www.springboardcourses.ie

Call for Proposals

January 2020

Important Notice

The Higher Education Authority (HEA) makes this document available to course Providers who wish to submit a proposal(s) for higher education courses as part of Springboard+ 2020. The document must not be used for any other purpose. Springboard+ is managed by the HEA on behalf of the Department of Education and Skills.

The HEA has taken all reasonable care to ensure that the information set out in this Call for Proposals is true and accurate in all material respects as at the time of publication. However, no warranty or representation is given as to the accuracy or completeness of this material. The HEA does not accept any liability or responsibility for the accuracy, adequacy or completeness of the information set out herein.

The HEA will not be liable or responsible for any opinion, statement, or conclusion contained in, or any omission from this document or for any other written or oral communication made available during the course of the Call process. No representation or warranty is made in respect of such statements, opinions or conclusions.

The HEA reserves the right to amend this document and any information contained herein at any time by notice in writing to the applicants.

None of the information set out herein will constitute a contract, or part of a contract, or an offer to enter into a contract, between the HEA and any provider. Nothing in this document is, nor shall be relied upon as, a promise or representation as to the HEA's ultimate decision in relation to the award of the contract for the services.

However, the HEA reserves the right to take such steps as it considers appropriate, including but not limited to: changing the basis of, or the procedures (including the timetable) relating to, the Call process; rejecting any, or all, of the proposals; abandoning the competition (or any part of it) at any time prior to a formal written contract being executed by and on behalf of the HEA; procuring the services by alternative means if it appears that the services can be more advantageously procured.

No legal relationship or other obligation shall arise between any applicant and the HEA unless and until a contract has been entered into.

Each applicant's acceptance of delivery of the Call for Proposals constitutes its agreement to, and acceptance of, its terms.

Under no circumstances will the HEA be liable for any costs, charges or expenses incurred by applicants as a result of participating in this Call process, however caused. Any costs associated with the submission of a proposal are the sole responsibility of the applicant and will not be reimbursed.

Statutory requirements

All Providers making a proposal(s) for courses to be supported via Springboard+ must confirm compliance with statutory requirements regarding their financial and legal status and be prepared to furnish any additional supporting documents as requested by the HEA.

The HEA reserves the right to exclude applicants on the basis that the supporting documents are considered inadequate.

Table of Contents

Providers who wish to make Springboard+, or Human Capital Initiative Pillar One, course proposals must submit their proposals online via http://skillsdirect.hea.ie. The deadline for submissions is **13.00hrs on Thursday 5th March 2020**.

Appendix 1 – Further Skills Guidance Documents

Appendix 2 – ISCED-F 2013: List of codes

Appendix 3 – Marking Scheme

Appendix 4 – QQI Template

Background to Springboard+

Springboard+ began in 2011 as part of the Government's Jobs Initiative. It has provided free and heavily subsidized upskilling in higher education in areas of identified skills need, with a particular emphasis on upskilling of people who are unemployed. Springboard+ complements the core State-funded education and training system and is one of a number of initiatives designed to support people back into employment and to build the supply of skilled graduates for vacancies arising across key sectors of the economy. A Department of Social Protection scan of the Live Register carried out in July 2018 reported that 90% of Springboard+ participants (2011 – 2017) were no longer on the Live Register.

Springboard+ forms part of the Government's Future Jobs Ireland 2019 which aims to increase the number of people in employment to 2.1m by 2020. The programme is funded through the National Training Fund and the ESF Programme for Employability, Inclusion and Learning (PEIL) 2014-2020. This year represents the tenth phase of Springboard+. When the initiative was first introduced in January 2011 unemployment was at 15%, with over 400,000 people out of work. However, unemployment is less than half that in 2019, with the CSO reporting 4.8% for October 2019[1]. With this in mind, Springboard+ in 2020 will continue to have a dual focus of upskilling and reskilling people who remain out of the workforce (activation) and also a focus on upskilling those in employment (workforce development). The further development of skilled workers remains central to our ability to attract ongoing Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) and the further development of our Small Medium Enterprise (SME) sector.

Springboard+ is managed by the Higher Education Authority (HEA) on behalf of the Department of Education and Skills. An evaluation framework underpins the initiative, with ongoing monitoring of its impact. All of the evaluation reports are accessible via www.springboardcourses.ie.

There are four additional specific objectives of the programme:

- Helping those who are unemployed, formerly self-employed and Returners to return to sustainable employment. To this end in developing proposals, Providers are expected to have regard to the most recent data and trends on the profile of people experiencing unemployment.

- Provide opportunities for workforce development to enhance the skill levels of those already in employment; to increase the national rate of enragement in Life Long Learning; to reskill those whose current occupation may be at risk from technological and other developments. The four areas of digital skills, transversal skills, management and leadership skills and the workplace of the future will be significant principles to be addressed under this objective.

- Enhance collaboration between enterprise and higher education to design and deliver relevant higher education courses that support job creation and expansion in line with the Government's Future Jobs Ireland, National Skills Strategy and Action Plan for Education.

---

[1] https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/er/mue/monthlyunemploymentoctober2019/

- Enhance the skills profile of the labour force to meet the targets and objectives of Future Jobs Ireland the Action Plan for Education, the National Skills Strategy, Technology Skills 2022, Languages Connect and other skills reports as outlined in Appendix 1.

Labour market trends

The seasonally adjusted number of persons unemployed was 117,300 in October 2019, relating to an adjusted unemployment rate of 4.8%[1], down from 5.7% in October 2018.

---

[1][1] https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/er/mue/monthlyunemploymentoctober2019/

Overview of Springboard+ 2020

The primary objective of Springboard+ in 2020 is to provide upskilling and reskilling courses to develop the talent base in Ireland in key growth sectors of the economy. Providers should be cognisant of the data and trends on national and regional skills shortages in expanding enterprise areas and submit proposals which are evidence-based. Courses can include, **but are not limited to,** ICT, biopharma, medical device technologies and manufacturing, financial services, hospitality and entrepreneurship.

Providers should, where relevant, be cognisant of the impact of Brexit, in particular any arising skill needs as a consequence of developments. They should also be mindful of the changes on the horizon due to the developments in technology and how this will impact on the future of how we work.

- All sectors of the economy *with a demonstrated skills shortage* are included. Springboard+ 2020 will continue to prioritise national skills requirements in growth sectors of the economy. Furthermore, courses proposed in *all skills categories* will be considered where strong and clear evidence of a regional or national need is articulated with evidenced enterprise support. Key areas to consider in this regard are digital skills, transversal skills, management and leadership skills and the workplace of the future.

- All courses are open to people irrespective of their employment status. The programme will continue to prioritise those in receipt of a social protection payment and returners to upskill or reskill and re-enter the workforce by providing places free of charge. Therefore, 30% of places approved will be ring-fenced for these applicants based on the 2019 applicant data and assuming full employment in 2020.

- Increasingly target the upskilling and reskilling requirements of those in employment and in particular those that are under-employed or whose job could become obsolete due to technological advances. The rates of engagement with Life-long Learning (LLL) have been increasing over recent years. In Ireland 13% of those in employment are engaged in LLL. To assist in improving this position and aligned with the priority of further developing work-ready graduates, Springboard+ is retaining the changes made in 2019.

- In courses (except 2-year part-time ICT skills conversion courses) where eligible applicants are a mix of all applicant categories, applicant categories 1 and 2 should form a minimum of 30% of the student cohort, where possible.

- For employed participants on courses NFQ L7-9, HEA will fund 90% of the course fee, with Providers collecting the remaining 10% from participants. Please note that in future financial audits HEA will check that the fee has been sought and paid by employed participants.

- Level 6 courses are free to all eligible participants.

- There is no restriction on the movement from one discipline area to another to pursue a course.

- There is no requirement for participants to move up the National Framework for Qualifications ladder. This means that participants may take a second Springboard+ course for example at Level 7 in a different skills area.

Current and future skills needs of enterprise

It is important to note that proposals submitted by Providers should:
- Be flexible and innovative in the provision proposed to ensure the best possible opportunity for potential applicants to participate in Springboard+, particularly in the context of upskilling for those in employment.
- Be nationally or regionally focussed.
- Demonstrate clear evidence of engagement with enterprise/industry partners and Regional Skills Fora Managers in the development of the programme. For example, evidence of co-operation with industry on course design, guest lectures from industry, work placements etc. *Note that generic/pro forma letters of support from industry are not deemed sufficient evidence of engagement with industry.*
- Include plans for work placements or credit-bearing projects as appropriate to the participant.
- Demonstrate that there is an available supply of applicants.
- Include career guidance as part of the course delivery, where applicable.

In addition, Providers will be expected to supplement the information provided in this document on skills demand through direct engagement with local and regional employers, and with representative organisations such as Ibec, Chambers of Commerce, ISME; with enterprise development agencies such as Enterprise Ireland, IDA Ireland and the City and County Enterprise Boards.

Eligibility: Providers (Course Eligibility)

Eligible courses must either:

(a) Lead to a higher education and training award that is included in the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) at Levels 6 to 9, which is made by one of the following Irish awarding bodies:

- Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI), including combinations of modules from already validated programmes leading to a major award. (*Important: Combinations should be submitted to QQI for approval prior to or at the same time as submission to Springboard to ensure adequate time for validation*)

- Institutes of Technology with delegated authority to make awards,

- Universities,

- Technological University Dublin (TUD),

- Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland,

or

(b)   Lead to a higher education and training award that is a comparable award based on recognition advice available from QQI. This criteria will be strictly enforced to safeguard learners and ensure that if they undertake a programme funded by the State through the Springboard+ Call the comparable NFQ level of that programme will be clear to the learner and can be confirmed by employers and education and training institutions for the purposes of employment and progression.

Collaborative proposals from two or more Providers will be considered for funding, including those who form part of regional clusters in higher education, where a skill need in a particular sector has been identified. A lead provider must, however, be clearly identified as part of the proposal and the proposal must adhere to all requirements regarding quality assurance and the making of awards. They will be responsible for the financial management and reporting of the programme.
As part of course proposals, Providers will be required to set out the teaching, learning and assessment methodologies that will be used to meet learner needs, including flexible approaches; practical application of learning; and study skills/return to learning components. Academic and student supports should also be referenced, including details of job readiness training and, where relevant, work placement/internship supports. Regarding entry and achievement of an award, it is expected that proactive Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) will be used by Course Providers. Details of each provider's policy in this area will be required as part of course proposals. Arrangements to promote and raise awareness of Springboard+ course opportunities will also be required.

Important note for courses requiring validation by Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI)

- Springboard+ funding will be subject to the proposed course being validated by QQI.

- Springboard+ courses leading to QQI awards must be validated for the 2020/21 academic year before any learners are enrolled.

- The QQI validation process and criteria for proposed Springboard+ courses will be the same as for other kinds of programmes. This is to ensure that Springboard+ courses are of a comparable quality. Validation will normally be for **five years**.

- Applications for validation must be submitted to QQI before proposed Springboard+ courses are marketed. Proposed programmes may be marketed to learners before determination of the application for validation but following acceptance by QQI of a completed application as long as it is made clear that the programmes are offered subject to being validated by QQI.

- The current version of the Programme Validation Manual for Programmes of HET and Apprenticeships (FET and HET) should be used for preparing applications.

- **Proposed Springboard Courses must be submitted to QQI for validation in advance of submissions to Springboard+ for funding.** This is to ensure adequate time for the QQI validation

process to be completed as this can take up to 25 weeks though it will be expedited by QQI. For programmes that are designed exclusively for Springboard+ purposes, while initial screening of the submission may take place, QQI will only proceed with the validation process after they have been approved for Springboard funding.

- A template (Appendix 4) has been provided to confirm that courses have been validated by the QQI. This must be completed and be sent by the provider to the HEA by **1st September 2020**.

- Written evidence that the course has received QQI validation must be submitted within 10 days of receipt of same from the QQI.

Types of courses which will be supported via Springboard+ 2020

Funding will be available for

I. part-time higher education courses **up to a maximum of 12 months** in duration

II. proposals for Level 8 and 9 ICT skills conversion courses both full and part-time.

Regarding part-time courses, Providers should note that for a course to be deemed part-time within Springboard+ **it cannot provide for more than 17 class contact hours per week.** This facilitates participants continuing to seek employment and therefore receive a job-seekers payment, and those already in employment. It is important that proposed attendance patterns, including timing of classes/lectures for programmes facilitate these requirements. Proposals submitted must provide details of attendance arrangements to enable full clarification that they meet the contact hours' requirement.

Please note the following:

- Courses in all areas of demonstrated skills needs are eligible, particularly including new and emerging skills areas. However, all proposals must be evidence-based.

- **For the purposes of this Call, the term 'part-time' is intended to cover all forms of flexible delivery including those offered partially during the day or in the evenings/weekends or those with an online and/or distance component. Given the emphasis on upskilling people in employment in Springboard+ 2020 Providers should be cognisant of the fact that many participants will be unable to attend classes during regular business hours of 9-5pm, Monday to Friday. Therefore, it is expected that courses will be proposed on the basis of flexible provision and/or at times of the week and weekend that suit the needs of learners in employment. If Providers are targeting Returners as an eligible cohort for a course the provision should reflect this with classes being provided during school hours. This will be factored into the assessment process of these programmes.**

- As per 2019, ICT skills conversion courses are sought on a one-year full-time *and* two-year part-time basis. However, given the current positive employment trends it is anticipated that in 2020/21 academic year demand will be greater for two-year part time ICT skills conversion courses, with an anticipated consequential decrease in demand for the full time one-year option. **This will be factored into the assessment process of these programmes.**

- Courses being submitted for 2020 should be stand-alone programmes that upskill participants for the labour market upon completion. For example, courses that are year one of a course that requires a participant to do a second year of a course are not being sought and will not be funded, with exception of two-year ICT skills conversion courses.

- As referenced earlier in the Call when developing courses Providers should be aware of the need to develop courses that address digital skills, transversal skills, management and leadership skills and the workplace of the future.

- Standard full-time courses in higher education will **not be** eligible for Springboard+ funding.

- For ICT skills conversion courses, eligibility for the two-year part-time option will continue to be confined to those who are <u>not</u> in receipt of an eligible DEASP social protection income that has job-seeking conditionality, as the Part Time Education Option (PTEO) payment will not be available to participants on the two-year course. Eligibility for the full-time course has not changed and will continue to cater for both the unemployed, Returners, the employed and those currently or formerly self-employed.

- Proposed Springboard+ full-time courses (with the exception of the one-year ICT skills conversion course) are not eligible for funding.

- Part-time course proposals which lead to an award of fewer than 10 ECTS credits or equivalent per annum will not be considered.

- Likewise, two-year part-time ICT skills conversion course must lead to an award of at least 60 ECTS credits in total.

- ICT skills conversion courses that provide 'multi-stream' options should provide evidence of previous interest from applicants and enrolment patterns to justify a 'multi-stream' approach.

- Courses at Level 6 in a defined advancement to Level 7 will be particularly welcome under Springboard+ 2020.

Job readiness and work placement

Courses must include a dedicated job readiness/job preparation component (i.e. distinct and specific credited module(s) on enhancing job readiness). Details of this provision will be required as part of course proposals. It should be noted that participants on reskilling courses may require a dedicated job readiness component on their course to facilitate their transition into a new area of employment.

Almost 85% of Springboard+ courses approved (excluding those in the Entrepreneurship skills category) in 2019 included a work placement, or college project. Where a Springboard+ course is a mixture of those in employment, Returners and those in receipt of a social protection payment, it is accepted that a work placement may not be required for a participant who is in employment. However, if a work placement is sought or deemed suitable for a participant in employment this is encouraged. In the case of participants who are Returners or unemployed, a work placement or project based credited module should be provided.

A work placement is mandatory for 1-year full-time ICT skills conversion programmes and a work placement or credit bearing project is required for the 2-year part-time ICT skills conversion programme.

Springboard+ Applicant eligibility

Those in receipt of an eligible payment from the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection (DEASP).	Individuals who already hold a National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) award at Level 5 or 6 or equivalent, with a previous history of employment; or with a previous history of employment who already hold a higher-level qualification at NFQ Levels 6 to 9, who may require additional upskilling or reskilling in order to re-enter employment.	To be eligible for a Springboard+ part-time course, a person must be in receipt of an eligible DEASP payment or be signing for social insurance contribution credits and have a previous history of employment or self-employment and be actively seeking work.
Previously self employed	Individuals at all qualifications levels who may require new qualifications to return to self-employment or to enter employment.	As above.
Returners	Individuals who already hold an NFQ award at Level 5 or 6 or equivalent, with a previous history of employment; or with a previous history of employment who already hold a higher-level qualification at NFQ Levels 6 to 9, who may require additional upskilling or reskilling in order to re-enter employment.	Returners seeking to apply in 2020 will be required to verify their status as a returner. This will include providing a letter/statement signed by a Commissioner for Oaths confirming their current status. It should be noted that acceptance on to a Springboard+ course does not confer any entitlement to DEASP payments or childcare supports. * See note below

Those in employment	wishing to upskill or reskill to meet required skill needs across a range of sectors.	This category of applicant will be required to provide a copy of their most recent P60 or other relevant revenue documentation or a letter from their current employer to confirm employment or self-employment. * See note below

Places will be provided free of charge to those participants from categories 1-3 above. In the case of category 4, Level 6 courses remain free and a contribution of 10% of the cost of the place will be collected by the provider for Level 7-9 courses. This contribution can be paid by the participant or their employer. The HEA will fund the remaining 90% of the cost directly to the Providers.

* Returners and employed participants will be required to meet the residency requirements for Springboard+; that they must have been ordinarily resident in an EU/EEA/Swiss state for at least three of the five years preceding their entry to their course.

It is important to note that as in previous years, no participant on a Springboard+ course in 2020 will be eligible for support under the Department of Education and Skills Higher Education Grants Scheme.

Target participants for ICT skills conversion courses

Courses both full and part time are available to applicants who have a Level 8 qualification in a cognate discipline, as well as the capacity and underlying aptitude to undergo an intensive programme of study and work-experience to acquire industry-relevant ICT and software development skills at Level 8 of the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ). In the case of the one-year full-time ICT skills conversion courses, persons meeting the entry criteria are eligible regardless of employment status. **Those in receipt of jobseeker's payments are not eligible for the two-year part-time ICT skills conversion courses.** Please see the eligibility criteria on www.springboardcourses.ie for further details.

Multi-mode delivery courses at level 8 Higher Diploma and level 9 Postgraduate Diploma on the National Qualifications Framework will be funded under this heading. Full-time ICT skills conversion proposals leading to awards of fewer than 60 ECTS credits per annum **will not** be considered for funding.

Students will be able to enter these courses directly from their undergraduate courses without requiring a year's break. For example, a student graduating in summer 2020 will be eligible for an ICT Skills Conversion course in autumn 2020. This cohort will be required to pay 10% of the cost of the course fee.

Given the positive trends in the rate of employment and the ESRI prediction for full employment later in 2020, it is anticipated that in 2020/21 academic year demand will continue to be greater for two-year part time ICT skills conversion courses, with an anticipated consequential decrease in demand for the full time one-year option. **This will be factored into the assessment process of these programmes.**

In line with the Human Capital Initiative funding of ICT proposals, successful courses funded under this stream will receive funding for up to 3 years. The uptake of places on these programmes will be closely monitored by the HEA.
Part time Springboard+ courses will continue to be funded on an annual basis.

Please note the following which applies to all Springboard+ 2020 applicants:

- Participants may not enroll in more than three courses in any five-year period. They may re-engage with the Springboard+ programme after a break period of two years. This criteria will be strictly enforced.
- Participants who enrolled in **more than one Springboard+** course since the inception of Springboard in 2011, and **did not complete** any course, are **not eligible** to apply in 2020. This criteria applies to all categories of applicant.
- Participants who enrolled in **just one course**, since the inception of Springboard+ in 2011, but did not complete, **are eligible to apply** in 2020.
- All applicants must meet the eligibility criteria outlined below and any additional requirements as outlined by the course provider.

Participants who return to employment

As one of the objectives of Springboard+ is to support upskilling of the labour force, participants who succeed in re-entering employment before completion of a course should be facilitated to gain the course award. In planning courses, Providers should ensure that participants who return to employment have a reasonable opportunity to complete the course on a flexible basis. Such participants will not be required to pay any fees to complete their course.

Priority of eligible participants

While the initiative is building on the changes made in 2018 in respect of the eligible cohorts, it should be noted as follows;

HEA will expect that when Providers are making decisions on the awarding of places to eligible applicants on these courses, in instances where two candidates meet the course academic admissions criteria, priority must be afforded to the unemployed / Returner applicant over those who are already in employment in every instance. Consideration should also be given to those who have not previously undertaken a Springboard+ course.

In courses (except 2-year part-time ICT skills conversion courses) where eligible applicants are a mix of all applicant categories, as outlined in Section 2, applicant categories 1 and 2 should form a minimum of 30% of the student cohort. In instances where there may be fewer eligible applicants from categories 1 and 2 it is acknowledged that the 30% threshold may not be possible. In such circumstances Providers can consult with the HEA.

Application and Evaluation Process

All Providers of courses funded through Springboard+ 2020 and the Human Capital Initiative Pillar 1 will be required to use the online system www.springboardcourses.ie to manage course information, applications and acceptances as well as return of data as set out above.

Selection process and criteria

Decisions on proposals for funding will be made by a panel of experts with industry and educational experience, supported by the HEA. An independent process auditor will oversee the assessment and selection process.

Course proposals will be assessed in accordance with the criteria set out in Sections 2-5 of the online course proposal form and the associated marking scheme (Appendix 3). As part of the assessment procedure the assessors will have access to information on academic and employment outcomes from the Application Management System (AMS) on courses run in previous years through Springboard+. As programmes are assessed each year based on the application material provided, there should not be an expectation that programmes funded in previous years will automatically receive funding again. It is intended that Springboard+ will support a mix of courses at different NFQ Levels, of varying duration; and having regard to the educational attainment levels of the priority participant groups. The panel's final recommendation on courses approved will also take into consideration the overall mix of courses by level, type and duration, as well as geographical spread and mode of delivery.

Since it was established Springboard+ has had an Expert Panel who have assessed the applications received and made recommendations to the Minister for Education and Science on proposals to be funded under the Call. This Expert Panel comprises national experts in the areas of enterprise, recruitment, biopharma/medical technology and information and communication technology.

With the Human Capital Initiative Pillar 1 call being incorporated into the Springboard+ process in 2020 the evaluation process has been expanded.

Proposals will be assessed on a competitive basis by an external independent assessment panel. The panel will be supported by the HEA Executive. The Panel will make recommendations for the allocation of available funding to the highest scoring proposals. The Panel will only make recommendations in respect of proposals that meet all of the criteria as set out in the Call document and at least a minimum level of quality. The Minister for Education and Skills will make all final decisions on funding allocations.

The assessment will follow a five-step process

1. All proposals will be checked for eligibility and completeness as per the call terms and conditions, by the HEA executive. Proposals which do not fulfil the eligibility criteria and/or are incomplete and do not address all questions as set out in in the online application portal will not progress. The HEA executive will assign all proposals to the independent panel and share the outcomes of step 1.

2. The independent panel will conduct individual remote assessments on applications assigned to them in accordance with the published evaluation criteria. All proposals will be considered by at least two members of the panel.

3. The independent panel will provide its final recommended list of ranked proposals for funding, including a reserve list of projects for funding subject to budgetary availability. This will include consideration of the overall programmatic composition of projects by quality, type, size and duration, as well as geographical spread.

4. The panel's recommendations will be communicated to the Expert Panel along with the outcomes of the Springboard assessment. The Expert Panel will review the recommendation of the independent assessment panel and make a final recommendation to the Minister for Education and Skills.

5. The final list of programmes recommended for funding will be subject to Ministerial approval in accordance with the governance procedures. The Ministers decision is final. The Ministerial approved outcome will be reported to the HEA Board, The National Skills Council and the National Training Fund Advisory Group.

Subject to demand and take-up of individual course places, the HEA may agree to re-allocate unfilled places to other Springboard+ courses. Since the expansion of the programme to include those in employment, demand for course places has increased. The budget for Springboard+ in 2020 remains static. Whist in the past the HEA was in a position to re-allocate unfilled places to other Springboard+ courses, this may not be in the case in 2020 and Providers should not expect that additional places on courses will be funded.

It is planned that notification of approved courses will be sent to Providers at the end of May 2020. Contracts will be agreed between Providers and the HEA and planning and marketing of courses will begin. It should be noted that once contracts have been issued by the HEA it will not be possible to make any amendments to these contracts. Uploading of information by Providers on approved courses to the online system www.springboardcourses.ie will be an important part of this process.

Costs and fees

Providers are requested to submit details of all costs associated with the delivery of proposals in the format outlined in Section 5 of the online proposals system http://skillsdirect.hea.ie. Funding to successful Providers will be on the basis of the course fee by reference to the number of credits to be provided. As mentioned above, for participants who are in employment HEA will fund 90% of the course fee, with the Provider receiving the balance from the participant (or her/his employer). The marks allocated in Section 5 on the value for money of a course will be competitive and will be made with reference to average costs in previous years across the same skills areas and at the same NFQ Levels. Funding will be released in a number of tranches depending on the course duration, numbers of students enrolled/registered and having regard to procedures in place for Protection for Enrolled Learners (where appropriate).

Programme Management

GDPR

Springboard+ is co-financed by the Department of Education and Skills and the European Social Fund (ESF) as part of the Programme for Employability, Inclusion and Learning (PEIL) 2014-2020. The data provided with applications for Springboard funding will be collected, processed and retained by the HEA in accordance with its obligations under the Common Provisions Regulation (EU) 1303/2013, the European Social Fund (EU) Regulation 1304/2014, and related delegated and implementing regulations (henceforth the "ESF Regulations"). The HEA and the Department of Education and Skills are Joint Data Controllers in respect of the data you provide and will only process that data in accordance with the GDPR and their legal obligations under the ESF Regulations referred to above. Personal data collected as part of applications will be shared with the Department of Education and Skills for the purposes of monitoring, evaluating, managing, verifying and auditing the implementation of Springboard+. Such data may also, from time to time, be shared with the European Commission, the European Court of Auditors, Central Statistics Office and/or their agents for audit and verification purposes. Data will only be retained by the Joint Data Controllers for the period required to fulfil their obligations under the ESF Regulations. Under the GDPR, data subjects have the right to request from the data controller access to their data, the right to request rectification or erasure of their data, the right to request that the processing of such data is restricted, and the right to data portability. Any such requests should be addressed to the Data Protection Officer in the HEA at dataprotection@hea.ie

Course Providers will be required to promptly return data to the HEA on course activity and outcomes, and co-operate with ongoing monitoring and evaluation, including all ESF reporting requirements, which is managed by the HEA in consultation with the Department of Education and Skills. Requirements will include maintaining a student record for each Springboard+ participant; collecting evidence that verifies eligibility of the applicant; and linking input data (education, employment history) with outcomes data (course completion, award, and employment by sector). Further details will be supplied as part of contract terms. Funding of courses will be conditional on co-operation with all aspects of the evaluation process and timely return of data, including requirements under the ESF co-financing arrangements as stipulated below.

Note: It is imperative that any material provided by applicants to confirm their eligibility for a

programme, as outlined above, is retained by the course provider. Failure to do this, and consequent failure to meet the requirements of a designated audit, may result in exclusion from applying to future Springboard calls. Examples of the type of material to be retained includes evidence of a DEASP payment for those in receipt of such payments and an employment detail summary (formerly P60) which is available through Revenue's myAccount service for those in employment.

Freedom of information

Information held by the HEA on Springboard will be subject to the Freedom of Information Act 1997 (FOI Act), which was passed into law on 21st April 1997, The Act has applied to the HEA since the 1 October 2001. Policies and procedures on access to information is set out in the following link: http://www.hea.ie/en/freedom-of-information

ESF Programme for Employability, Inclusion and Learning (PEIL) 2014-2020

Springboard+ is co-funded under the European Social Fund Programme for Employability, Inclusion and Learning (PEIL) 2014-2020. Participation in ESF co-financed programmes necessitates specific requirements with regard both to financial management and controls, participant's data collection and verification of student eligibility.

In addition, participation in ESF co-funded programmes necessitates compliance with ESF communication and publicity requirements. Any material publicising or promoting Springboard+ funded courses (including posters and signage) must explicitly acknowledge ESF co-funding and ESF logos must be incorporated into all Springboard publicity material. Please see https://www.esf.ie/en/Information-Centre/Communication/ for details.

Further information on ESF is available on the ESF website www.esf.ie

Please note that all approved Providers are subject to audit by the EU and other national bodies (including the DES, the HEA and their designated auditors). It is anticipated that a number of audits will be carried out in 2020. These audits may comprise financial and/or communication and publicity elements. Checks may also be carried out on material retained as part of applicant's eligibility for courses. It is imperative that all application material is retained by Providers.

Submission of proposals

A Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) document has been prepared to coincide with the Call document and will be circulated to all Providers. Any questions not addressed in this document can be submitted to springboard@hea.ie The FAQ document will be updated and uploaded to the website on Wednesday each week. The final FAQ will be uploaded on **Thursday 27th February 2020.**

(i)   Proposals must be submitted online via http://skillsdirect.hea.ie/

(ii)   The closing date for submission of proposals is **13.00hrs on Thursday 5th March 2020**.

The online application system will not accept proposals submitted after this deadline.

(iii)   As outlined above any queries on the Call process for 2020 must be emailed to
springboard@hea.ie and responses will be updated on the FAQ document. Telephone
queries will not be accommodated, and any form of canvassing will disqualify Providers
from participation in the initiative.

Indicative* timetable 2020

Call for Proposals issues	**Thursday 16th January 2020**
Deadline for submission of proposals	**Thursday 5th March 2020, 13.00 hrs**
Providers notified of approved courses	**May 2020**
Contracts agreed with HEA, Providers upload information for applicants to www.springboardcourses.ie	**May 2020**
Applications for Springboard+ 2020 open via www.springboardcourses.ie	**May 2020**

*The HEA will endeavor to adhere to these indicative dates. However, it may prove necessary to amend them as the initiative rolls out. Any changes in the timetable will be notified to prospective course Providers.

APPENDIX 1

Further Skills Guidance Documents

Expert Group on Future Skills Needs publications – www.skillsireland.ie

Future Jobs Ireland 2019
Regional Labour Markets Bulletin 2016
Winning by Design 2017
Update on the Future Skill Needs of the Food and Drink Sector 2017
National Skills Bulletin 2017
Hospitality Skills Oversight Group Report 2018
Languages Connect
Addressing the Skills Needs Arising from the Potential Trade Implications of Brexit
Vacancy Overview 2017
Future Skills Needs of the Biopharma Sector in Ireland, 2016
Assessment of Future Skills Requirements in the Hospitality Sector in Ireland, 2015-2020, 2015
Assessing the Demand for Big Data and Analytics Skills 2013-2020, 2014
Addressing Future Demand for High Level ICT Skills, 2012
Technology Skills 2022
Ireland for Finance 2025
SME and Entrepreneurship Policy in Ireland

APPENDIX 2 – Springboard+

ISCED-F 2013: List of codes

Broad field	Narrow field	Detailed field
00 Generic programmes and qualifications	000 Generic programmes and qualifications not further defined	0000 Generic programmes and qualifications not further defined
	001 Basic programmes and qualifications	0011 Basic programmes and qualifications
	002 Literacy and numeracy	0021 Literacy and numeracy
	003 Personal skills and development	0031 Personal skills and development
	009 Generic programmes and qualifications not elsewhere classified	0099 Generic programmes and qualifications not elsewhere classified
01 Education	011 Education	0110 Education not further defined 0111 Education science 0112 Training for pre-school teachers 0113 Teacher training without subject specialisation 0114 Teacher training with subject specialisation 0119 Education not elsewhere classified
	018 Inter-disciplinary programmes and qualifications involving education	0188 Inter-disciplinary programmes and qualifications involving education
02 Arts and humanities	020 Arts and humanities not further defined	0200 Arts and humanities not further defined
	021 Arts	0210 Arts not further defined 0211 Audio-visual techniques and media production 0212 Fashion, interior and industrial design 0213 Fine arts 0214 Handicrafts 0215 Music and performing arts 0219 Arts not elsewhere classified
	022 Humanities (except languages)	0220 Humanities (except languages) not further defined 0221 Religion and theology 0222 History and archaeology 0223 Philosophy and ethics 0229 Humanities (except languages) not elsewhere classified
	023 Languages	0230 Languages not further defined 0231 Language acquisition 0232 Literature and linguistics 0239 Languages not elsewhere classified
	028 Inter-disciplinary programmes and qualifications involving arts and humanities	0288 Inter-disciplinary programmes and qualifications involving arts and humanities
	029 Arts and humanities not elsewhere classified	0299 Arts and humanities not elsewhere classified

Broad field	Narrow field	Detailed field
03 Social sciences, journalism and information	030 Social sciences, journalism and information not further defined	0300 Social sciences, journalism and information not further defined
	031 Social and behavioural sciences	0310 Social and behavioural sciences not further defined 0311 Economics 0312 Political sciences and civics 0313 Psychology 0314 Sociology and cultural studies 0319 Social and behavioural sciences not elsewhere classified
	032 Journalism and information	0320 Journalism and information not further defined 0321 Journalism and reporting 0322 Library, information and archival studies 0329 Journalism and information not elsewhere classified
	038 Inter-disciplinary programmes and qualifications involving social sciences, journalism and information	0388 Inter-disciplinary programmes and qualifications involving social sciences, journalism and information
	039 Social sciences, journalism and information not elsewhere classified	0399 Social sciences, journalism and information not elsewhere classified
04 Business, administration and law	040 Business, administration and law not further defined	0400 Business, administration and law not further defined
	041 Business and administration	0410 Business and administration not further defined 0411 Accounting and taxation 0412 Finance, banking and insurance 0413 Management and administration 0414 Marketing and advertising 0415 Secretarial and office work 0416 Wholesale and retail sales 0417 Work skills 0419 Business and administration not elsewhere classified
	042 Law	0421 Law
	048 Inter-disciplinary programmes and qualifications involving business, administration and law	0488 Inter-disciplinary programmes and qualifications involving business, administration and law
	049 Business, administration and law not elsewhere classified	0499 Business, administration and law not elsewhere classified

Broad field	Narrow field	Detailed field
05 Natural sciences, mathematics and statistics	050 Natural sciences, mathematics and statistics not further defined	0500 Natural sciences, mathematics and statistics not further defined
	051 Biological and related sciences	0510 Biological and related sciences not further defined 0511 Biology 0512 Biochemistry 0519 Biological and related sciences not elsewhere classified
	052 Environment	0520 Environment not further defined 0521 Environmental sciences 0522 Natural environments and wildlife 0529 Environment not elsewhere classified
	053 Physical sciences	0530 Physical sciences not further defined 0531 Chemistry 0532 Earth sciences 0533 Physics 0539 Physical sciences not elsewhere classified
	054 Mathematics and statistics	0540 Mathematics and statistics not further defined 0541 Mathematics 0542 Statistics
	058 Inter-disciplinary programmes and qualifications involving natural sciences, mathematics and statistics	0588 Inter-disciplinary programmes and qualifications involving natural sciences, mathematics and statistics
	059 Natural sciences, mathematics and statistics not elsewhere classified	0599 Natural sciences, mathematics and statistics not elsewhere classified
06 Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs)	061 Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs)	0610 Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) not further defined 0611 Computer use 0612 Database and network design and administration 0613 Software and applications development and analysis 0619 Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) not elsewhere classified
	068 Inter-disciplinary programmes and qualifications involving Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs)	0688 Inter-disciplinary programmes and qualifications involving Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs)

Broad field	Narrow field	Detailed field
07 Engineering, manufacturing and construction	070 Engineering, manufacturing and construction not further defined	0700 Engineering, manufacturing and construction not further defined
	071 Engineering and engineering trades	0710 Engineering and engineering trades not further defined 0711 Chemical engineering and processes 0712 Environmental protection technology 0713 Electricity and energy 0714 Electronics and automation 0715 Mechanics and metal trades 0716 Motor vehicles, ships and aircraft 0719 Engineering and engineering trades not elsewhere classified
	072 Manufacturing and processing	0720 Manufacturing and processing not further defined 0721 Food processing 0722 Materials (glass, paper, plastic and wood) 0723 Textiles (clothes, footwear and leather) 0724 Mining and extraction 0729 Manufacturing and processing not elsewhere classified
	073 Architecture and construction	0730 Architecture and construction not further defined 0731 Architecture and town planning 0732 Building and civil engineering
	078 Inter-disciplinary programmes and qualifications involving engineering, manufacturing and construction	0788 Inter-disciplinary programmes and qualifications involving engineering, manufacturing and construction
	079 Engineering, manufacturing and construction not elsewhere classified	0799 Engineering, manufacturing and construction not elsewhere classified
08 Agriculture, forestry, fisheries and veterinary	080 Agriculture, forestry, fisheries and veterinary not further defined	0800 Agriculture, forestry, fisheries and veterinary not further defined
	081 Agriculture	0810 Agriculture not further defined 0811 Crop and livestock production 0812 Horticulture 0819 Agriculture not elsewhere classified
	082 Forestry	0821 Forestry
	083 Fisheries	0831 Fisheries
	084 Veterinary	0841 Veterinary
	088 Inter-disciplinary programmes and qualifications involving agriculture, forestry, fisheries and veterinary	0888 Inter-disciplinary programmes and qualifications involving agriculture, forestry, fisheries and veterinary
	089 Agriculture, forestry, fisheries and veterinary not elsewhere classified	0899 Agriculture, forestry, fisheries and veterinary not elsewhere classified

Broad field	Narrow field	Detailed field
09 Health and welfare	090 Health and welfare not further defined	0900 Health and welfare not further defined
	091 Health	0910 Health not further defined 0911 Dental studies 0912 Medicine 0913 Nursing and midwifery 0914 Medical diagnostic and treatment technology 0915 Therapy and rehabilitation 0916 Pharmacy 0917 Traditional and complementary medicine and therapy 0919 Health not elsewhere classified
	092 Welfare	0920 Welfare not further defined 0921 Care of the elderly and of disabled adults 0922 Child care and youth services 0923 Social work and counselling 0929 Welfare not elsewhere classified
	098 Inter-disciplinary programmes and qualifications involving health and welfare	0988 Inter-disciplinary programmes and qualifications involving health and welfare
	099 Health and welfare not elsewhere classified	0999 Health and welfare not elsewhere classified
10 Services	100 Services not further defined	1000 Services not further defined
	101 Personal services	1010 Personal services not further defined 1011 Domestic services 1012 Hair and beauty services 1013 Hotel, restaurants and catering 1014 Sports 1015 Travel, tourism and leisure 1019 Personal services not elsewhere classified
	102 Hygiene and occupational health services	1020 Hygiene and occupational health services not further defined 1021 Community sanitation 1022 Occupational health and safety 1029 Hygiene and occupational health services not elsewhere classified
	103 Security services	1030 Security services not further defined 1031 Military and defence 1032 Protection of persons and property 1039 Security services not elsewhere classified
	104 Transport services	1041 Transport services
	108 Inter-disciplinary programmes and qualifications involving services	1088 Inter-disciplinary programmes and qualifications involving services
	109 Services not elsewhere classified	1099 Services not elsewhere classified
99 Field unknown	999 Field unknown	9999 Field unknown

Appendix 3

Marking Scheme

Criteria	Marks available
Course description, modules, delivery and other relevant details. Digital skills, transversal skills, management and leadership skills and the workplace of the future should be addressed under this criteria.	40
Course details relating to industry collaboration and support for the course proposal	30
Course details relating to supports for course participants	10
Cost and value for money	20
Total	**100**

Appendix 4

Quality and Qualifications Ireland

Certification of Course Approval Springboard+ 2020

Course Name	
Course Provider	
Course Leader	
NFQ Level	
ECTS Credits	
Length of Course	
Duration of Course Approval	
Approval Granted By	
Date Granted	

QQI Verification

Name:

Position:

Signature: