# lyit

Institiúid Teicneolaíochta
Leitir Ceanainn
Letterkenny Institute
of Technology

# STRATEGIC PLAN 2019-2023

**LYIT @ 50** - Delivering for Our Students and Our Region

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# CHAIRMAN'S STATEMENT

On behalf of the Governing Body of Letterkenny Institute of Technology I welcome the presentation of this Strategic Plan covering the five years 2019 to 2023.

The previous plan was approved by the Governing Body at a time of severe funding deficits leaving restricted scope for innovation and expansion due to the prevalence of austerity within all sectors of our economy including the Education Sector. Despite these limitations, in the intervening years, LYIT has increased student numbers and evolved into a more inclusive educational Institution reflecting the changed cultural fabric of our modern Irish Society.

Input from and collaboration with our many stakeholders, both within and outside the Institute, is reflected in the new plan.

At the heart of the plan is a clear focus on achieving positive experiences and successful outcomes for our students locally, nationally and internationally. Given the speed at which technological innovation and change is happening now, our five year strategy needs to be flexible enough to facilitate these changes and to provide relevant courses as soon as the demand arises. Adaptability is inherent in the plan which will be subject to regular review.

The LYIT's trajectory towards Technological University status is progressing and our aspiration is for a successful collaborative union with our fellow institutes in GMIT and IT Sligo. This will require lengthy negotiation and significant mutual trust both within and outside our Institute in order to achieve this goal. After almost 50 years of experience, LYIT is poised and prepared to take its place within a University environment.

Fintan Moloney

Chairman

# PRESIDENT'S STATEMENT

## Review of LYIT Strategic Plan 2014 -17

In preparation for this Strategic Plan it was useful to review the 2014 - 2017 plan and the various outcomes arising from it. Looking back now the shorter timescale covered by that plan reflected the uncertainty of the HE Landscape at the time. While reference was made to "Greenshoots" appearing in the Irish economy, from an institutional perspective we knew we had some distance still to travel. When reviewing the five domains contained in that plan there are notable successes but also areas where we didn't progress as anticipated.

### Learning and Teaching

There was significant ongoing work over the lifetime of the plan in this domain, specifically the impact of the Institute's engagement with the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning and significant developments in work-based learning, online and blended delivery. The success of the Institute's MALT programme supported the professional development of a number of staff and this extended to primary and secondary teachers in the region through Professional Mathematics and Coding.

### Student Experience

The student social spaces have undergone significant transformation throughout the period of this plan reflecting a positive engagement between the Institute's Estates Manager and the Students Union. The student voice has also been heard more effectively through the NStEP process which allowed staff and students to sit side by side in various fora influencing institute planning. The work of the Students Union in supporting a significant increase in the number of clubs and societies is recognised and a more professional approach to the management of competitive teams has resulted in significant success for the Institute. The change in the cultural mix of the student body influenced by the growth in non-EU students studying at the college has had and will continue to have a very positive impact on student experience.

### Research, Innovation and Enterprise

This activity has evolved through the investment in the Institute's CoLab increasing the number of start-up companies setting up on campus and creating additional opportunities for graduates. The Institute has appointed a Head of Research and Innovation and there has been a significant growth in funded research projects with Enterprise Ireland and academic partners particularly on a cross-border basis. While the proposed industry and employment forum has not materialised as envisaged it has emerged in other ways and through other fora.

### Collaboration and Engagement

Work has continued with our CUA partners in pursuit of the criteria for Technological University and the momentum around this project has increased significantly since the publication of the TU Act 2018. In addition the Institute has formed a Cross-border FE/HE Cluster, meeting the needs of our specific region while maintaining membership of the West North/West Cluster. There has been significant emphasis put on marketing and schools engagement activity and this has cemented our relationship with schools in Donegal and opened up new possibilities with schools outside the county and on a cross-border basis. We have continued to work through our MoUs with Ernact, Donegal ETB, Donegal County Council and Donegal GAA.
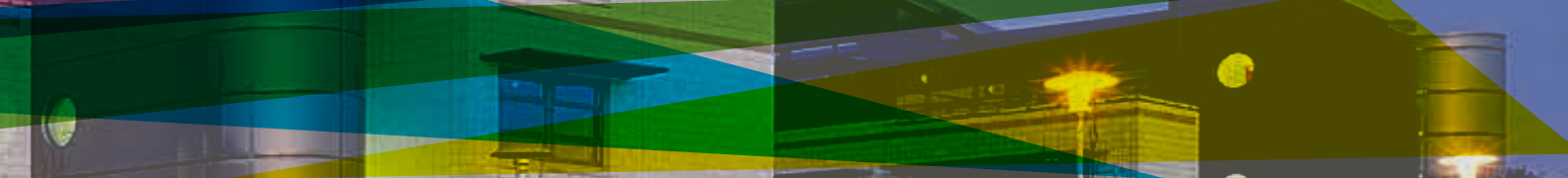
### Sustainability and Resource Allocation

This was an issue that was of paramount importance for the Institute in 2014 when the previous plan was published. LYIT encountered some difficult years from a financial perspective running operating deficits for six years in a row only returning to a balanced budget in 2015/16 with an operating surplus in 2016/17. A surplus is predicted for the financial year 2017/18. The proposed functional area plans were successful up to a point and on reflection they were overly prescriptive. This issue has been addressed to a certain extent through the CINNTE Cyclical Review, academic reviews and the Central Services Reviews which have been completed over the last 18 months. The Institute has improved its risk management environment and this is reflected through the engagement with the Audit and Risk Committee of Governing Body.

## Strategic Plan 2019-2023

As can be seen from the preceeding paragraphs the Institute was due to agree a new Strategic Plan in 2018. Given the level of activity ongoing throughout 2018 and the recommendations arising from the Institute's CINNTE Cyclical Review published in November 2018 it was agreed with the Governing Body that the plan would be deferred for finalisation to 2019. The following are some of the factors that had a direct impact on this decision being made.

The Strategic Planning process began in September 2017, the President made a presentation to the Governing Body identifying some potential themes to be addressed as part of our emerging strategic plan. At that time input was requested

on an array of issues or on any activities deemed worthy of inclusion. This process was replicated through correspondence with all staff in November of that year.

A number of issues arose throughout 2018 which had a direct impact on the Higher Education environment and consequently on our planning process. These included:

- LYIT was successful in securing funding through a Public Private Partnership package to develop a new building on the Letterkenny campus to the value of almost €20m.

- LYIT was successful in a number of significant research projects through Interreg V funding, Erasmus+, the Technology Gateway process with Enterprise Ireland, and is a partner in a Horizon 2020 project. Multi-disciplinary research projects with our various university partners signalling a more sustainable research environment at LYIT into the future. In addition, for the first time the HEA agreed to allocate dedicated funding for research to the Institute of Technology Sector and LYIT will benefit from this in 2019.

- For the first time in seven years, the Institute returned a balanced budget in its annual accounts for 2015/16 and this has been followed by an operating surplus of €700k for 2016/17. A surplus is predicted for the financial year 2017/18. This does not mean that the Institute's financial concerns are allayed but it should allow us to move out of the austerity mind-set that has gripped us for the best part of a decade.

- The Government launched its Action Plan for Education 2018 where the key focus for 2018 included: promoting and encouraging quality, excellence and innovation, meeting critical skills gaps, leading in key enabling technologies, championing inclusion and increasing participation in lifelong learning.

- A new Code of Governance for the Institutes of Technology was developed by THEA and implementation began on 1 January 2018.

- A new funding model and performance framework was published by the HEA in January 2018. This framework defined the new performance compact which was agreed between the HEA and LYIT in January 2019.

- Project Ireland 2040 National Planning Framework was launched on Friday, 16 February 2018 and this framework has had a significant bearing on our new Strategic Plan. Letterkenny is given substantial prominence in its own right in this framework and also for its importance in the cross-border context.

- The Technological Universities Act 2018 was enacted in March 2018. Subsequent to this an application was made from three Dublin Institutes of Technology to become a Technological University and TU Dublin came into being on 1 January 2019. The passing of the Act has given clear direction as to how Technological Universities will evolve and this has focussed the activity of the CUA. LYIT has ensured that any evolving structure will recognise the needs of our region.

- In February 2018 the MoU for the cross-border further and higher education cluster including LYIT, Ulster University, Donegal ETB and North West Regional College was officially signed. The Minister for Education and Skills, Richard Bruton, TD attended the Institute to witness the signing of the MoU. This cluster is receiving significant political backing in the context of the emerging North West City Region and is an important development in respect of what has been a key component of longstanding Institute strategy. The Cluster received funding of €250k to support a work plan. This work commenced in January 2019.

- Accelerating Gender Equality in Irish Higher Education Institutions Gender Action Plan 2018/20 was launched in December 2018.

- The Institute underwent a QQI CINNTE Cyclical Review in April 2018 with the final report being published in November of that year. The Institute used the preparation for the Cyclical Review as an input to the emerging Strategic Plan and also the recommendations and commendations from the Review have had a direct impact on the emerging plan.

- Given our location, the uncertainty created by Brexit has had a destabilising effect on our region and LYIT has a significant role to play in regional development post Brexit.
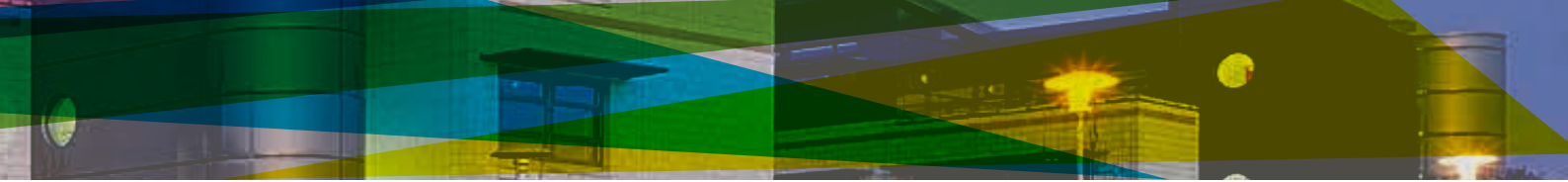
The new plan for 2019-2023 is addressing some familiar challenges but also some new ones. The work on the emerging Technological University has become more focussed as the participating institutes work towards meeting the TU criteria and making a submission to the HEA. Brexit has brought a focus back on the border and specifically the work of LYIT on a cross-border basis. This collaborative work has taken on extra significance in the context of Project Ireland 2040 and the work of local authorities on both sides of the border to develop the North West City Region including Letterkenny, Derry and Strabane.

The impact of technology is all pervasive within this new plan and LYIT must adopt a leadership role in the use of technology in its own work but also in the application of technology through the courses provided and the research undertaken. The Institute has ambitious plans for infrastructural development specifically with the expansion of its sporting infrastructure and also the completion of a €20m extension to the Letterkenny campus. Investment is also needed in the Killybegs campus to become a more attractive location for prospective students and the development of an Ocean Innovation Centre in Killybegs should allow greater engagement with industry similar to the CoLab model in Letterkenny and the digital hubs throughout the county supported by LYIT.

Our future funding will be dependent on an external environment where the majority of funding will be allocated on a competitive basis. This will be the new normal and will require an internal restructuring to take advantage of the new scenario.

Internally it is important that we address the austerity mindset that we have been working under over the last 10 years. This does not mean that we are careless with scarce resources but that we are ambitious about what we want to achieve and revise the structures we currently have to address the strategies we want to pursue. LYIT is undergoing significant transformation in terms of staff turnover and it is important that this voice is heard in the next stage of the Institute's development.

The Institute must continue to be a leader within the region and this is reflected through our international profile and the ongoing recruitment of students from outside of Ireland. Our engagement with industry has grown significantly over the last five years and there is potential for further development of this engagement to ensure that the North West City Region continues to develop as proposed.

This year recognises the 50th Anniversary of our Killybegs campus and the Letterkenny campus will be 50 years old in 2021. This plan has allowed us to reflect on our development over that half century and to look forward positively to the next period of the Institute's development. The timescale of this plan will be marked by a number of celebrations of these milestones and it is important that while reflecting on the past we build very strongly for the future.


Paul Hannigan

President

# 1. INTRODUCTION

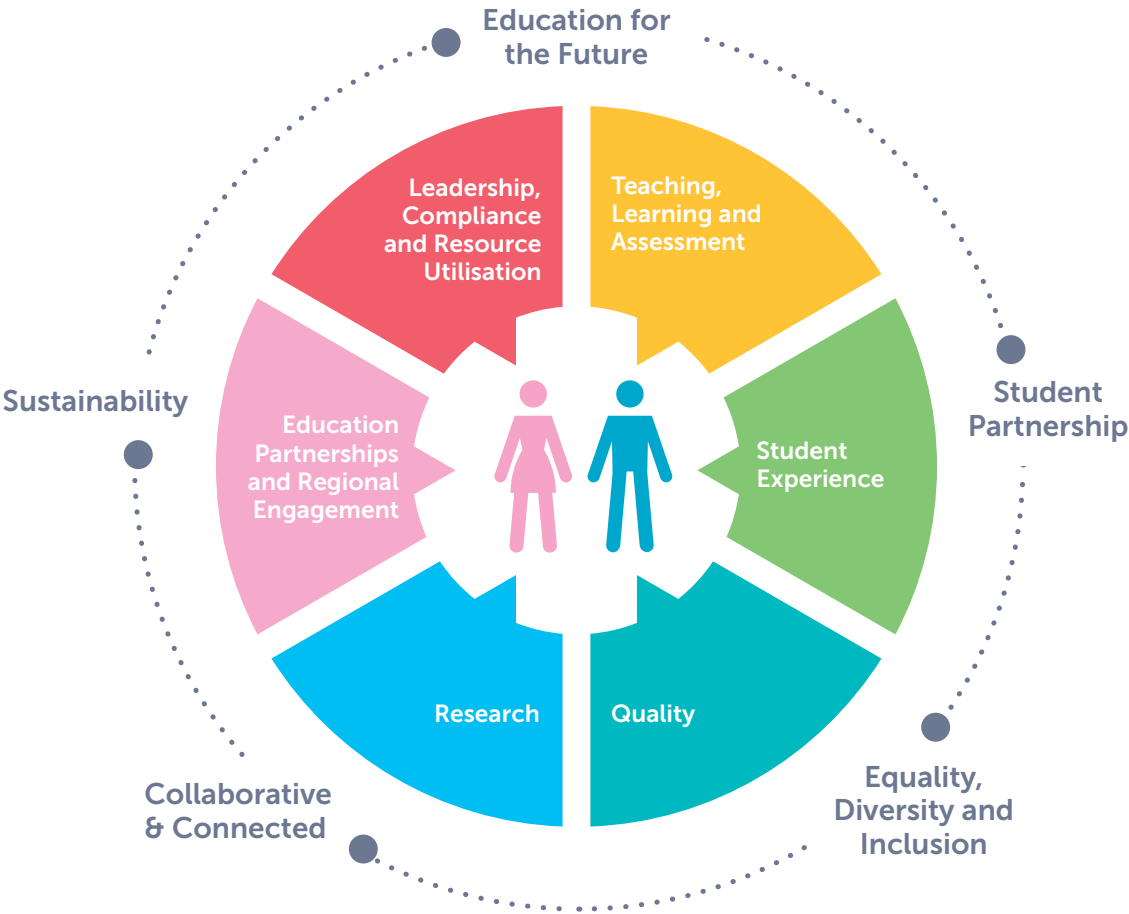## Strategic Plan 2019-2023 – Themes and Objectives

The approach to framing this strategic plan is a familiar one. We will set out our mission to outline what LYIT is doing, a vision that captures where we are striving to reach, and values that detail how we are going to approach this transition.

In this strategic plan we also identify 'themes' that permeate many of the objectives and are presented here as: Education for the Future; Student Partnership; Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion; Collaborative and Connected; and Sustainability. These elements were selected as themes because of their cross-cutting nature and also to give prominence to these important emerging areas in the higher education debate that were not centrally addressed in previous Institute strategies.

The six objective domains employed in this strategy are: Teaching, Learning & Assessment; Student Experience; Quality; Education Partnerships & Regional Engagement; Research; and Leadership, Compliance & Resource Utilisation. Each objective domain includes five objectives.

However, before we set out the core of this strategy we first examine the key influence that Our Region and our pursuit of Technological University status through the Connacht Ulster Alliance (CUA) has in shaping this strategy and also through LYIT @ 50 reflect on important milestones for this Institute.

# Figure 1 Themes and Objective Domains for Strategic Plan 2019-2023



Education for the Future

Leadership, Compliance and Resource Utilisation

Teaching, Learning and Assessment

Student Partnership

Student Experience

Sustainability

Education Partnerships and Regional Engagement

Research

Quality

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Collaborative & Connected

# 2. OUR REGION

Project Ireland 2040 aims to achieve ten strategic outcomes around the overarching themes of wellbeing, equality and opportunity fit well with this strategy. Strategic Plan 2019-2023 will positively contribute to achieving the outcomes of Project Ireland 2040 under Compact Growth; Strengthened Rural Economies and Communities; A Strong Economy supported by Enterprise, Innovation and Skills; and Access to Quality Childcare, Education and Health Services. Institute strategy has always been shaped by the region we serve, and this takes on an even greater significance in the context of Project Ireland 2040 and the plans for place-making and the North West City Region.

The National Planning Framework (NPF) has identified the key role that Letterkenny and Donegal must play in more balanced regional development. The NPF further sets out a vision for the North West City Region as: *Addressing enhanced connectivity is a priority for this regional area as well as enabling growth and competitiveness to support the strong links that exist between Letterkenny and Northern Ireland. While a co-ordinated strategy exists through the North-West Growth Partnership, there is scope to further reflect this approach in a regional and local spatial planning context to ensure that Letterkenny and environs has the capacity to grow sustainably and secure investment in the context of the cross-border North-West Gateway Initiative.*

The North West City Region growth agenda has been firmly established through the North West Strategic Growth Partnership (NWSGP) and associated structures. The NWSGP has been co-designed and agreed by local and central government in both jurisdictions as the vehicle for co-ordinating and influencing all aspects of future growth of the North West City Region and is the endorsed mechanism via the North South Ministerial Council for senior central government officials and their Departments to engage with the North West City Region on collaborative approaches to growth.
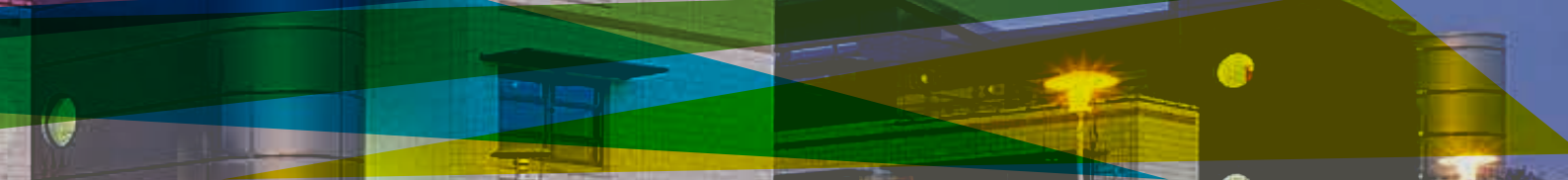
On 23 February 2018 the NWSGP, in partnership with the Higher and Further Education and Training Institutions of the North West City Region, announced a new agreement in education, training and innovation for the North West City Region. The agreement is the result of years of successful collaborative working amongst the four education sector providers –Letterkenny Institute for Technology (LYIT), Ulster University (UU), North West Regional College (NWRC) and Donegal Education and Training Board (DETB) - with the aim of improving access to higher and further level education and training to students living and studying in the North West City Region.

This project which achieved initial funding support through the HEA for higher education landscape reform is also aligned with the National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030 (January 2011) in respect of cross-border collaboration and regional development: *Collaboration across the system nationally will also continue to be encouraged, focusing on areas where there is potential to build national scale and strength. There is also significant potential for institutional collaboration on a North-South basis to advance cross-border regional development and strategically advance Irish higher education on an all-island basis.*

# 3. TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY

LYIT's involvement in the Technological University is premised on enhancing student opportunities and the positive social, cultural and economic impact we have on our region.  Through Strategic Plan 2019-2023 we have aligned the strategic objectives of LYIT with its future as a constituent university college in a Technological University.

The Connacht-Ulster Alliance (CUA) is a consortium of LYIT, IT Sligo and GMIT that has been working together since 2012 to become a Technological University (TU) for the West/North-West.  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.

Section 9 of the Technological Universities Act 2018 sets out in detail the functions of a technological university and they are included in Appendix B. These functions in themselves represent a compelling agenda for LYIT to pursue over the next five years and they have been assimilated into the objectives in this strategy.

As part of the Connacht Ulster Alliance (CUA), LYIT is working towards the criteria detailed in Section 28 of the Technological Universities Act. These criteria are set out in Appendix C and the necessary measures to support the achievement of these criteria are also reflected in the strategic objectives detailed here. Section 9 of the Act very clearly presents the context for delivering on the functions of a technological university as *having particular regard to the needs of the region in which the campuses of the technological university are located*.  Ensuring compliance with section 9 will require the adoption of a distributed model of governance and management with the autonomy for the constituent colleges to deliver on their particular regional agendas.

# 4. LYIT @ 50

The LYIT School of Tourism - established as the Hotel Training and Catering College, Killybegs - celebrates its fiftieth anniversary in 2019. In 2021, the Letterkenny campus of LYIT reaches the same milestone.

Emerging Government policy in the 1960s helped shape to a significant extent the higher education landscape of today. Appraisals conducted by the OECD pointed to the need for advanced technical education leading to the establishment of Regional Technical Colleges in the 1970s which were re-designated as Institutes of Technology (IOT) in 1998.

Donogh O'Malley Regional Technical College (RTC Letterkenny) opened in 1971 offering courses at certificate and diploma level and a Leaving Certificate programme for students from local Vocational Schools. Letterkenny RTC initially came within the remit of County Donegal Vocational Education Committee (VEC) who had previously founded the Killybegs college. In 1992, the VEC renamed the Killybegs college as Tourism College, Killybegs (TCK). An agreement for academic integration between LYIT and TCK was signed in 2001 and the Institute of Technology Act 2006 formalised this arrangement establishing TCK as a School of LYIT in 2007.

The Steering Committee on Technical Education set up in 1966 was tasked with creating a blueprint for the development of eight Regional Technical Colleges (RTCs) and to "advise on the need for a ninth college in Letterkenny, Co Donegal." From these initial uncertain steps LYIT has grown to become an important part of the Irish higher education landscape with a diverse student body of more than 4,000 students, a strong portfolio of excellent taught programmes, a growing cohort of masters and doctoral research students, impressive campus facilities, and a track record of supporting the regions development through a prioritisation of innovation and the activities of LYIT's incubation centre, CoLab.

LYIT @ 50 is an important milestone and our successes to date challenge us in a very significant way to frame this strategy to facilitate the continued growth of the Institute.  This development must be aimed at further enhancing the opportunities of the students, who choose to study with us, enriching the cultural and social fabric of our locality and through collaboration with our many partners achieve an economic transformation of this region.

# 5. MISSION, VISION AND VALUES

*Strategic Plan 2019-2023: LYIT @ 50 – Delivering for Our Students and Our Region* is the fourth strategic plan in the Institute's history and the plan is the most ambitious yet for the Institute, for our students, and the region we serve.
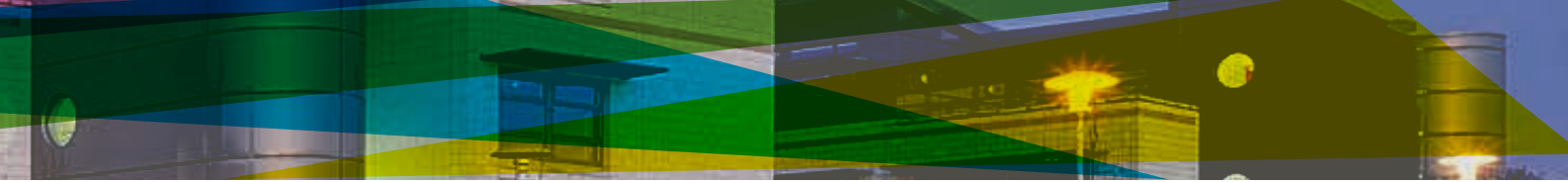
## Mission:

Letterkenny Institute of Technology will confirm its significant national profile for excellence in higher education through the continued pursuit of an ambitious development agenda informed by public policy, strong regional engagement, and a fundamental commitment to a student-centred ethos.

- Nationally Significant
- Regionally Engaged
- Student Centred

## Vision:

- To be recognised nationally as a leading higher education institute for the quality of our graduates and our employment-focused education programmes.

- To be an exemplar Institute in higher education for student engagement, student services and campus facilities building on the excellent relationship that we enjoy with our student body.

- To play a key role in driving the development of the North West region through research, innovation and enterprise initiatives and our well established partnerships with education, industry, and community bodies.

- To be a leader in higher education's response to the opportunities and challenges posed by emerging disruptive technologies and to see LYIT emerge as the HEI in Ireland that has capitalised to the greatest extent from these new technologies.

- To lead the implementation of key elements of national policy that impact on LYIT and the region we serve, such as, Project Ireland 2040, exploiting LYIT's particular strength and track record on cross-border engagement.

## Values:

The Institute's core value is:

- Integrity - We are accountable, honest, transparent, and responsible in all our activities.

To deliver on our mission and strive for our vision we will leverage that we are:

- Ambitious – We are continuously challenging ourselves to deliver on the aspirations of our students, staff and external stakeholders.

- Innovative – We are dedicated to achieving smart solutions to emerging challenges and to facilitating the further development of the Institute's innovative capacity.

- Excellent – We are committed to a best practice approach that encompasses all Institute interests with an emphasis on teaching and learning, research, and the student experience.

- Inclusive – We are welcoming, respectful, supportive, and student-centred.

- Collaborative– We are collaborative internally via our multidisciplinary teams and externally we seek out the most appropriate partner to help us add value, extend our reach, and provide an impetus to Institute activity.

- Empowering – We empower students and staff to pursue interests aligned with the Institute's mission and as active leaders/participants in strategic initiatives that benefit our community partners.

# 6. THEMES OF STRATEGIC PLAN 2019-2023

## Education for the Future:

LYIT must set a course through this strategy to address the future of higher education and employment. Projections of employment for the medium term see many current employment-roles disappearing as technology disruption continues and this will have obvious impacts on LYIT's programme offering and our approach to preparing graduates for work. The launch of the Irish Government's Future Jobs Programme identified automation, the internet of things, advanced robotics, artificial intelligence and big data as technologies that will transform employment here in the future. The Institute will embrace these disruptive technologies in the programmes that we deliver and through the research that we conduct. LYIT recognises that the need for strong digital skills extends throughout our entire portfolio of programmes and via this strategy we aim to achieve a digital transformation.

## Student Partnership:

LYIT has prided itself, since our inception, on the very strong relationship that all categories of staff enjoy with our student body. Given that the average length of study has grown significantly in recent years, it is now appropriate that a formal student partnership agreement be framed that places students at the centre of all aspects of Institute activity from planning through to implementation. This initiative was motivated by LYIT's participation in the National Student Engagement Programme 2016 Pilot (NStEP) and will be informed by the Report of the Working Group on Student Engagement in Irish Higher Education (April 2016) and focus on delivering an enhanced student experience.

## Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion:

LYIT will give greater prominence to equality, diversity and inclusion to ensure that we have appropriately informed Institute policy and practice taking advantage of our positive ethos to become an exemplar HEI in this regard. A key component will be the further development of LYIT's Gender Action Plan and the adoption and implementation of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy aligned with the Athena SWAN Charter, Higher Education Gender Equality Task Force Action Plan and the Department of Education and Skills' Gender Action Plan 2018-2020. LYIT is committed to growing and further developing our supports for student numbers
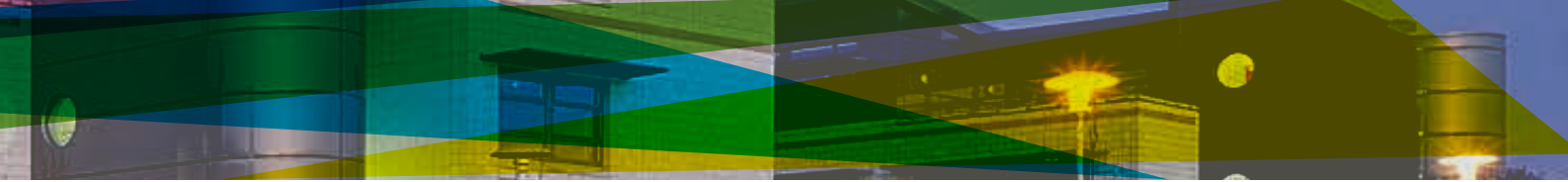
from underrepresented groups. The success of the various actions under the broad heading of Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion will be monitored and evaluated via ongoing data collection and appropriate tracking and trending.

## Collaborative and Connected:

LYIT has over the past five years prioritised engagement with employers, universities, professional bodies, schools, and community organisations. This is a strength of LYIT and will remain a priority for Strategic Plan 2019-2023; this commitment will be evident in our support for both the North West City Region through Project Ireland 2040 and achieving the Technological University criteria. Internally, we will be more multidisciplinary and team focused where inter-departmental and cross-functional working will become the norm. There will be a particular emphasis on improving communications with staff and a greater range of staff representative fora.

## Sustainability:

LYIT will build on sustainability awareness activity to become an active advocate for the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) aimed at achieving a better and more sustainable future for all. The 17 SDGs address the global challenges, including those related to poverty, inequality, climate, environmental degradation, and peace and justice. In conjunction with the SDGs (included in Appendix D), Institute activity will also be informed by the National Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development in Ireland 2014- 2020 which includes an examination of how the higher education sector can address these issues. The Institute will continue to build on Institute success in energy performance and sustainability initiatives and will pursue Green Flag status via the Green-Campus Programme. This commitment to sustainability will be integrated into all aspects of what we do including the education we provide and the research we conduct.

# 7. STRATEGIC DOMAINS AND STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

A total of 30 strategic objectives are set out under the domains of Teaching, Learning & Assessment; Student Experience; Quality; Education Partnerships & Regional Engagement; Research; and Leadership, Compliance & Resource Utilisation.

Commitments made through LYIT's Mission-based Performance Compact 2018-2021 with the Higher Education Authority (HEA) on Lifelong Learning; Employability; Internationalisation; Enterprise Engagement; Research; Quality; Underrepresented Groups; Student Success Strategy; Professional Development of Staff; Equality, Diversity & Inclusion; and Compliance with Government Policy are reflected here.

**Table 1 Summary of Strategic Domains and Strategic Objectives.**

| Teaching Learning & Assessment | T&L Initiatives & National Forum Engagement | Equity of Access | Digital Transformation | Modes of Delivery | Employability |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Student Experience | Campus Development | Student Voice | Student Services | Internationali-sation | Health, Wellbeing & Sport |
| Quality | Programme Quality | Quality Reporting | Athena SWAN/ Gender Action Plan | Interdisciplinary Programmes | Student Transition & Retention |
| Education Partnerships & Regional Engagement | Technological University Collaboration | Cross-border FE HE Cluster | Enterprise, Innovation & Regional Engagement | North West Innovation Lab | Community, Culture & Irish Language |
| Research | Prioritised Research Areas | Research Model | Research Partner Collaboration | Research Support for Students | Research Support for Staff |
| Leadership, Compliance & Resource Utilisation | Professional Development of Staff | Institutional Research Office and Quality Office | Institute Restructuring | Action Planning & Resources | Compliance & Regulation |

# 7.1 Teaching, Learning & Assessment

### T&L Initiatives and National Forum Engagement

Establish an evidence-based, inclusive professional development plan for all those who teach in our institution. The plan will enhance disciplinary excellence in teaching, learning and assessment and will support student success and be informed by the activities of the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning.

### Equity of Access

Implement a Student Success Strategy, aligned with the National Plan for Equity of Access, that further builds on Institute strengths in relation to the participation of underrepresented groups; this strategy will involve the selection of a comprehensive set of metrics to ensure that the participation of the various underrepresented groups is accurately tracked, appropriate targets are set, and that the specific supports required for these student groups are in place. The Institute will engage with ongoing work of the National Forum in this area and this initiative overlaps with a broader Institute project on student transition and retention.

### Digital Transformation

Develop and implement a strategy to achieve digital maturity which will transform how LYIT conducts all its activities. This strategy will prioritise teaching and learning, be informed by supports available through the National Forum for building digital capacity and involve working collaboratively with partner institutions and via industry collaborations. Specifically, the aims will encompass students achieving advanced digital literacy skills and the targets in the Government's ICT skills plan, Technology Skills 2022.

### Modes of Delivery

Maintain and grow the numbers engaged in lifelong learning and the population of new entrants accessing their studies via flexible means in line with the targets in the National Skills Strategy by continuing our efforts to design programmes specifically for part-time students and utilise the opportunities available via minor, special purpose, and supplemental awards to meet the needs of industry. Postgraduate programmes will be a key element of this activity and the Institute will collaborate with other providers and state agencies to give access to the widest possible range of learning opportunities for the population of this region.

### Employability

Set out and deliver a tailored plan to improve the employability of graduates consistent with commitments given in LYIT's Mission-based Performance Compact with the HEA including the aim of adopting a more strategic approach to work placement. This work will be reflected in a suite of employability skills statements specific to each discipline developed in close cooperation with employers and informed by best practice.

## 7.2 Student Experience

### Campus Development

Undertake significant capital projects over the period of this strategic plan; including the approximately €20m extension at the Letterkenny campus, renovation and upgrade work of the facilities in Killybegs, development of significant sporting infrastructure at Knocknamona in Letterkenny, and plans are also in place for enhanced facilities for research and innovation at both the Letterkenny and Killybegs campuses.  In addition, the campus development plans will be revised to further leverage the town centre campus in Letterkenny and the greater prominence that will be achieved from development on both sides of the main arterial route into town while also exploiting LYIT's South Donegal presence in Killybegs and its national importance in terms of marine activity. Campus Plans will address the need for on-campus student accommodation and students will be centrally involved in ensuring that these new and revamped facilities address their needs.

### Student Voice

Enhance student engagement significantly to provide greater opportunities for students to help shape Institute activity and be central partners in the delivery of Institute services.  The Institute will adopt the value-based principles from the Report of the Working Group on Student Engagement in Irish Higher Education to further this initiative.  This project will build on LYIT's positive experience of the National Student Engagement Programme (NStEP) and where appropriate the Institute will engage external expertise to give impetus to this important area.

### Student Services

Capture the learning from the Central Services Reviews completed as part of the QQI Cyclical Review 2017/18 to reorganise Student Services to better address the needs of our student body. This reorganisation will coincide with the development of a new Student Services hub as a central element of the Institute's extension. The recasting of student services will be undertaken to ensure that QQI's Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines in respect of Supports for Learners, Information and Data Management, and Public Information and Communications are fully addressed.

### Internationalisation

Develop and implement an Internationalisation Plan that examines all opportunities that will help foster a more outward looking international culture in the Institute.  This plan will address attracting international students (including non-EU international students), strengthening our offering to this student cohort, and the supports available here to meet their particular needs.  This plan will also be aimed at strengthening ties with national and international partner colleges to facilitate increased student and staff mobility.  Specific measures will be put in place to further support LYIT students to avail of opportunities and placements abroad via programmes, such as, Erasmus+. Arising from QQI's Code of Practice for the Provision of Programmes to International Learners and the planned QA mark for international education the Institute will draft new QA guidelines to underpin existing activity levels and planned growth in student numbers.

### Health, Wellbeing and Sport

Set out and deliver a healthy campus strategy for both students and staff which encompasses important aspects of physical health, such as, exercise and diet, and also addresses important elements for achieving and maintaining positive mental health. The Healthy Ireland initiative reflects these aims and provides useful supports for implementing a healthy campus strategy at LYIT. In addition, a Sports Plan will be put in place which will reflect the Institute's strong commitment to competitive sport and include the social and health benefits of a broader engagement in sport.

## 7.3 Quality

### Programme Quality

Deliver on the commitments made through the Cyclical Review 2017/18 and address the recommendations of the international expert panel.  These activities recognise the importance of Quality Assurance to sustain innovation in programme development and also encompass the upgrade of the Institute's quality assurance processes to include the extended QA agenda reflected in QQI's Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines.

### Quality Reporting

Develop capacity and align activity to ensure that the Institute is better placed to meet the demands of the Annual Institute Quality Report (AIQR) to QQI and the necessary submission under the HEA's Strategic Dialogue Process.  This will involve changing staff roles and staff development, specifying additional key performance indicators, tracking and trending of Institute data, adoption of new technologies, and benchmarking activity against other national and international providers.

### Athena SWAN / Gender Action Plan

Commence in 2019 the necessary steps to apply for an Athena SWAN Institutional Bronze Award and commit the necessary resources to expedite this submission. In addition. LYIT will establish and implement its own Gender Action Plan to address the Department of Education and Skills' Gender Action Plan 2018-2020.

### Interdisciplinary Programmes

Prioritise programme provision between departments and disciplines which will allow for the development of a richer portfolio of programmes and enable a better utilisation of the skills of academic staff.  To ensure delivery of this change, the Academic Plan for the period 2019-2023 will give greater support to interdisciplinary collaboration programme development.  Appropriate models for cross-departmental collaboration will be developed and the significant opportunities available through our existing database of modules via 'unbundling' will be examined.

### Student Transition and Retention

Draft a student transition and retention plan based on significant Institute experience and international best practice approaches.  Notable Institute innovations include

peer mentoring, transition to college life, learning support, and motivating students in their future employment opportunities. A senior academic has been identified to carry out a scoping exercise on transition and retention issues and the recommendations from this piece of work will form the basis for the Institute plan on Student Transition and Retention.

## 7.4 Education Partnerships and Regional Engagement

### Technological University

Pursue Technological University status with our partners in the Connacht-Ulster Alliance (CUA), GMIT and ITS, to deliver on enhanced student opportunities and greater social, cultural and economic benefits for each of our three regions. Activity over the period of the plan will focus on achieving the TU Criteria (set out in Appendix C) together with the development of an overarching framework that respects in an equal way the differing needs of each region and the achievements and organisational cultures of these mature institutions. Progressing the TU proposal will consist of significant consultation with our external stakeholders and consultation and engagement with our internal stakeholders will involve a further development of Institute processes utilised previously in respect of major change initiatives.

### Cross-border FE HE Cluster

Support the long-term growth of the North West City Region aligned with the work of the North West Strategic Growth Partnership (NWGSP) via the Strategic Alliance among the education partners LYIT, Ulster University, Donegal ETB, and North West Regional College. Specifically, the partners will deliver on an innovative regional FE-HE prospectus that articulates study pathways for prospective students and support employment in the region as part of the HEA funded Cross-border FE and HE Education Partnership.
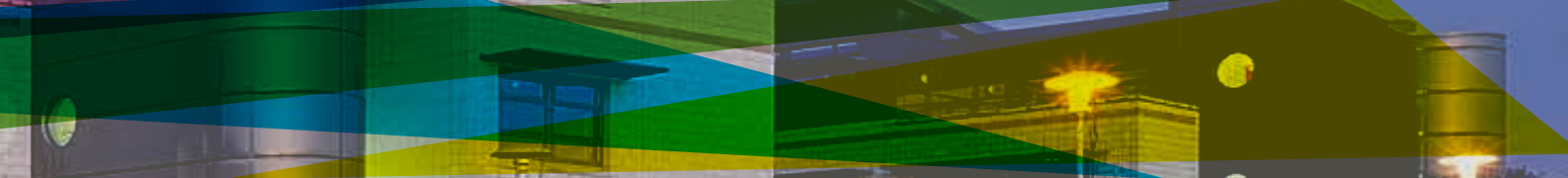
### Enterprise, Innovation & Regional Engagement

Enhance enterprise and innovation capacity in the region with key partners, such as, Donegal County Council and Údarás na Gaeltachta, leveraging the success of, CoLab, the Institute's business and innovation centre. Further develop our portfolio of supports for business through an increased number of project agreements and improved supports in terms of intellectual property licence agreements for commercially relevant technologies; LYIT's involvement in the EI and Knowledge Transfer Ireland funded Ignite West Consortium will be important in this regard.

### North West Innovation Lab

Establish the North West Innovation Lab at LYIT that builds on existing strengths and activity in an interdisciplinary way to support local industry unearth new technology opportunities, help identify and evaluate future research opportunities for the

Institute, be accessible to undergraduate students across the Institute for project ideas, represent a useful resource for proof of concept assessments and business planning, and be used to inspire future technology graduates and for the promotion of the STEM agenda .

### Community, Culture, and Irish Language

Build on the Campus Engage Charter for Civic and Community Engagement (2014) to better address the needs of our community partners and achieve the objectives of a Civic University.  The Institute will be an active partner in delivering the 20-Year Strategy for the Irish Language 2010-2030 and the Heritage Ireland 2030 initiative recognising Donegal's national importance for language, culture and natural heritage.

## 7.5 Research

### Prioritised Research Areas

Determine research priorities for the period 2019-2023 and develop a new Research Strategy aimed at using new knowledge for economic and social progress taking cognisance of the Government's research priorities for 2018 to 2023: ICT; Health and Wellbeing; Food; Energy, Climate Action and Sustainability; Manufacturing and Materials; and Innovation in Services and Business Processes.  In line with Innovation 2020, the Institute will support the further development of our existing research strengths and give precedence to research centres, such as, the WiSAR Gateway, our wireless sensor applied research laboratory.

### Research Model

Establish the Research Office working collaboratively with our research partners to deliver the full breadth of research supports with an initial focus on the development of a Postgraduate Research Handbook and support the extension of Delegated Authority to cover NFQ Level 10 research in targeted areas.  The next phase of work will address drafting LYIT's Research Strategy 2020-2024 and a formal process for Institute recognition and support for high-potential, multidisciplinary Research Centres with strong governance arrangements.  The Research Office will support students and staff source research funding through the appropriate funding mechanism, such as, Irish Research Council, Enterprise Ireland, and Erasmus+.

### Research Partner Collaboration

Build additional research capacity through our involvement in the Horizon 2020 funded TAOIDE ocean energy devices project and three Interreg VA funded projects (Bryden Centre for Advanced Marine and Bio-Energy Research, the North West Centre for Advanced Manufacturing, and the Centre for Personalised Medicine), through these partnerships the Institute will target additional funding sources including Horizon Europe (the successor to Horizon 2020), PRTLI, and SFI over the period 2019-2023.  The Institute will work with the SFI funded Insight Centre and

our partner Ulster University to further build research strength in data analytics to better serve the innovative industry that has transformed our region. A joint research supervision model will also be developed with our research partners to accelerate the development of research at LYIT and facilitate the provision of greater access to research programmes for LYIT students at both Level 9 and Level 10 on the NFQ.

### Research Supports for Students

Boost supports for our increasing number of research students including a greater number of Institute research bursaries, improved research facilities and equipment, more extensive research training programmes, improved access to published research, improved career supports, and access to facilities and supports at partner HEIs via the strong relationships the Institute has with our education partners.

### Research Supports for Staff

Enhance the supportive culture for developing the research potential of Institute staff based around the European Commission's Framework for Research Careers with a view to getting more staff research active and through the stages of this framework.  Staff involved in research will also benefit from involvement in a greater number of funded research projects, a sustainable supply of research students, improved research facilities and equipment, more extensive training to support research, improved access to published research, additional research supports via our research partners, help in identifying research funding opportunities, and assistance in applying for key research funds.

## 7.6 Leadership, Compliance & Resource Utilisation

### Professional Development of Staff

Frame a comprehensive Staff Development Plan encompassing all staff categories to deliver on the objectives of Strategic Plan 2019-2023.  Key elements of strategy requiring a significant commitment to staff development include Leadership Development, Digital Transformation, Institute Restructuring, Research, and Quality Reporting.  Support for these initiatives and a continued growth in student numbers will be sought through the Human Capital Initiative 2020-2024 and via the National Professional Development Framework for All Staff Who Teach in Higher Education. (The PD Framework).

### Institutional Research Office and Quality Office

Establish an Institutional Research Office (IRO) and a Quality Office (QO) building on established practices in place in other HEIs. The IRO will address a broad category of work to support LYIT to play a leadership role in the region and inform campus decision-making and planning.  The QO will support the increased focus on Quality Assurance through this strategy and both the QO and IRO will play a central role in terms of annual returns to QQI and the HEA.

## Institute Restructuring

Complete the process already commenced to look at better matching Institute structures to address existing and projected student demand together with the expectations placed on LYIT through Government policy.  Initial changes in the form of the new Vice President roles has already commenced and the Institute is looking at moving to a revised faculty structure and these changes will also be reflected in a recasting of all service areas.  Changes proposed will be aimed at improving workflows and enhancing administrative supports to enable key decision-making bodies better address their strategic agendas.

## Action Planning and Resourcing

Adopt an annual action planning approach aligned with the academic calendar and the HEA's strategy and performance dialogue process; action plans will be drafted for consideration by relevant stakeholders by February each year for final review at the Executive Board and submission to the Governing Body in time for implementation at the commencement of the new academic year.  Annual Action Plans will be based on a best practice approach and be supported by the identification and commitment of the necessary resources and there will be a focus on initiatives aimed at supporting continued Institute growth and capturing additional resources through competitively allocated funding sources.

## Compliance & Regulation

Strengthen processes for compliance with Government policy in line with commitments made through our Mission-based Performance Compact 2018-2021. These commitments include submitting comprehensive annual Governance Statements to the HEA, complying with QQI processes including the submission of the Annual Institutional Quality Report (AIQR), complying with public procurement rules, observing full transparency in financial statements, complying with public pay policy, ensuring observance of public sector numbers controls, complying with all regulatory frameworks e.g. FoI and GDPR, fully implementing the THEA Code of Governance, and adopting a continuous quality improvement approach to the full compliance and regulation agenda.

# 8. TRANSFORMATION 2023

By 2023 the implementation of Strategic Plan 2019-2023 will have transformed our Institute and delivered many benefits for the region we serve.  A comprehensive list of metrics and targets that will be achieved by 2021 are detailed in LYIT's Mission-based Performance Compact 2018-2021.

Ten key benefits that will be delivered through Strategic Plan 2019-2023 are:

## 1. Education for the Future

LYIT will have capitalised significantly on its strong commitment to embracing disruptive technologies and this will be evident in the many innovative programmes in place, the attractiveness of the programme portfolio to prospective students, innovative approaches to programme delivery, the skills of our graduates, the many industry partnerships, and the strength of our applied research.
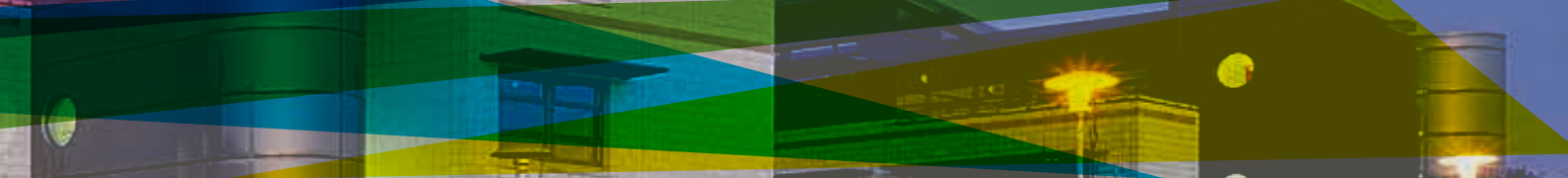
## 2. Student Partnership

LYIT will have in place an excellent Student Partnership model that will have been central to shaping the delivery of all elements of Strategic Plan 2019-2023 with a particularly emphasis on achieving improved outcomes for students.

## 3. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

LYIT will have built on its existing strengths in relation to underrepresented groups and have adopted a progressive approach to the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion agenda having adopted international best practice and through strong engagement with our student body.  In addition, the Institute will have successfully achieved a Bronze Athena SWAN Award under the expanded charter and be working towards attainment of a higher award and have implemented all measures identified through the Department of Education and Skills' Gender Action Plan 2018-2020.

## 4. Collaborative and Connected

The Institute through a continued emphasis on collaboration and engagement will point to significant developments for LYIT and the region that were achieved through engagement with partners. Internally, a renewed focus on inter-disciplinary and cross-functional working and better communications will have delivered

attractive new programmes for students, and more innovation in Institute activity, and more responsive service provision.

## 5. Sustainability

LYIT will be an important voice at a national level in respect of the Sustainability agenda and this commitment will have transformed our approach to all our activities and be a core element of the programmes we deliver.

## 6. Campus Development

LYIT will have completed the €20m extension to the Letterkenny campus together with the renovation and upgrade of the Killybegs campus.  The Institute will also have developed its sporting infrastructure at Knocknamona in Letterkenny and have completed work on the Ocean Innovation Centre in Killybegs.

## 7. Quality

Quality Assurance will be recognised as a key strength of LYIT and through the Institute's commitment to the Quality Office there will be sufficient oversight to support a culture of continuous quality improvement and innovation in quality to strengthen programme quality and the quality of all Institute services and ensure compliance with quality reporting responsibilities to QQI and the HEA.

## 8. Technological University

LYIT, with our partner Institutions in IT Sligo and GMIT will have achieved all of the criteria for TU designation as set out under Section 28 of the Technological Universities Act 2018 (included in Appendix C).

## 9. Research

LYIT will have more than doubled the number of active research staff, research students, and research funding achieved from the January 2019 levels, with many examples of research conducted in conjunction with industry in this region. Increased activity levels will have been achieved through leveraging existing research centres and the further development of research partnerships.  The Research Office will be central to ensuring that the key supports are in place for students and staff. In addition, a small number of high-potential multidisciplinary Research Centres will have been prioritised for further growth.

## 10. Institute Restructuring

Institute Restructuring will have impacted all areas of LYIT activity from faculty level to individual staff roles to ensure a better matching of structures to student demand and to improve workflows and enhance administrative supports.  The approach to this restructuring will also have recognised the benefits of multidisciplinary working to address the increasing complex environment in which LYIT operates and the need to develop capacity to compete for an increasing array of competitive funds.

# APPENDIX A - HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK

LYIT's Mission-based Performance Compact 2018-2021 and the objectives detailed in this strategy address the key objectives for the Higher Education system 2018 -2020 as set out by the Minister for Education and Skills.

## Key System Objectives for the Higher Education 2018 -2020

**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

**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

**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

**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

**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

**6** Demonstrates consistent improvement in governance, leadership and operational excellence.

# APPENDIX B - SECTION 9 TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITIES ACT 2018

## Functions of technological university

(1) The functions of a technological university, having particular regard to the needs of the region in which the campuses of the technological university are located, shall be to—

    (a)    provide teaching and facilitate learning that—

        (i)    is informed by research, and

        (ii)    promotes excellence at all levels of higher education within the Framework,

    (b)    provide programmes of education and training that reflect the needs of individuals, business, enterprise, the professions, the community, local interests and other stakeholders in the region in which the campuses of the technological university are located and facilitate learning by flexible means,

    (c)    provide for the broad education, intellectual and personal development of students, for the purpose of enabling them, as graduates, to excel in their chosen careers and to contribute responsibly to social, civic and economic life in innovative and adaptable ways,

    (d)    provide opportunities for staff and students—

        (i)    of the technological university to teach, learn or conduct research at institutions that provide higher education outside the State, or to obtain relevant work experience outside the State, and

        (ii)    of institutions that provide higher education outside the State to teach, learn or conduct research at the technological university,

    (e)    collaborate with institutions that provide higher education inside and outside the State, including on joint research projects and provision of programmes of education and training,

    (f)    support a body of research that includes research relevant at regional, national and international levels and pursue excellence in the conduct of that research,

    (g)    support entrepreneurship, enterprise development and innovation in business, enterprise and the professions through teaching and the conduct of research and through effective transfer to those and other sectors of knowledge arising from that research,

    (h)    collaborate with business, enterprise, the professions, the community, local interests and related stakeholders in the region in which the campuses of the technological university are located—

(i) to promote the involvement of those stakeholders in the design and delivery of programmes of education and training, and

(ii) to ensure that, in so far as possible, innovation activity and research undertaken by the technological university reflects the needs of those stakeholders,

(i) support the development of a skilled labour force including, where appropriate, engaging in the education and training of apprentices in accordance with policy relating to that education and training for the time being communicated to the technological university by An tÚdarás, the Government or any Minister of the Government,

(j) support the mobility of staff and students of the technological university into and out of the labour force through collaboration with business, enterprise, the professions and related stakeholders in the region in which the campuses of the technological university are located,

(k) serve the community and public interest by—

(i) developing and promoting strong social and cultural links, and links supporting creativity, between the technological university and the community in the region in which the campuses of the technological university are located,

(ii) supporting (without prejudice to the generality of subsection (4)) the delivery of policies or objectives of the Government or any Minister of the Government, for the time being communicated to the technological university by An tÚdarás, the Government or any Minister of the Government, in relation to development of business and enterprise at a local, regional or national level,

(iii) fostering close and effective relationships with—

(I) a statutory body whose functions relate to regional development in the region in which the campuses of the technological university are located,

(II) a local authority or local authorities in whose local authority area or areas the campuses of the technological university are located,

(III) the education and training board or boards in whose education and training board area or areas the campuses of the technological university are located,

(IV) a provider of further education and training in the region in which the campuses of the technological university are located, and

(V) organisations representing the social, creative and cultural interests of the community in the region in which the campuses of the technological university are located,

and

(iv) in so far as possible in the performance of its functions—

(I)   contributing to the promotion of the economic, cultural, social, scientific and technological development of the State,

(II)  respecting the diversity of values, beliefs and traditions in Irish society,

(III) promoting critical and free enquiry, informed intellectual discourse and public debate within the technological university and in wider society, and

(IV)  promoting an entrepreneurial ethos,

(l)   promote access to the technological university and the education it provides, by economically or socially disadvantaged persons, by persons who have a disability and by persons from sections of society in the region in which the campuses of the technological university are located who are significantly under-represented in its student body,

(m)  undertake assessment of students, and award degrees and other qualifications,

(n)   make best use of its expertise and resources, whether or not on a commercial basis, for the purposes of its functions under this Act,

(o)   provide directly, or in collaboration with other providers of programmes of education and training, facilities for all levels of higher education within the Framework, including technological and professional education, and for research,

(p)   collaborate with persons or bodies inside and outside the State for the purpose of its functions under this Act, and

(q)   promote the attainment of gender balance and equality of opportunity among the students and staff of the technological university.

(2) A technological university may accept gifts of money, land or other property subject to such trusts and conditions, if any, as are not in conflict with this Act, specified by the donor.

(3) A technological university shall have all such powers as are necessary or expedient for the performance by it of its functions.

(4) A technological university shall, in the performance of its functions, have regard to policies of the Government (including policies relating to education and training or remuneration of staff employed in the education sector) for the time being.

(5) (a) For the purposes of the performance of its functions, a technological university shall establish procedures relating to resolution of disputes.

  (b)   Procedures established under paragraph (a) shall—

    (i)   be established following consultation with each trade union and staff association recognised by the technological university and with the student union,

    (ii)   provide for consideration of a dispute by a person who is independent of the persons involved in the dispute, and

    (iii)  be published in such manner as the technological university considers appropriate.

(6) A technological university may perform any of its functions through or by any member of the staff of the technological university authorised in that behalf by the technological university.

(7) A technological university may delegate any of the functions that, in its opinion, can be better or more conveniently performed by the academic council, to the academic council.

(8) For the purposes of subparagraph (i) of subsection (1)(h) "involvement", in relation to a programme may include—

  (a)   developing, with the technological university, the curriculum of the programme,

  (b)   contributing to assessment, as required by the programme, of the progress of the student, or

  (c)   providing a work placement for a student registered on the programme.

(9) In subsection (1) "providers" has the same meaning as it has in section 2 of the Act of 2012.

# APPENDIX C - SECTION 28 TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITIES ACT 2018

## Eligibility criteria

(1) The applicant institutes concerned shall, in relation to an application for an order under section 36, jointly comply with the following criteria (in this chapter referred to as "eligibility criteria"):

    (a)    of the students of the applicant institutes registered on a programme that leads to an award to at least honours bachelor degree level—

        (i)    at least 4 per cent are research students registered on a programme which leads to an award to at least masters degree level, and

        (ii)    at least 30 per cent fall within one or more than one of the following classes of students:

            (I)    students who are registered on a programme that is provided on a flexible basis, such as by means of part-time, online or distance learning;

            (II)    students who are registered on a programme that has been designed, and is being delivered, with the involvement (which shall be construed in accordance with subsection (2)(b)), of business, enterprise, the professions, the community, local interests and other related stakeholders in the region in which the campuses of the applicant institutes are located;

            (III)    students who are not less than 23 years of age;

    (b)    the applicant institutes have a plan that demonstrates, to the satisfaction of the advisory panel, that they would have capacity, as a technological university to increase within 10 years of the date of the making of an order under section 36, from at least 4 per cent to at least 7 per cent, the proportion of their research students referred to in paragraph (a)(i);

    (c)    of the full-time academic staff of the applicant institutes engaged in the provision of a programme that leads to an award to at least honours bachelor degree level—

        (i)    at least 90 per cent hold a masters degree or doctoral degree,

        (ii)    at least 45 per cent hold—

            (I)    a doctoral degree, or

            (II)    subject to subparagraph (iii), a terminal degree, as well as sufficient practical experience gained in the practice of a profession to which the programme relates, such that the degree and experience together can reasonably be viewed by the advisory panel as equivalent to a doctoral degree,

and

    (iii)  not more than 10 per cent hold only the qualifications referred to in subparagraph (ii)(II);

(d)   the applicant institutes have a plan that demonstrates, to the satisfaction of the advisory panel, that they would have capacity, as a technological university, to increase, within 10 years of the date of the making of an order under section 36, from at least 45 per cent to at least 65 per cent, the proportion of their full-time academic staff referred to in paragraph (c)(ii);

(e)   of the full-time academic staff of the applicant institutes engaged in both of the following, at least 80 per cent hold a doctoral degree—

    (i)   the provision of a programme that leads to an award at doctoral degree level, and

    (ii)  the conduct of research;

(f)   each of the full-time academic staff of the applicant institutes engaged in the supervision of students registered on a programme that leads to an award to doctoral degree level—

    (i)   holds—

        (I)   a doctoral degree, or

        (II)  a terminal degree, as well as sufficient practical experience gained in the practice of a profession to which the programme relates, such that the degree and experience together can reasonably be viewed by the advisory panel as equivalent to a doctoral degree,

and

    (ii)  has a record of continued conduct of research in an area relevant to the programme;

(g)   in respect of not less than 3 fields of education—

    (i)   the applicant institutes provide programmes that lead to awards to doctoral degree level, and

    (ii)  the academic staff and students of the applicant institutes conduct research;

(h)   in relation to a programme referred to in paragraph (g), the applicant institutes demonstrate, to the satisfaction of the advisory panel—

    (i)   that they carry out innovation activity and conduct research to a high standard, and

    (ii)  that the innovation and research has positive social and economic effects on business, enterprise, the professions, the community, local interests and other related stakeholders in the region in which the campuses of the applicant institutes are located;

(i)    all programmes provided by the applicant institutes that lead to an award to doctoral degree level comply with any policy relating to doctoral

education as may be agreed from time to time between An tÚdarás and the Qualifications and Quality Assurance Authority of Ireland following consultation with bodies representing the interests of an institute, a technological university or a university specified in paragraphs (a) to (d) of section 4(1) of the Universities Act 1997;

(j)     the applicant institutes have a plan that demonstrates to the satisfaction of the advisory panel that they would have capacity, as a technological university to increase within 5 years of the date of the making of an order under section 36, from at least 3 to at least 5, the fields of education referred to in paragraph (g);

(k)     the applicant institutes demonstrate to the satisfaction of the advisory panel that the applicant institutes have, at the time they apply under section 29 for an order under section 36, the capacity to effectively perform the functions of a technological university and in particular demonstrate—

   (i)   that they have integrated, coherent and effective governance structures in place concerning academic, administrative and management matters,

   (ii)  that they have strong links with business, enterprise, the professions, the community, local interests and other stakeholders in the region in which the campuses of the applicant institutes are located,

   (iii) that they have, under section 28 of the Act of 2012, established procedures in writing for quality assurance in relation to which—

      (I)   no notice has been furnished by the Qualifications and Quality Assurance Authority of Ireland under section 36(1) of the Act of 2012,

   or

      (II)  approval has not been withdrawn under section 36 of that Act,

   (iv)  that they develop, and have procedures in place to further develop programmes that respond to the needs of business, enterprise, the professions, the community, local interests and other related stakeholders in the region in which the campuses of the applicant institutes are located,

   (v)   that they—

      (I)   provide opportunities for staff and students of the applicant institutes to teach, learn or conduct research at institutions that provide higher education outside the State, or to obtain relevant work experience outside the State,

      (II)  provide opportunities for staff and students of institutions that provide higher education outside the State to teach, learn or conduct research at the applicant institutes, and

      (III) collaborate with institutions that provide higher education outside the State, including on joint research projects and for the purpose of provision of programmes;

(l)    that they develop and promote and if an order is made under section 36 have procedures in place to further develop and promote, as a technological university strong social and cultural links, and links supporting creativity, between the technological university and the community in the region in which the campuses of the technological university will be located.

(2)

(a)    In this section—

"award" means an award that is recognised within the Framework;

"credit" has the same meaning as it has in section 56 of the Act of 2012;

"field of education" means a field of education described as a narrow field of education in the International Standard Classification of Education being the classification for the time being adopted by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation;

"level" means recognised at the level concerned within the Framework;

"programme" means programme of education and training;

"research student" means a student who is registered on a programme of education and training where not less than 60 per cent of the available credits are assigned in respect of a thesis or theses prepared by the student based on research conducted by him or her.

(b)    For the purposes of subparagraph (ii)(II) of subsection (1)(a), "involvement" in relation to a programme may include—

(i)    developing, with one or, as the case may be, more than one of the applicant institutes concerned, the curriculum of the programme,

(ii)    contributing to assessment, as required by the programme, of the progress of a student, or

(iii)    providing a work placement for a student registered on the programme.

(c)    A reference, in paragraph (c), (e) or (f) of subsection (1)—

(i)    to a masters or doctoral degree held by a member of staff of the applicant institutes is a reference to a degree awarded to masters or doctoral level within the Framework and if not awarded within the Framework is, to the satisfaction of the advisory panel, equivalent to such a degree, or

(ii)    to a terminal degree held by a member of staff of the applicant institutes is a reference to an award to at least honours bachelor degree level within the Framework which, in the view of the advisory panel, was at the time the award was made the highest academic award available in the discipline concerned, and if not so awarded within the Framework is, to the satisfaction of the advisory panel, equivalent to such a degree.

# APPENDIX D - UNITED NATIONS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **1 NO POVERTY** | **2 ZERO HUNGER** | **3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING** | **4 QUALITY EDUCATION** |
| **5 GENDER EQUALITY** | **6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION** | **7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY** | **8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH** |
| **9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE** | **10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES** | **11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES** | **12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION** |
| **13 CLIMATE ACTION** | **14 LIFE BELOW WATER** | **15 LIFE ON LAND** | **16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS** |
| **17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS** | | | |

# APPENDIX E - ACRONYMS

| | |
|---|---|
| AIQR | Annual Institutional Quality Review |
| CUA | Connacht Ulster Alliance |
| DETB | Donegal Education and Training Board |
| EU | European Union |
| ETB | Education and Training Board |
| FE | Further Education |
| FoI | Freedom of Information |
| GAA | Gaelic Athletic Association |
| GMIT | Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology |
| GDPR | General Data Protection Regulation |
| HE | Higher Education |
| HEA | Higher Education Authority |
| HEI(s) | Higher Education Institute(s) |
| IoTs | Institutes of Technology |
| ITS | Institute of Technology Sligo |
| LYIT | Letterkenny Institute of Technology |
| MALT | Masters in Learning and Teaching |
| NSTEP | National Student Engagement Program |
| NWRC | North West Regional College |
| NWSGP | North West Strategic Growth Partnership |
| PATH | Programme for Access to Higher Education |
| PD | Professional Development |

| | |
|---|---|
| PRTLI | Programme for Research in Third Level Institutions |
| QQI | Quality and Qualifications Ireland |
| RTC(s) | Regional Technical College(s) |
| SDGs | Sustainable Development Goals |
| SFI | Science Foundation Ireland |
| STEM | Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics |
| TCK | Tourism College Killybegs |
| TU | Technological University |
| THEA | Technological Higher Education Association |
| UN | United Nations |
| UU | Ulster University |
| VEC | Vocational Education Committee |

# APPENDIX F - BIBLIOGRAPHY

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