedagogical design that supports this successful outreach programme. Graduate of the prestigious Entrepreneurship Development Programme at MIT (Sloan) and Director of Innovate21 - a newly formed innovation based outreach programme at NUI Galway. Co-Founder of LaunchPad Education.



1st May 2018

Dear Expert Panel,

I write in support of the NUI Galway collaboration with GMIT, LyIT, and IT Sligo in their joint proposal for PATH 3.

It is a honour to know and work with the NUI Galway Access Centre over a period of fifteen years, supporting innovative student and community engagement programmes. The Uni4U programme links current students with primary school pupils in an intensive six-week programme to address educational marginalisation. As manager of ALIVE, the student volunteering programme at NUI Galway, partnering the Uni4U programme has led to mutual growth and development. This is evident in key policy and practice areas including child protection, volunteer management, and creativity in fostering youth voice and determination. This local successful campus partnership enabled the development and ongoing growth of national practices and policies through the IUA supported, studentvolunteer.ie network. Through a partnership with a non-profit educational programme EIL, The NUI Galway Access Centre is an influential partner in our local and national conversations on the civic mission of higher education through the national Campus Engage network.

We look forward to working with the West /North West Higher Education Cluster in the development and the delivery of the work packages outlined in PATH 3 proposal, in particular the 'Breaking the Seal' Strand and the strand which focuses on mentoring. We share considerable experience in effective mentoring models through student empowerment and mutually beneficial community sharing. NUI Galway currently hosts two student mentoring programmes on campus and three community based mentoring programmes. These are supported through national best practice sharing. The West/North West Cluster experience and commitment to its local communities through meaningful partnerships with and across sectors is strengthened when harnessed collectively. A collaborative approach in the region will build the capacity of all our target communities to increase their chances to access third level education.

Yours Sincerely,

Lorraine Tansey
ALIVE Programme Manager
The Hub, Aras na Mac Leinn, National University of Ireland, Galway, University Road,
Galway, Ireland.
lorraine.tansey@nuigalway.ie
00 353 (0)91 49 5346

Letters of Support



Building a Receptive, Integrated and Diverse Galway of Equals

Suzanne McKane, **BRIDGE** project
Westside Resource Centre,
Seamus Quirke Road, Galway
Mobile: 0860433376 / Tel: 091-528325

04.05. 2018

Dear Expert Panel,

I'm writing on behalf of the **The BRIDGE PROJECT (Building a Receptive and Integrated Galway of Equals)**, to support NUI Galway in collaboration with GMIT, LyIT, and IT Sligo proposal for PATH 3..

BRIDGE is funded under the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) and supported by the Department of Justice and Equality. The project seeks to promote the effective delivery of reception and integration supports (including advocacy and capacity building interventions) to asylum seekers and third country nationals living in Galway City and County. Access to training and education is a significant concern of our client group and as such it is key focus of our work.

BRIDGE has been an active member of the NUIG University of Sanctuary Working Group and has collaborated closely with the University and the NUI Galway Access Programmes in particular on a number of projects for example, facilitating outreach information sessions to our target groups.

This collaborative approach has proved very successful we would very much hope to further develop and expand this work with the West /North West Higher Education Cluster. The outcome of the programme outlined in PATH 3 would be significant for our client group, initiatives such as 'Breaking the Seal 'and the Mentoring support empowering and up-skilling them, ultimately increasing their chances to access third level education.

BRIDGE fully supports West /North West Higher Education Cluster application PATH 3 and would fully intend to actively facilitate the project aims.

I hope you can take this into consideration when you are making your decision on the application.

Please do not hesitate to contact me. If you require anything further.

With kind regards,

Suzanne McKane



Ireland's European Structural and
Investment Funds Programmes
2014-2020
Co-funded by the Irish Government
and the European Union



EUROPEAN UNION
Investing in your future
European Social Fund



EUROPEAN UNION
Asylum, Migration
and Integration Fund



Galway City Partnership
Comhairleachtas Chathair na Gaillimhe
a tide for change
an t-ádh na n-ádh

This project is co-financed by the European Commission under the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund 2014-2020 and is supported by the Department of Justice and Equality

Re: Cluster PATH 3 Funding Application
GMIT Access and Disability Service

03/05/2018

Re : Michael McDonagh

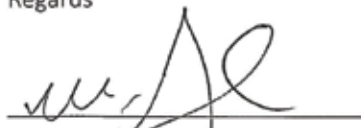
To Whom it May Concern,

This letter is in support of the GMIT proposed programme to work with disadvantaged young people and members of the Traveller Community who enrol on the Applied Leaving Certificate programme in YouthReach centres as part of the Cluster PATH 3 funding application.

I am Youthreach co-ordinator for over twenty years. Youthreach is a Department of Education and Skills official education, training and work experience programme for early school leavers aged 15 – 20. It offers young people the opportunity to identify options within adult life, and provides them with opportunities to acquire certification. I have had a long standing working relationship with the GMIT Access and Disability Service where I refer students who require alternative pathways to GMIT and GMIT considers these students for special case admission and provides the students with financial and social support to facilitate their transition. I am aware that the funding proposal GMIT is submitting will go much further than the work we currently do and GMIT will deliver a specific programme to our Applied Leaving Certificate Students and develop a specific entry route to GMIT for these participants. I am also aware that once the students transition to third level with they will be mentored, supported financially and provided with additional learning support.

I personally would be committed to such a programme and see an alternative entry route for these students as a very positive development.

Regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. McDonagh', is written over a horizontal line.

Michael McDonagh - Director
Youthreach Tuam

Letters of Support



a tide for change
an taoide ag casadh

Galway City Partnership

Comhpháirtíocht Chathair na Gaillimhe



04.05. 2018

Dear Expert Panel,

I'm writing on behalf of Galway City Partnership to support NUI Galway in collaboration with GMIT, LyIT, and IT Sligo proposal for PATH 3.

As the Social inclusion & Community Activation Programme (SICAP) implementers for Galway City we work with some of the most vulnerable groups in the city. We are embedded in the local community with outreach work concentrating the most disadvantaged areas. Capacity building through access to training and education is strong focus of our work therefore we see the PATH 3 proposal as a positive addition to our local community.

A collaborative approach has always been central to our work we would look forward to developing links with the West /North West Higher Education Cluster and working with them in the future. The community focus of the PATH 3 application is key and of particular interest is the 'Breaking the Seal' and Mentoring work packages.

I hope you can take this into consideration when you are making your decision on the application.

Please do not hesitate to contact me. If you require anything further.

With kind regards,

Suzanne McKane

Suzanne McKane Community Development Worker

Directors

Val Coakley

Michael Coppinger

Margaret Cullinane

Mary Gibbons

Brian Hickey

Cathy Higgins

Bridget Kelly

Gina Mc Namara

Morgan Mee

Martin O Connor

Paul Shelly

Donal Walsh

CEO

Declan Brassil

Chairperson

Tommy Flaherty

Company Reg. No. 258847
(CHY 13937)



Galway City Partnership is a recognised 'Excellence Through People'
organisation.

3 The Plaza Offices, Headford Road, Galway.
Tel: (091) 773466 Fax: (091) 773468
Website: www.gcp.ie e-mail: info@gcp.ie



GALWAY LIONS CLUB

'We serve the community of Galway'




Dear Expert Panel,

We would like to support NUI Galway in collaboration with GMIT, LYIT, and IT Sligo's proposal for PATH 3.

The West/North West Cluster has longstanding relationships with statutory, voluntary and community groups in the region, working together to support increased access to higher education for those who are most under-represented in higher education. This includes students from under-represented SEG groups, students with disabilities, lone parents, first-time mature student entrants, Irish Travellers, members of other ethnic minority groups and children in the care of the state.

A collaborative approach in the region will build the capacity of our target communities to increase their chances to access third level education. We have been working with the NUI Galway Access Schools Programme in particular for a number of years in designing and rolling out innovative educational programmes. We look forward to working with the West /North West Higher Education Cluster in the development and the delivery of the work packages outlined in PATH 3 funding proposal, as we endeavor to impact educational opportunity at a regional and national level.

Sincerely


Mary MacLynn
Secretary

Meetings: Ardiluan House Hotel, Taylors Hill, Galway. (2nd Monday of month)

Letters of Support



2/5/2018

Dear Expert Panel,

We would like to support NUI Galway in collaboration with GMIT, LYIT, and IT Sligo proposal for PATH3. The West/North West Cluster has longstanding relationships with statutory, voluntary and community groups in the region, working together to support increased access to higher education for those who are most under-represented in higher education. This includes students from under-represented SEG groups, students with disabilities, lone parents, first-time mature student entrants, Irish Travellers, members of other ethnic minority groups and children in the care of the state.

A collaborative approach in the region will build the capacity of our target communities to increase their chances to access third level education. We have been working with the NUI Galway Access Programme for a number of years ensuring our FET learners have clear progression opportunities and pathways. A number of the Access programmes have taken place in our FET Centres throughout the region. We have agreed MOUs in place with GMIT and NUIG to ensure our programmes are preparing learners to successfully transition to 3rd level. We look forward to working with the West /North West Higher Education Cluster in the development and the delivery of the work packages outlined in PATH 3 proposal, in particular the 'Breaking the Seal' Strand and the strand which focuses on mentoring.

Yours sincerely,

Eithne Nic Dhonnchadha
Director of Further Education & Training

Tairgeann an Bord raon seirbhísí trí Ghaeilge agus fáiltítear roimh chomhfhreagras i nGaeilge agus i mBéarla.
eolas@gretb.ie info@gretb.ie www.gretb.ie

Ceanncheathrú Bhord Oideachais & Oiliúna na Gaillimhe & Ros Comáin,
An Coiléar Bán,
Baile Átha an Rí, Co. na Gaillimhe.
GRETB Headquarters,
An Coiléar Bán,
Athenry, Co. Galway.
t: 091 874500

Fo-oifig Bhord Oideachais & Oiliúna na Gaillimhe & Ros Comáin,
Sráid Bhéal Átha Liag,
Ros Comáin.
GRETB Sub-office,
Lanesboro Street,
Roscommon.
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Ionad Oiliúna Bhord Oideachais & Oiliúna na Gaillimhe & Ros Comáin,
Páirc Gnó Mervue,
Mervue, Gaillimh.
GRETB Training Centre,
Mervue Business Park,
Mervue, Galway.
t: 091 706200



Erin House, Airglorney Business Park, Ballygaddy Road, Tuam, Co. Galway
Tel: 093 26246 email: youthreachtuam@GRETb.ie

03/05/2018

Re: Cluster PATH 3 Funding Application
GMIT Access and Disability Service

To Whom it May Concern,

This letter is in support of the GMIT proposed programme to work with disadvantaged young people and members of the Traveller Community who enrol on the Applied Leaving Certificate programme in YouthReach centres as part of the Cluster PATH 3 funding application.

I work as a Counsellor and Career Guidance in Youthreach Tuam. The students who complete the Leaving Certificate Applied with us tend to come from disadvantaged backgrounds and face a real struggle to believe in the possibility of further education. A big part of my work is building their confidence and helping them see that options are available and support does exist to help them realise their dream of a third level education.

I have had a long standing working relationship with the GMIT Access and Disability Service where I refer students who require alternative pathways to GMIT and GMIT considers these students for special case admission and provides the students with financial and social support to facilitate their transition. I am aware that the funding proposal GMIT is submitting will go much further than the work we currently do and GMIT will deliver a specific programme to our Applied Leaving Certificate Students and develop a specific entry route to GMIT for these participants. I am also aware that once the students transition to third level with they will be mentored, supported financially and provided with additional learning support.

I personally would be committed to such a programme and see an alternative entry route for these students as a very positive development.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Allison Joyner', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Allison Joyner,
Student Counsellor and Career Guidance
Youthreach, Tuam

Letters of Support



Linda McGloin
Acting Access Officer
IT Sligo
Ash Lane
Sligo F91 YW50

2nd May 2018

Re: IT Sligo - HEA Path 3 – Higher Education Access Fund – Mentoring Programme Application

Dear Linda,

The Cranmore Regeneration Project would like to express its support for this proposed HEA Path 3 Mentoring Programme. We will be delighted to work with the Access Office in IT Sligo.

This Mentoring Programme would ensure that mentoring and support would be available for young people from the Cranmore Regeneration Area who will be transitioning into College from a number of Secondary Schools in the area and also for those mature students who are considering College for the first time.

It would be our intention to work in close partnership with the Access Office in IT Sligo and also to include the additional supports and expertise of the various community and statutory organisations who are currently members of the Cranmore Regeneration Education and Learning Sub Group. This Sub Group oversees the delivery of the Education and Learning Strategy actions as identified in The Sligo East City, Cranmore and Environs Masterplan 2016.

We hope to be in a position to work with IT Sligo on this project in the near future and we wish you every success with this funding application.

Yours sincerely,

Joe Gethin
Administrative Officer



Comhairle Chontae Shligigh *Sligo County Council*
Oifig Thionscadal Athghiniúna an Chrainn Mhóir, 7-10 Céide Uí Dhaimhín, An Crann Mór, Sligeach
Cranmore Regeneration Project Office, 7-10 Devins Drive, Cranmore, Sligo

T: 071 9111250 E: cranmoreregeneration@sligococo.ie W: www.sligococo.ie



Bord Oideachais agus
Oiliúna Dhún na nGall
Donegal Education and
Training Board



Mr Paul Hannigan
President
Letterkenny Institute of Technology
Port Road
Letterkenny
Co Donegal

9th May 2018

Re: 'Reach for ATS Project'

Dear Mr Hannigan

Donegal ETB is pleased to support the Letterkenny Institute of Technology 'Reach for ATS Project'. We understand that funding is being sought as part of a competitive fund under the Programme for Access to Higher Education (PATH), managed by the HEA on behalf of the Department of Education and Skills.

Donegal ETB has 15 post-primary schools under direct management with 8 of these schools receiving DEIS (Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools) funding.

If you should require additional information, please contact me.

Regards

Ms Anne McHugh

Chief Executive

Donegal ETB

Offíóg Riaracháin:
Ard Uí Dhomhnaill
Leitir Ceanainn
Co. Dhún na nGall

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Anne McHugh
Chief Executive

Anne NicAodha
Príomhfheidhmeannach

Letters of Support



An Ghníomhaireacht um
Leanaí agus an Teaghlach
Child and Family Agency

An Ghníomhaireacht um Leanaí agus an Teaghlach,
Tar éis cúram,
Foirgneamh Jigsaw,
Fairgreen,
Gaillimh.

Child and Family Agency,
Aftercare,
Jigsaw,
Fairgreen House,
Fairgreen,
Galway.

t. +353 (091) 549252
f. +353 (091) 560161

03/05/18

Dear Expert Panel,

We would like to support NUI Galway in collaboration with GMIT, LYIT, and IT Sligo's proposal for PATH 3.

The West/North West Cluster has longstanding relationships with statutory, voluntary and community groups in the region, working together to support increased access to higher education for those who are most under-represented in higher education. This includes students from under-represented SEG groups, students with disabilities, lone parents, first-time mature student entrants, Irish Travellers, members of other ethnic minority groups and children in the care of the state.

A collaborative approach in the region will build the capacity of our target communities to increase their chances to access third level education. We have been working with the NUI Galway Access Schools Programme in particular for a number of years in designing and rolling out innovative educational programmes. We look forward to working with the West /North West Higher Education Cluster in the development and the delivery of the work packages outlined in PATH 3 funding proposal, as we endeavour to impact educational opportunity at a regional and national level.

Sincerely


Ruth Maloney,
Aftercare Manager,
Galway Aftercare Services

From: Intercultural Platform <donegalip@gmail.com>
Date: 14 May 2018 at 15:34:56 IST
To: McGonagle Brian <Brian.McGonagle@lyit.ie>
Subject: Re: Ethnic minority project

For the attention of Mr. Paul Hannigan
The President
Letterkenny Institute of Technology
Port Road
Letterkenny
Co. Donegal

Dear President

As the Co-Chairs of Donegal Intercultural Platform, Billy Banda and I would like to express the support of our Non-Governmental Organisation for the proposed Application under the Path 3 National Fund to work with members of Black and Minority Ethnic communities.

As a long-standing intercultural organisation in Donegal that has been advocating for the rights, recognition and inclusion of minorities we warmly welcome this initiative as proposed by LYIT and hope it is successful in attracting the necessary funding to bring it to fruition.

Please contact us if we can be of any further assistance on this matter.

Yours faithfully

Paul Kernan & Billy Banda
Co - Chairpersons
Donegal Intercultural Platform.

Notes



Contact:

Dr Lynn Ramsey,
Programme Manager,
West/North-West Higher Education Cluster.
e: lynn.ramsey@lyit.ie



**Higher Education System
Innovation and Transformation Call 2018**

**Innovative Opportunities Transforming Education (iNOTE)
Project**

*Building digital capability for flexible learning delivery in the West/North
West Region*

on behalf of:

*Galway Mayo Institute of Technology
Letterkenny Institute of Technology
Institute of Technology Sligo*

**CONNACHT-ULSTER
ALLIANCE**



PROJECT DETAILS

Project Information:	
Project Title:	<p>Innovative Opportunities Transforming Education (iNOTE) Project</p> <p><i>Building digital capability for flexible learning delivery in the West/North West Region</i></p>
Project abstract:	<p>Between now and 2029, the Irish HE sector will be required to accommodate a projected 20% increase in the student population [1]. The majority of the 'new' learners are predicted to be mature, lifelong learners [2]. Offering a flexible education proposition, via enhanced digital capabilities, is regarded as being the optimum solution to meet this demand [2, 3 & 4].</p> <p>Despite advances in technology, learning and teaching practices, technology use in the Irish Education system "... <i>still holds enormous untapped potential</i>" [5]. The NFETL recommended that the strategic development of digital capacity be prioritised in institutional/national policy. Furthermore, it advocates that such strategies be aligned across "<i>multi-institutional partnerships</i>" [5]. This project, delivered by the Connacht Ulster Alliance (CUA), in responding to the above, will have impact across the higher education system by implementing new methods of delivering digitally enhanced learning through shared approaches.</p> <p>The CUA is an alliance of HEIs (GMIT, LYIT, IT Sligo) actively committed to the creation of a Technological University, via a network of geographically dispersed campuses, in the West/North-West of Ireland. Recognising the challenging nature of achieving the TU criteria, the CUA will continue to commit significant resources and effort towards the attainment of the criteria.</p> <p>The iNOTE project aligns with, and will form a direct response to, the key system objectives for the Higher Education System 2018 -2020. This will be achieved via the completion of five work packages focusing on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) developing a quality assurance policy for flexible delivery; (ii) building digital capabilities amongst CUA staff;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (iii) developing a range of digitally enhanced student supports for those undertaking programmes through flexible delivery; (iv) developing and delivering work based programmes (WBP) utilising digital capabilities for flexible delivery and (v) mainstreaming, disseminating and evaluating CUA digital capabilities for flexible delivery.
Provide a lead contact person for all HEA project communications:	
Lead Institution:	Letterkenny Institute of Technology on behalf of the CUA
Name:	Dr Seán Duffy
Job title:	Connacht Ulster Alliance Project Manager - LYIT
Office:	LYIT, Shore Road, Killybegs, Co. Donegal, F94 DV52
Email address:	sean.duffy@lyit.ie
Contact number:	087 6489257

Provide a lead contact person for each collaborating institution:	
Collaborating Institution 1:	Galway Mayo Institute of Technology (GMIT)
Name:	Dr Carina Ginty
Job title:	Teaching and Learning Officer
Email:	Carina.ginty@gmit.ie
Collaborating Institution 2:	Institute of Technology Sligo (IT Sligo)
Name:	Professor Jacqueline McCormack
Job title:	Vice President Online Development
Email:	McCormack.Jacqueline@itsligo.ie
Collaborating Institution 3:	Letterkenny Institute of Technology (LYIT)
Name:	Dr Simon Stephens
Job title:	SL1 Quality Assurance
Email:	Simon.stephens@lyit.ie

Section 1: Project Team

List the staff involved in this proposal including participating departments/other institutions associated with the project, and a brief description of their role in the project

Name	Institution and Department	Project Role
Carmel Brennan	Assistant Registrar (Quality) GMIT	Work Packages 1, 2, 4 & 5
Dr Carina Ginty	Teaching and Learning Officer, GMIT	Work Packages 1, 2, 4 & 5 GMIT Project lead contact person
Dr Deirdre Garvey	Senior Lecturer/ Lifelong Learning GMIT Mayo Campus	Work Packages 1, 2, 4 & 5
Professor Jacqueline McCormack	Vice President Online Development, IT Sligo	Work Packages 3, 4 & 5 IT Sligo Project lead contact person
Dr Niamh Plunkett	Educational Development Manager, IT Sligo	Work Packages 3, 4 & 5
Gavin Clinch	Centre for On-line Learning, IT Sligo	Work Packages 3, 4 & 5
Dr Lynn Ramsey	Head of Teaching and Learning, LYIT	Work Packages 1, 4 & 5
Dr Simon Stephens	SL1 Quality Assurance, LYIT	Work Packages 1, 4 & 5 LYIT Project lead contact person
Michael Margey	Head of School of Business, LYIT	Work Packages 1, 4 & 5
Dr Seán Duffy	CUA Project Manager, LYIT	Project Co-ordinator and Lead Contact, Work Package 6

Section 2: Institutional Strategy

As a Technological University, the CUA will be a differentiated organisation, complementary to the existing traditional universities, serving diverse communities of learners and practitioners across a highly dispersed, mostly rural community via a multi-campus structure. The TU will be a leader in the communities it serves, the key producer of work ready graduates, a key partner and driver of research and innovation, a key attractor of investment to the region and a key partner in the retention of such investment.

The CUA, in conjunction with its stakeholders, has set itself the challenge of creating a virtuous cycle through higher education provision, graduate employment, industry and community engagement which can enhance the development of the region. The iNOTE project, which will make a significant contribution to the achievement of this vision, is the latest example of collaborative projects undertaken by the CUA since it was established in 2012. It will build on established collaborations such as:

- CUAL Project: On-line research repository developed by the libraries in GMIT, IT Sligo and LYIT (2014). CUAL is now part of the Research@THEA repository.
- Myexperience.ie; Recognition of Prior Learning collaborative website.
- CUA Joint Policy on Research Degrees
- CUA Students' Union Mental Health Initiative.

Furthermore, the project builds on the strengths of the CUA and its members, namely on-line programmes, work based learning and flexible programme delivery.

During the past year, the CUA has formed four working groups who report to the CUA Steering Group. Work Group 3 is focusing on 'Academic Planning, Strategy and Related Engagement'. This working group comprises the three CUA Vice Presidents for Academic Affairs and Registrars, and a CUA Project Manager. Additional CUA staff will be co-opted onto this group as the need arises.

This project submission for the 'Higher Education System Innovation and Transformation Call 2018' is being managed via the CUA Working Group 3 (WG3) iNOTE Governance Forum. A sub-group of WG3 has been formed with membership from each CUA institution (see details in Section 1). This iNOTE Steering Group reports to the Vice Presidents for Academic Affairs and Registrars will be charged with the development and implementation of project.

The CUA's ambitions and strategic objectives are underpinned by the Strategic Plans of each of the CUA members. The aim and objectives of this project are specifically supported in each strategic plan. Please see selection of relevant strategic plan objectives below.

Institute of Technology Sligo, Strategic Plan [7] –

- *Seek to provide a transformed technology-enhanced learning environment.*
- *Foster inclusion and participation for all students.*
- *Create an innovative and inspiring teaching and learning environment, (page 21).*
- *Support the continuous professional development of all staff.*

Letterkenny Institute of Technology Strategic Plan [8,9]

- *Implement procedures that recognise the increasingly many ways in which students may wish to access programmes of study, ensure greater parity in terms of access for part-time students to programmes and services, (page 17).*
- *Review and enhance the Institute's virtual learning environment (VLE), this will involve an examination of opportunities presented via new technologies and consideration of best fit models for blended learning, (page 18).*
- *Education for the Future: Concentration on embracing the available technological advances and incorporating them into our courses and how we deliver these courses, (Emerging Strategic Pillars).*

Galway Mayo Institute of Technology Strategic Plan [10]

- *Develop more flexible programme structures and delivery options, (page 6).*
- *Improve access to learning, support and information resources using new technologies, (page 7).*
- *Develop a digital strategy which will support staff and students in using technology in their teaching and learning.*
- *Provide training and support on new teaching approaches that enhance engagement. (page 7)*
- *Develop effective models for industry and community engagement through course design and delivery. (page 14)*

In 2018, the CUA has significantly accelerated and deepened its collaborative development, through the operation of dedicated Working Groups, supported by seconded senior staff. The members of the Alliance have appointed Project Managers to support the work of each working group. The CUA Steering Group, Working Groups and CUA Project Managers will develop the distinctive TU vision and mission; address the totality of the TU criteria; develop collaborative projects and initiatives that add value; address issues of governance and organisation; quality enhancement and shared services; and enhance the Alliance's ability to 'act as one'.

The CUA is engaging in further extensive consultation with internal and external stakeholders. It has a strong desire to work collaboratively with the HEA and the DES to achieve the vision of TU for the West/North West as a fundamental contribution to balanced national development, as outlined in the National Development Plan and maintenance of access and equity in Irish higher education. The CUA received Ministerial approval of its Stage 1 Expression of Interest in October 2015, since that time the CUA has worked steadily towards its objective.

The CUA Expression of Interest document [6] makes reference to the strengths and objectives of the CUA members, details what each collaborative partner brings to the CUA project and by extension to this iNOTE flexible delivery project and demonstrates the capacity of the institutions to deliver the project objectives. In particular the CUA Expression of interest states:

It [the TU] will be a driver of change, the key national leader in blended education encompassing traditional methods of delivery coupled with state of the art online and distance learning, a provider of education to more mature learners, a nexus of continuous professional development and the National Centre for Life Long Learning, (page 1)

The CUA is particularly well experienced in open and distance learning (ODL)/blended and online delivery facilitates, teaching and bespoke training when and where it is required. The capability of the TU to deliver lifelong learning (LLL) across all levels will be particularly relevant. The TU will build on its experience to meet the needs of enterprises and communities in a region where the population is widely dispersed, (page 12).

Student centred learning will be the focus of the Learning and Teaching Strategy for the CUA. The alliance will respond to the unique dimensions of disadvantage in our region. There will be a particular drive to develop part-time, flexible and blended delivery methods appropriate to the learning styles of the student cohort. There will be a high priority given to the development of online delivered programmes with a particular focus on bespoke delivery to meet the needs of industry, (page 33).

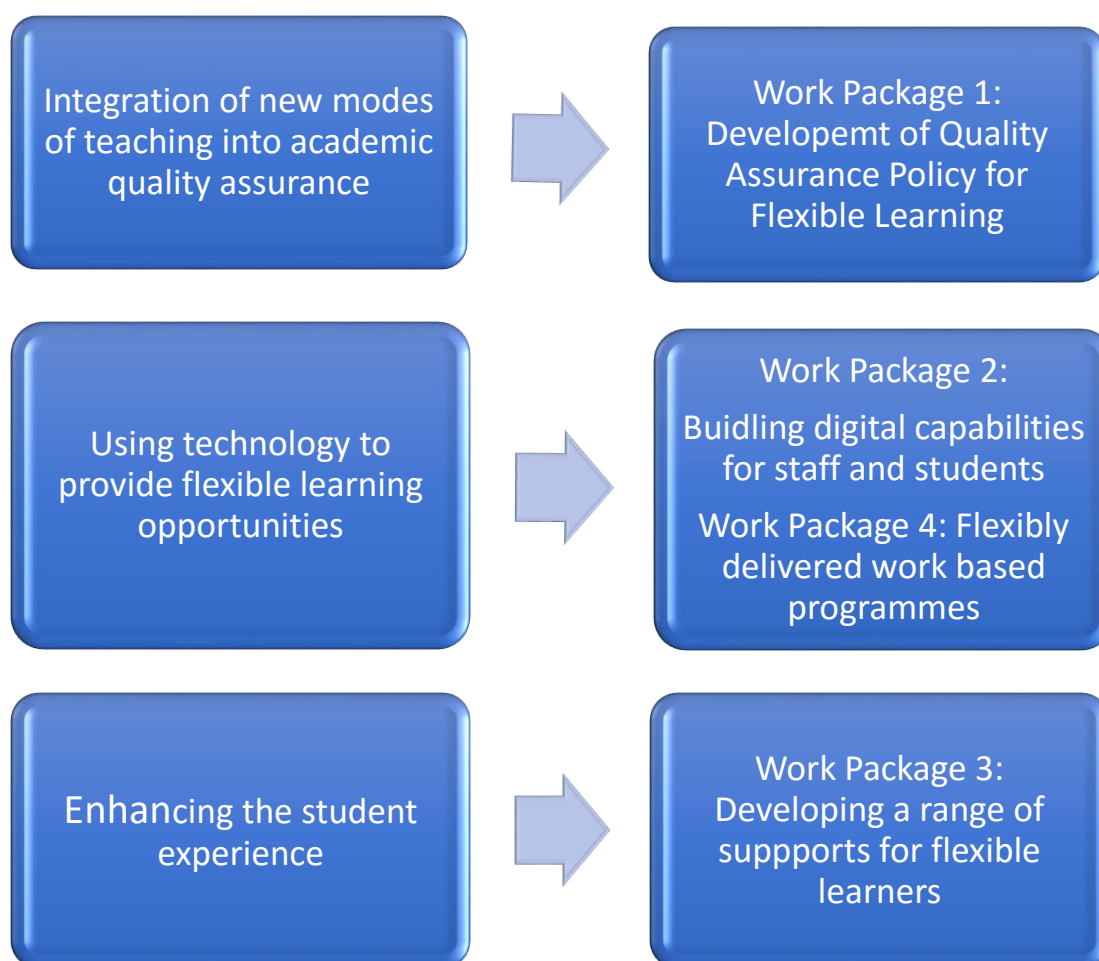
The strategic objectives of the CUA Institutes support the individual actions contained in each member's compact, which have been submitted to the HEA. In addition, the compact documents detail how each Institute is addressing the key objectives for the Higher Education System 2018 – 2020.

Section 3: Proposal for funding

Although there are excellent elements of innovation in terms of digital capacity in Irish HEIs, the NTELF has found that ‘... *there is still little evidence of initiatives of significant scale and effect*’ in Irish HEIs, [13]. In ‘A Review of the Existing Higher Education Policy Landscape for Digital Teaching and Learning in Ireland’, Murphy (2018) [13], summarised strategic issues that need to be addressed by Irish HEIs. The iNOTE project will seek to address the issues raised by specifically focusing on the following issues (problems) in the context of building digital capacity.

1. How ‘new modes’ of teaching and learning can be systematically integrated into existing academic quality assurance/enhancement processes.
2. What team processes can be improved to act as a ‘unit of change’ in HEIs?
3. What is the impact of investment in continuous professional development (CPD) for HEI staff and how can this be measured?
4. How can technology be used appropriately to provide flexible learning opportunities?
5. The need to exploit the potential of using learning analytics in HEIs

This project will address three main problems/issues, in terms of flexible delivery, via innovative and transformative work packages as illustrated below.



Project Title:**Innovative Opportunities Transforming Education (iNOTE) Project**

Building digital capability for flexible learning delivery in the West/North West Region

Project Objectives:

The iNOTE project aligns with and forms a direct response to the key system objectives for the Higher Education System 2018 -2020 (see Section 5 below). Furthermore, this proposal has been developed within the context of the NFETL 'Vision for Digital Capacity in Irish Higher Education', [4]. This aim of this project - building digital capability for flexible learning delivery in the West/North West Region will be achieved via the completion of five work packages focusing on:

- (i) developing a quality assurance policy for flexible delivery;
- (ii) building digital capabilities amongst CUA staff;
- (iii) developing a range of digitally enhanced student supports for those undertaking programmes through flexible delivery;
- (iv) developing and delivering work based programmes (WBP) utilising digital capabilities for flexible delivery;
- (vi) mainstreaming, disseminating and evaluating CUA digital capabilities for flexible delivery.

The proposed methodology for the iNOTE project is illustrated in the figure below. The project has been organised into five distinct work packages. The work packages are interrelated and will be sequenced to ensure the achievement of the project aims and objectives.

Quality Assurance Policy for Flexible Delivery

The first stage of the project will see the development of a quality assurance policy for flexible delivery for the CUA. Such a policy does not currently exist. A key feature of this work package will be once the policy has been developed, it is planned that it will become an integral part of the quality assurance policies of each of the three CUA institutes. As this work package will be completed by the end of the second year of the project, it will serve as the background for the work packages which follow (2, 3 & 4).

Building Digital Capacities Amongst CUA Staff

The second work package will focus on developing digital capabilities and pedagogic expertise in the CUA in order to design, deliver and support flexible, distance and e-learning programmes. This package will include consultation and mentoring from New York State University focusing on replicating best practice across the CUA campuses.

Providing Support Services for Flexible Learners

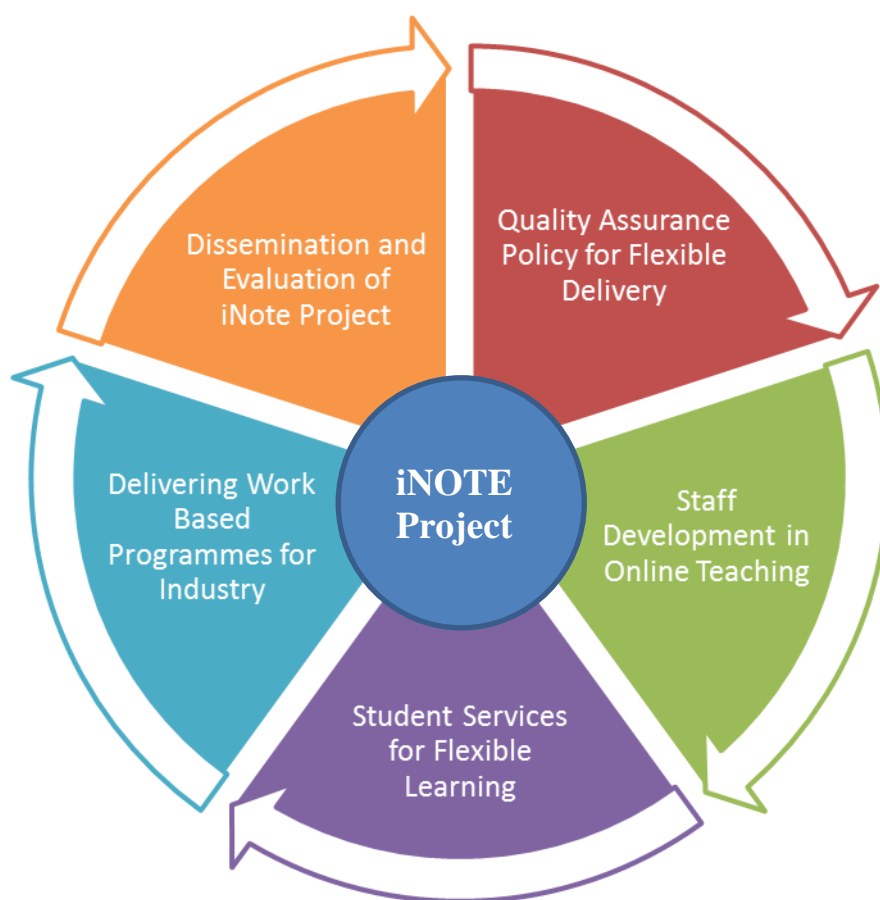
The third element of the project will place particular emphasis on the provision of appropriate supports and services for flexible learning students with disabilities, to include physical, learning, visual, hearing and physiological/emotional disabilities as well as special educational needs assessment. This work package will also review the effectiveness of support systems, pilot an on-line student advisor system, assess learning needs of flexible learners and enhance student union services and supports for flexible learners.

Delivering for Industry

The outputs and learning from the first three work packages will be implemented in the fourth work package. This phase will see the development of three pilot programmes flexibly delivered to serve distinct industry profiles of Donegal, Sligo and Galway/Mayo.

Dissemination and Evaluation of the iNOTE Project

The final work package will ensure that the outputs of the iNOTE project will be mainstreamed throughout the CUA institutes and disseminated to the wider higher education sector. In addition, a robust process of monitoring and evaluation by an external analyst will be implemented.



As with all major projects, the operation of this project will be considered within the context of each Institute's risk register system. The CUA HEIs have been working together under CUA structures since 2012. The iNOTE Governance Forum members are all members of senior management of GMIT, LYIT and IT Sligo. This group has gained substantial experience of the initiation and execution of a variety of large-scale projects such as this. One example is the West/North West Cluster Project, PATH 3, Equity of Access with an overall budget of €1m.

The main aim of this project is to building digital capability for the delivery of flexible learning in the West/North West Region via the Connacht Ulster Alliance. Throughout the project, national and international best practice in this area will form the foundations of each work practice. In preparing the proposal, attention has been paid to such practices, which in turn have informed the development of the proposal and guided innovation and transformative nature of the work packages. Letters of support are included at the end of the document.

An old adage reminds us that change is about the only constant in how we function. This is especially true in the world of higher education. In responding to such change and indeed embracing its nature, this proposal has been formed by two key concepts:

1. Building digital capabilities and
2. The delivery of flexible learning.

Digital Capability

Digital capability is deliberately used in forming this proposal as best practice shows that innovative and transformative programmes in the area of digital/flexible learning go beyond building digital capacity (resources) and now focus on building capability (ability to use digital resources). The definition of 'digital capability' used in this proposal focuses on '*... the skills and attitudes that individuals and organisations need if they are to thrive in today's world*', [11]. At an individual level, digital capabilities are those which '*equip someone to live, learn and work in a digital society*'. At an organisational level, it is necessary to look beyond the '*... capabilities of individuals and consider the extent to which the culture and infrastructure of an institution enables and motivates digital practices*', [11]. When viewed as a whole, the work packages contained in this proposal form a digital capabilities framework for the CUA. This will recognise that '*... digitally capable staff and students are essential*' to a higher education institution's success and acknowledges that such success can only be achieved by supporting and encouraging the digital capabilities of the individual, [11].

Flexible Learning

The UK Higher Education Academy states that flexible learning is '*... about empowering students by offering them choices in how, what, when and where they learn: the pace, the place and mode of delivery*', [12]. This proposal will focus, as an overarching theme, on the development of a 'flexible learning community of practice', [12]. Flexible learning is taken as encompassing all aspects of blended, face-to-face and on-line learning.

Successful completion of the iNOTE project would result in significant positive impacts for the CUA institutes in particular and for the wider higher education system in general.

Work plans and detailed budgets are provided in the tables below. The work package budgets have been developed to support the implementation of a large-scale project over three geographically dispersed Institutes of Technology. The funding will support the delivery of flexible learning to the diverse population that the CUA serves. The majority of the funding request relates to staff costs (academic and support), material and soft infrastructure. All of which will be vital to develop and sustain a project of this scale. The iNOTE project will serve as a primary vehicle to meet the needs of the growing higher education student population, which is expected to increase by 20% between now and 2029. The budget requested is for €2,844,000 for just over a three-year period (2018 -2021) and represents excellent value for money.

3a Project Objectives and Implementation Plan

	<u>(a) Work package(s)</u>	<u>(b) Short Description</u>	<u>(c) Timescale</u>	<u>(d) Outcomes /targets</u>	<u>(e) Key Milestones</u>
<u>1</u>	Quality Assurance Policy on Flexible Delivery (i) Quality Assurance	(i) Develop a new common quality assurance policy and related procedures that can be integrated with other QA policies. Specifically: Develop a set of Quality Assurance policies and procedures for Online and Blended learning that meet the requirements of QQI's (2018) <i>Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines for Blended Learning Programmes</i> .	2018 – 2019/20 <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Convene a working group (including student representatives) to co-create a draft structure for the Quality Assurance Policies and Procedures (month 1). 2. Draft the QA policy and circulate to the three institutions (month 2 – 4). 3. Convene meetings in each institution to collate feedback (month 5/6). 4. Prepare a final draft for submission to the three Academic Councils (month 7-9). 5. Complete final document and publish online and disseminate to stakeholders (month 10-12). 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Establishment of a Quality Assurance (Flexible Delivery) working committee for the CUA. 2. Publication and adoption of Quality Assurance Policies and Procedures for Online and Blended Learning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convene a working group. • Draft the QA policy and procedures. • Cross institutional engagements to collate feedback. • Complete final document and publish online and disseminate to stakeholders

	(ii) Common Approach to Quality Assurance and Enhancement	<p>Develop appropriate quality assurance and enhancement mechanisms that can become standard practice for CUA members. Specifically:</p> <p>Produce a benchmarking system to ensure the consistency and quality of online/flexible provision.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Convene a working group and agree common aims (month 1). 2. Review best practice principles via desk-based research (month 2 – 4). 3. Undertake fieldwork in award winning HEIs i.e. DCU, University of the Highlands and Islands, Cornell University (month 5/6). 4. Prepare a final draft for submission to the three Academic Councils (month 7-9). 5. Complete final document and publish online and disseminate to stakeholders (month 10-12). 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Establishment of a Quality Assurance working committee for the CUA. 2. Benchmarking of the quality of all Online and Blended Learning provision across the CUA. 3. Undertake an international review of online/flexible learning Quality Scorecards and Guides. E.g. Online Learning Consortium and Quality Matters (US), UNIQUE - European Universities Quality in eLearning, the International Council for Open and Distance Education and the European Association of Distance Teaching Universities (EADTU). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convene a working group. • Review of best practice. • Cross institutional engagements to collate feedback. • Complete supporting documentation and disseminate to stakeholders.
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2	Building Digital Capabilities: online teaching development and learning technology services	<p>Building digital capabilities and pedagogic expertise in the CUA to design, deliver and support flexible, distance and e-learning opportunities and programmes.</p> <p>This work package will develop the <i>Teaching, Social and Cognitive Presence</i> required to create a rewarding educational experience for students learning online and flexibly.</p>			
	<p>(i) Training Needs Analysis</p> <p>(ii) Creation of training programmes underpinned by the appropriate pedagogy for flexible delivery</p>	<p>Identify the skills required by staff to optimally engage with flexible and online delivery modes.</p> <p>Work with international higher education partner SUNY (New York State University delivering online and flexible programmes to 30,000 students in the state across 20 + campuses) to replicate best practice in building academic and instructional design support teams/communities that support multiple campuses.</p>	<p>2018 – 2019</p> <p>2019</p> <p>2019 – 2020</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training Needs Analysis • Training Development Plan (TDP) • Identify Flexible Learning Design Champions • Establish Champion Team • Mentoring support by international partner 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of a pilot group 'A Community of Flexible Learning Design Champions' supporting the design and delivery of programmes in GMIT Campus sites. • Pilot the 'champion team' on a programme of study and evaluate the impact. • Consultation and mentoring support by SUNY (HEI international partner) on the ideal design team creation, services portfolio and soft infrastructure.

			2020 - 2021	On-line Student Advisors Training programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a training programme for 'Online Student Advisors' to support work package 3.
3	Providing appropriate student services to flexible learners and the student experience	This work package will focus on the development of delivery and effectiveness of flexible learning from a student services and student experience perspective.			
	(i) Provision of appropriate supports and services for all flexible learning students including those with disabilities	<p>A particular emphasis will be on the provision of appropriate supports and services for flexible learning students with disabilities, to include; physical, learning, visual, hearing and physiological/emotional disabilities as well as special educational needs assessment. The recent AHEAD survey (2018) which documented the participation rates of students with disabilities in higher education in Ireland focused primarily on fulltime and part-time students attending on-campus courses. This work package will seek to develop principles and online resources for flexible learners to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensure equity of accessibility to student support services for flexible learners 2. Ensure equity of student experience of flexible learners 	2019-2021	<p>Determination of appropriate support systems and identification of gaps</p> <p>Provision of significantly more equitable student support services for flexible learners</p>	<p>Using a focus group and individual interviews approach, we will engage with current and former flexible learners to establish what supports they currently access and what requirements they might have.</p> <p>We will also work to determine ways to provide appropriate support for international flexible learners.</p> <p>In a similar way, via focus groups and one-to-one interviews we will seek the views of academic staff who are experienced in flexible learning, particularly</p>

		3. Facilitate the use of learner analytics to identify flexible learners that are at risk of failure			<p>relevant Programme Directors.</p> <p>We will identify gaps in current provision across the CUA and seek to address these gaps via the other tasks within this WP.</p>
	(ii) Review of support systems	Determine appropriate ways for flexible learners within the CUA to be able access to support systems in a structured and equitable way.	<p>2019</p> <p>Dissemination and recommendations for change</p>		<p>Undertake an audit of current support systems for flexible learning across the three institutes, disseminate good practice and make recommendations for change across the CUA.</p> <p>Undertake a review the role and provision of student support provided by third party (non-HEI) organisations making recommendations for appropriate use of such support systems</p>
	(iii) Pilot and review Online Student Advisor system	IT Sligo are currently piloting a new role of Online Student Advisors (Commencing Sept 2018) whose role is to support online students through the application and enrolment process and to provide mentorship and support to enrolled students. As part of this project, we will report on the role and efficacy of this pilot and, if this role is effective, we will	<p>Preliminary Review 2019</p> <p>Second review to include support at pre-enrolment stage 2019</p> <p>Extend Pilot to other CUA members</p>	Review reports on the effectiveness of the Online Student Advisor role	<p>Pilot of the adoption of the role taking place at IT Sligo from Sept 2018-Sept 2019.</p> <p>Review and reports will be undertaken in June 2019 and Dec 2019</p>

		seek to extend it within the CUA as appropriate.			
	(iv) Source more effective and accessible ways to assess the learning needs of flexible learners	<p>With respect to special needs assessment currently an online system is available whereby all students can avail of Quick Scan*, an online questionnaire, which can accurately 'flag' specific areas of learning strengths and weaknesses, including mathematics difficulty, learning difficulties and dyslexia. However, if a student has a difficulty flagged they must then complete an adult dyslexia screening assessment, which can only take place with the Learning Support Tutor, as the software is only licenced to them. This makes it challenging for flexible learners to avail of the service unless they are prepared to attend the Institute in person.</p> <p>*Both IT Sligo and LYIT are currently using Quick Scan for full-time entrants. This software will be introduced in GMIT.</p>	<p>Identification of appropriate systems for special needs assessment of flexible learners by 2019</p> <p>Pilot of special needs assessment systems by 2020</p> <p>Identification of suitable examination systems by Q4 2019 and pilot completed by Q3 2020</p>	<p>A software package Do It Profiler has the added benefit of psychometric testing and there is the possibility that adult dyslexia assessment might be incorporated into the package, thus accommodating flexible learners.</p> <p>Within the current project, the team will seek to source more effective and accessible ways to assess the learning needs of flexible learners and we consider possible mechanisms for flexible learners with special educational needs to take examinations without having to attend on campus.</p>	<p>Learning Support Officers will undertake a review of systems suitable for flexible learners and identify a suitable system which will then be piloted across a range of courses at each of the IT's.</p> <p>Identification of more suitable examination systems for flexible learners with disabilities will be undertaken and piloted.</p>
	(v) Produce a suite of support packages, online supports and	<p>The suite of support packages may include:</p> <p>A. Get Ready Education – A Learning Journey designed to</p>	2019 for pilot in academic year 2020/21	A comprehensive online package of resources for flexible learners	Collation of a comprehensive support package for flexible learners which will be disseminated and made available to

	resources for students.	<p>help second level students prepare for the transition into higher education.</p> <p>B. Academic Success - Preparation for 3rd Level: C. Maths MOOC D. Online student's Induction Course</p>			learners within the CUA institutions
	(vi) Providing Student Union Services and Supports for Flexible Learners	As part of this work package, we will invite Students' Union representatives to explore what are the challenges/solutions to them providing support for these learners and where appropriate we will work with them to develop relevant principles for the support of flexible learners.	2019 with introduction across academic year 2020/21	With the Students' Union are supportive we would support them in developing principles for the support of flexible learners	Work with SU to develop relevant principles for the support of flexible learners.
	(vii) identify students who are at risk of failure	In order to help identify students who are at risk of failure and put in place steps to ensure flexible learners do not drop out of their course we will employ digital Learning Analytics using VLE dashboard to monitor and support student engagement.	<p>Audit of current provision and capabilities 2019</p> <p>Effectiveness study and dissemination 2020</p> <p>Development of principles for use in academic year 2020/21</p>	<p>Audit report, effectiveness assessment report; dissemination activities.</p> <p>Principles for use of learner analytics across the CUA.</p>	<p>Identify the different systems available at the partner colleges and their capabilities and limitations.</p> <p>Undertake a study to examine the effectiveness of the different systems and disseminate these across the CUA colleagues with a view to developing principles for the use of learner analytics for the checking the engagement and progress of flexible learners.</p>

4	Delivering for Industry	<p>Develop three separate pilot programmes on a flexible delivery basis for targeting the three distinctive industrial profiles of the West/North West region served by the CUA HEIs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Donegal – FinTech • Sligo – Pharma • Galway/Mayo - MedTech <p>In developing the pilot programmes, the project team will work closely with the Regional Skills Forum, Regional Growth Sectors and statutory bodies such as the Western Development Commission.</p>	2019 - 2021	3 flexible delivery programmes developed, including relevant technological resources and supports	<p>2019 Scoping study</p> <p>2020 Programme development and approval</p> <p>2020/2021 programme delivery and evaluation</p>
5	Dissemination and Evaluation of iNOTE Project	<p>This work package will serve to ensure that the outputs of the project are shared and mainstreamed.</p> <p>In addition, a robust process will be implemented to ensure the monitoring of progress of the project against actions and the evaluation of project targets.</p>			
	(i) Dissemination of project outputs	Collaborating, sharing and mainstreaming CUA digital capabilities for flexible delivery	<p>2018-2019</p> <p>2019-2020</p>		<p>Twice yearly meeting with iNOTE Governance Group and CUA Steering Group</p> <p>Annual Workshop and Conference</p>

			2020-2021		<p>Annual dissemination via West/North West Cluster Steering Group</p> <p>Annual dissemination to both Regional Skills Fora</p> <p>Participate in QQI Annual Quality Forum</p>
	(ii) Project Monitoring and Evaluation	<p>Implementing a robust process for monitoring progress against actions and evaluation against project targets</p> <p>Governance for the project will be provided through the CUA Working Group 3.</p> <p>The iNOTE Governance Forum will meet every six months and will review progress against targets.</p> <p>The work packages will be managed by the iNOTE Steering Group which will meet every two months. Each of the work packages has an identified institution lead(s) with responsibility for providing an annual report.</p> <p>Evaluation of the iNOTE project will involve both internal and external dimensions. The project will be opened to invited external analysis, which will result in the production of an annual</p>	<p>2018-2019</p> <p>2019-2021</p>	<p>Project monitoring and evaluation reports by project teams.</p> <p>Project evaluation report by external evaluator.</p>	<p>Submission of six monthly and annual reports</p> <p>Presentation of annual evaluation report by external evaluator.</p>

		<p>report for review by the CUA members and will inform the work plan.</p> <p>Continuity and integration will be provided by CUA WG3 Project Manager who is member of both the iNOTE Governance Forum and iNOTE Steering Group.</p> <p>All iNOTE progress reports will be reviewed by the CUA Steering Group.</p>			

3b). Project Financial Plan

Table 3b: TOTAL Expected Costs						
	<u>Work Package (1)</u>	<u>Work Package (2)</u>	<u>Work Package (3)</u>	<u>Work Package (4)</u>	<u>Work Package (5)</u>	
Staff Costs						0
<i>Academic</i>	180000	240000	240000	580000	150000	0
<i>Support staff</i>	80000	150000	160000	220000	45000	0
Materials	1000	27000	26000	36000	15000	0
Travel	12000	30000	32000	34000	26000	0
Soft infrastructure	10000	49000	56000	78000	4500	0
Equipment (under €15k)	8000	48000	43000	42000	5500	
Other	0	45000	48000	63000	60000	0
Total Direct Costs	291000	589000	605000	1053000	306000	0

TOTAL DIRECT COSTS	€2,844,000
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(Summary of all work package costs listed above)

Table 3b: Yearly Expected Costs (2018)						
	<u>Work Package (1)</u>	<u>Work Package (2)</u>	<u>Work Package (3)</u>	<u>Work Package (4)</u>	<u>Work Package (5)</u>	
Staff Costs	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Academic</i>	20000	20000	20000	40000	15000	0
<i>Support staff</i>	0	11500	12000	10000		0
Materials	0		2000	3000	0	0
Travel	1000	2000	2000	2000	2000	0
Soft infrastructure	0	4000	6000	6000	0	0
Equipment (under €15k)	2000	3000	8000	6000	2500	
Other	0	0	3000	3000	0	0
Total Direct Costs	23000	40500	53000	70000	19500	0

2018 TOTAL DIRECT COSTS	€206,000
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(Summary of all work package 2018 costs listed above)

Table 3b: Yearly Expected Costs (2019)						
	<u>Work Package (1)</u>	<u>Work Package (2)</u>	<u>Work Package (3)</u>	<u>Work Package (4)</u>	<u>Work Package (5)</u>	
Staff Costs		0	0	0	0	0
<i>Academic</i>	80000	100000	100000	180000	45000	0
<i>Support staff</i>	40000	69250	50000	70000	15000	0
Materials	1000	9000	8000	11000	5000	0
Travel	6000	9500	10000	10000	8000	0
Soft infrastructure	5000	15000	20000	24000	1500	0
Equipment (under €15k)	3000	15000	15000	12000	1000	
Other	0	15000	15000	20000	20000	0
Total Direct Costs	135000	232750	218000	327000	95500	0

2019 TOTAL DIRECT COSTS	€1,008,250
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(Summary of all work package 2019 costs listed above)

Table 3b: Yearly Expected Costs (2020)						
	<u>Work Package (1)</u>	<u>Work Package (2)</u>	<u>Work Package (3)</u>	<u>Work Package (4)</u>	<u>Work Package (5)</u>	
Staff Costs	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Academic</i>	80000	100000	100000	180000	45000	0
<i>Support staff</i>	40000	69250	50000	70000	15000	0
Materials	0	9000	8000	11000	5000	0
Travel	5000	9000	10000	11000	8000	0
Soft infrastructure	5000	15000	15000	24000	1500	0
Equipment (under €15k)	3000	15000	15000	12000	1000	
Other	0	15000	15000	20000	20000	0
Total Direct Costs	133000	232250	213000	328000	95500	0

2020 TOTAL DIRECT COSTS	€1,001,750
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(Summary of all work package 2020 costs listed above)

Table 3b: Yearly Expected Costs (2021)						
	<u>Work Package (1)</u>	<u>Work Package (2)</u>	<u>Work Package (3)</u>	<u>Work Package (4)</u>	<u>Work Package (5)</u>	
Staff Costs	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Academic</i>	0	20000	20000	180000	45000	0
<i>Support staff</i>	0		48000	70000	15000	0
Materials	0	9000	8000	11000	5000	0
Travel	0	9500	10000	11000	8000	0
Soft infrastructure	0	15000	15000	24000	1500	0
Equipment (under €15k)		15000	5000	12000	1000	
Other	0	15000	15000	20000	20000	0
Total Direct Costs	0	83500	121000	328000	95500	0

2021 TOTAL DIRECT COSTS	€628,000
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(Summary of all work package 2021 costs listed above)

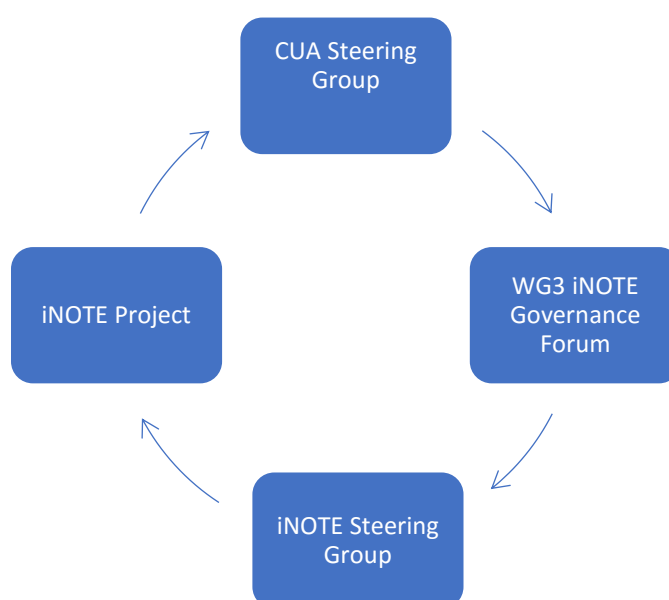
Section 4: Sustainability and Mainstreaming Plan

Following Ministerial approval of its Stage 1 Expression of Interest in October 2015, the CUA has worked steadily towards its objective. Passage of the Technological Universities Act 2018 provides the stimulus for the CUA to progress purposively towards application for designation as a Technological University (TU).

Having a long record of accomplishment and collaboration, the three Institutes appreciate the importance of shared trust among the partners in developing any initiative of this nature. It is also important that the stakeholders of each institution are clear about the benefits accruing to them through this engagement. With a clear focus on these two factors, the alliance has a solid foundation on which to build stronger and closer collaboration.

During the past year, the CUA has formed four working groups. Work Group 3 is focusing on 'Academic Planning, Strategy and Related Engagement'. This working group comprises the three CUA Vice Presidents for Academic Affairs and Registrars, and a CUA Project Manager. Additional CUA staff will be co-opted onto this group as the need arises.

This project submission for the 'Higher Education System Innovation and Transformation Call 2018' is being managed via the CUA Working Group 3 (WG3) iNOTE Governance Forum. A sub-group of WG3 has been formed with membership from each CUA institution (see details in Section 1). This iNOTE Steering Group reports to the Vice Presidents for Academic Affairs and Registrars will be charged with the development and implementation of project. See summary of project governance below.



A key focus of the group will be ensuring that the work packages have been developed using shared approaches to ensure sustainability of the actions, generate efficiencies and enable effective transfer of the knowledge within the CUA.

Furthermore, a key focus of the group will be to disseminate the digital capability for flexible learning knowledge that has been generated to benefit the wider higher education sector. Each work package has an identified institution lead (as presented in the table below) with responsibility for providing an annual report (via the Project Lead) to the CUA Working Group 3.

Work Package		Collaborating Institution Lead
1	Quality assurance policy for flexible delivery	Letterkenny Institute of Technology
2	Building digital capabilities	Galway Mayo Institute of Technology
3	Digitally enhanced student supports	Institute of Technology Sligo
4	Delivering work based flexible learning programmes using digital capabilities	Letterkenny Institute of Technology Galway Mayo Institute of Technology Institute of Technology Sligo
5	Mainstreaming, disseminating and evaluating CUA digital capabilities for flexible delivery.	Letterkenny Institute of Technology

The iNOTE project aligns with national priority objectives for higher education. Each of the CUA members strategic plans contain specific objectives which support this project. In turn, these strategic objectives are reflected in detail in the individual Institute compacts, which address national higher education objectives.

The main goal of this project to provide a stimulus for meaningful collaborative activity responding to the needs of the regions the CUA serves as progress is made towards the establishment of a Technological University with a priority focus on flexible delivery. The funded project will support specific activity via work packages to effect change in terms of flexible learning and hence mainstream this activity via the TU structure.

Section 5: Impact Statement

The first Higher Education System innovation and Transformation Call 2018 has prioritised four key areas. The iNOTE project addresses the second priority -

Innovation and transformation in flexible, distance and e-learning opportunities and programmes

This project focusing on building digital capability for flexible learning delivery in the West/North West Region, will via the project work packages address the key system objectives for the Higher Education System 2018 -2020;

Higher Education System 2018 -2020	iNOTE Project
Objective 1: Providing a strong talent pipeline combining knowledge, skills & employability which responds effectively to the needs of our enterprise, public service and community sectors, both nationally and regionally, and maintains Irish leadership in Europe for skill availability	Work Package 4
Objective 2: Creating rich opportunities for national and international engagement which enhances the learning environment and delivers a strong bridge to enterprise and the wider community	Work Packages 2 & 4
Objective 4: Significantly improves the equality of opportunity through Education and Training and recruits a student body that reflects the diversity and social mix of Ireland's population	Work Package 3
Objective 5: Demonstrates consistent improvement in the quality of the learning environment with a close eye to international best practice through a strong focus on quality & academic excellence	Work Packages 1, 2, 3 & 4
Objective 6: Demonstrates consistent improvement in governance, leadership and operational excellence.	Work Packages 1, 2, 5

The iNOTE project presents innovative and transformative work packages designed to support the offering of flexible education propositions, via enhanced digital capabilities. The outputs of the work packages, collaboration and shared resources between three HEIs will all positively influence flexible learners and the wider higher education sector. They will also serve as a means of meeting, in part, the demands of a 20% increase in the student population in Ireland by 2029.

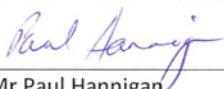
This project will enable the CUA to provide an enhanced learning experience for flexible learners and will empower staff to effectively respond to diverse communities of learners and practitioners across a highly dispersed, mostly rural community via a multi-campus structure.

The project will also ensure that the CUA members can fully satisfy their regional remit in terms of meeting regional training, education and development needs. Furthermore, the development of flexible programmes for industry will enable entrance to new markets (beyond CAO) for the institutes. Such developments have the potential to make a significant contribution to the overall long-term sustainability of the three institutes.


In tandem with the life of this project (2018 – 2021), the CUA will have progressed towards the achievement of the TU criteria and the creation of a Technological University for the West/North-West of Ireland. At such time, the innovative proposals, which form part of this project will become core activities and have had a transformative role by being integrated into the regular functions of the TU and ensure sustainability.

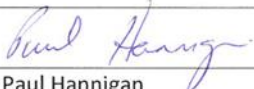
Section 6: Signatures

Section 6: Signatures

Head of Lead Institution Signature:	
Name:	Mr Paul Hannigan
Title:	President, Letterkenny Institute of Technology On behalf of Connacht Ulster Alliance
Date:	20 th Sep. 2018.

Head of Collaborating Institution 1 Signature:	<i>Michael Hannon</i>
Name:	Dr Michael Hannon
Job title:	Deputising for the President, Galway Mayo Institute of Technology
Date:	20-09-2018

Head of Collaborating Institution 2:	
Name:	Dr Brendan McCormack
Job title:	President, Institute of Technology Sligo
Date:	20 th September 2018

Head Collaborating Institution 3:	
Name:	Mr Paul Hannigan
Job title:	President, Letterkenny Institute of Technology
Date:	20 th Sept. 2018

Reference Notes

- [1] DoES (2018), Taoiseach & Ministers Announce €11.9 billion Investment in Education as part of Project Ireland 2040, Department of Education and Skills Press Release, September.
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- [4] NFETL (2014), Teaching and Learning in Irish Higher Education: A roadmap for enhancement in a digital world 2015 – 2017, National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education, Dublin.
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- [7] IT Sligo (2017), Institute of Technology Sligo Strategic Plan 2017 -2022.
- [8] LYIT (2014), Letterkenny Institute of Technology Strategic Plan, 2014-17 – Our Commitment to the North West Gateway Learning Region.
- [9] LYIT (2018), Letterkenny Institute of Technology, Draft Strategic Plan, Emerging Strategic Pillars 2018 – 2022.
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- [12] Higher Education Academy (2018), Advance HE, Flexible Learning in Higher Education, UK, <https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/individuals/strategic-priorities/flexible-learning#section-1>
- [13] Murphy, T. (2018), A review of the existing higher education policy landscape for digital teaching and learning in Ireland, National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education, Dublin, June.

Letters of Support for the iNOTE project



September 15, 2018

Support Letter for collaboration SUNY Empire State College the United States

I am pleased to provide a letter of potential collaboration with Dr Carina Ginty, Teaching and Learning Officer from the Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology/Connacht Ulster Alliance for building digital capacities. This would be accomplished by building a Community of Online Learning Design Champions in GMIT. The partnership would allow us to showcase and partner for cases of best practice in SUNY demonstrating coordinating, training and supporting learning technology /instructional design teams. I would be pleased to mentor and host lectures or workshops through the State University of New York, Empire State College and related universities in SUNY or others who have specialist expertise. I would also be willing to set-up meetings with colleagues at other adult-serving institutions or institutions in the project interests.

I had the pleasure of working in Ireland on a Fulbright Scholar program in 2015 at Waterford Institute of Technology, and have continued to have an alliance with Carina Ginty and colleagues on serving adult learners and research related to digital learning. I usually visit the region every year to continue these relationships and have hosted several professional visits in New York or through online virtual meetings. I am a former acting President, Provost (Registrar in Ireland), Dean of Online and faculty member at ESC. I was also President and a leader of the Online Learning Consortium (formerly Sloan Foundation) for six years, and keep relationships with leading digital innovators in the US and beyond.

I would be most pleased to serve as a project mentor or advisor, and can be reached at meg.benke@esc.edu. The project sounds very exciting.

Sincerely,

Meg Benke, Ph.D., Professor and Coordinator, Master of Arts in Adult Learning,

And Master of Arts in Learning and Emerging Technologies

Fulbright at Waterford Institute of Technology, 2015

111 West Ave | Saratoga Springs, NY 12866-6048 | 518 587-2100 ext. 2429 | www.esc.edu/grad



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Ms Carmel Brennan,
Student Retention & Engagement Officer,
Galway Mayo Institute of Technology,
Galway.

19th September 2018

Re: Online and Blended Delivery Mode Programmes

Dear Carmel

RPS welcome GMIT's move towards increasing online and blended delivery mode programmes. This type of flexible delivery makes staff upskilling more attractive and feasible. We welcome the opportunity to continue our work with you and your colleagues in the development of programmes for our industry.

RPS is a leading international multidisciplinary consultancy with the experience to support clients through the development process, from planning to design to implementation. We have over 5000 employees located in 66 cities and major towns around Ireland, the UK, the Netherlands, USA, Australia and South-East Asia.

In response to key changes within the Construction Industry together with fast changing market conditions, new and existing competitors in the market, and software changes, RPS recognises the need for a significant step change in our approach to learning and staff development.

The Department of Building and Civil Engineering at GMIT have partnered with RPS on several research-informed projects for the construction industry over recent years. The multi-award winning Higher Diploma in Engineering in Building Information Modelling programme was designed, through this close symbiotic alliance, to meet the demand for implementing innovative processes and technologies to keep pace with a changing construction sector, both in Ireland and internationally.

I wish you the very best in the development of these online and blended delivery mode programmes and I compliment you on your approach to meeting the requirements of people who cannot attend college on a full-time basis. I look forward to you having a successful outcome and to working with your graduates into the future.

Yours sincerely,

Mark Costello
Director BIM & Technical Services
For and on behalf of RPS

Dublin | Cork | Galway | Sligo

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RPS Consulting Engineers Limited, registered in Ireland No. 161581
RPS Planning & Environment Limited, registered in Ireland No. 160191
RPS Engineering Services Limited, registered in Ireland No. 99795
The Registered office of each of the above companies is West Pier
Business Campus, Dun Laoghaire, Co. Dublin, A96 N6T7



Capital Investment Plan

MAJOR CAPITAL FUNDING

Funding		Total	2018/2019 Budget	2019/2020 Budget	2020/2021 Budget	2021/2022 Budget	22/23 Budget
		€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000
Land Acquisition							
Lands in vicinity of Galway campus	HEA/other	7,600	0	7,600	0	0	0
Total Land Acquisition		7,600	0	7,600	0	0	0
Galway Campus							
STEM Building	HEA/PPP	18,750	100	150	5,000	11,000	2,500
EI Hub Extension	EI/other	3,750	1,350	2,000	400	0	0
CCAM -fabric and upgrade	HEA/other	5,500	0	1,000	1,500	1,500	1,500
Sports Alliances	CR	650	450	200	0	0	0
Student building	HEA/OTHER	1,500	0	0	300	1,200	0
IT & Equipment upgrades	HEA/other	4,000	0	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
Apprenticeship Infrastructure Work		290	290				
Castlebar Infrastructure Works							
Total Galway Campus		34,440	2,190	4,350	8,200	14,700	5,000
Mayo Campus							
Fabric Upgrade	HEA/other	1,600	500	500	500	100	0
Sports Field	CR/sportsgrant/other	500	0	100	300	100	0
IT & Equipment upgrades	HEA/other	600	0	150	150	150	150
Total Mayo Campus		2,700	500	750	950	350	150
Letterfrack							
Spray Booth	CR	200	0	100	100	0	0
IT & Equipment upgrades	HEA/other	600	0	150	150	150	150
Total Letterfrack Campus		800	0	250	250	150	150
Other							
Murrough Sports Options	Other	1,750	0	0	500	750	500
Mountbellew Hall	CR	150	0	0	150	0	
Total Other		1,900	0	0	650	750	500
Total Capital Expenditure		47,440	2,690	12,950	10,050	15,950	5,800