



Call for Proposals

December 2021

Springboard+ is co-funded by
the Government of Ireland
and the European Union.



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland

HEA | HIGHER EDUCATION AUTHORITY
AN tÚDARÁS um ARD-OIDEACHAS

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Providers who wish to make Springboard+ course proposals must submit their proposals online via [SkillsDirect](#). The deadline for submissions is **13:00hrs on Wednesday, February 16th 2022**.

Proposals will not be accepted after this deadline or via any other platform.

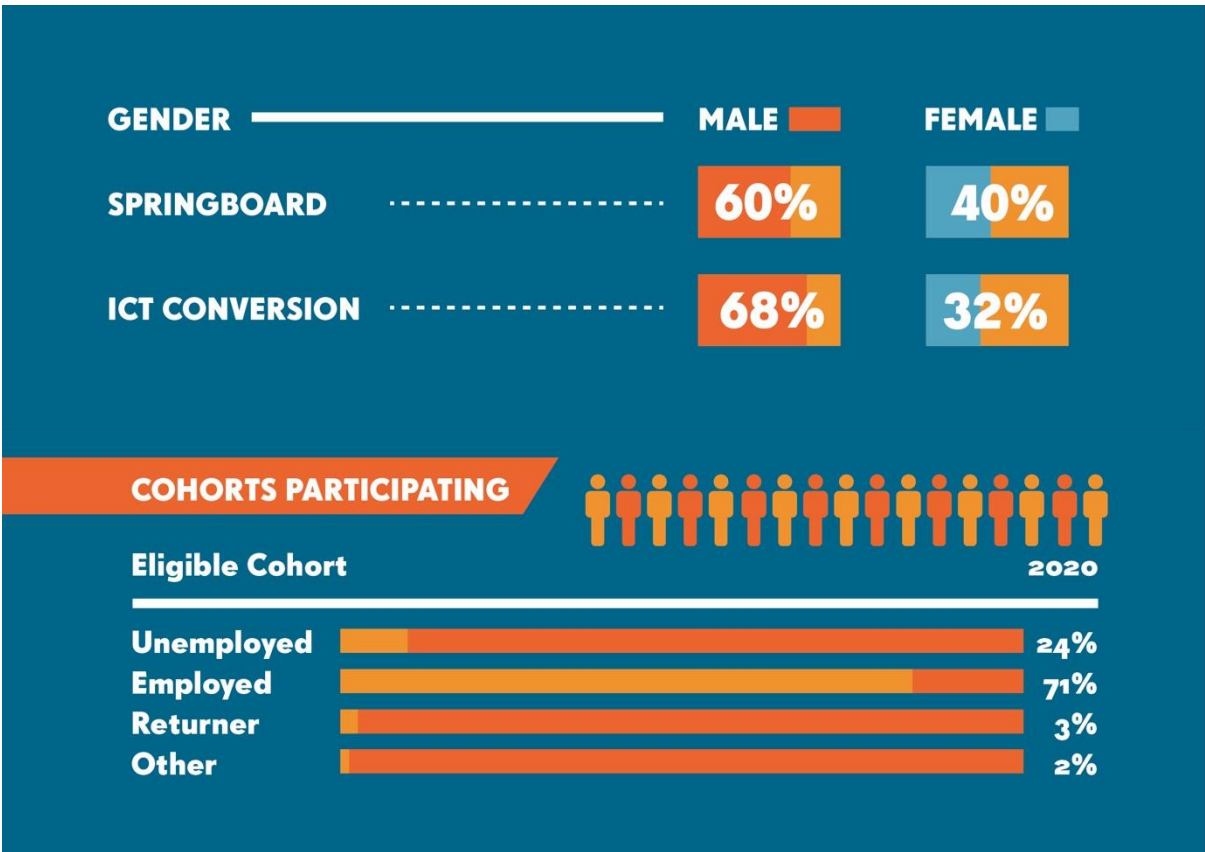
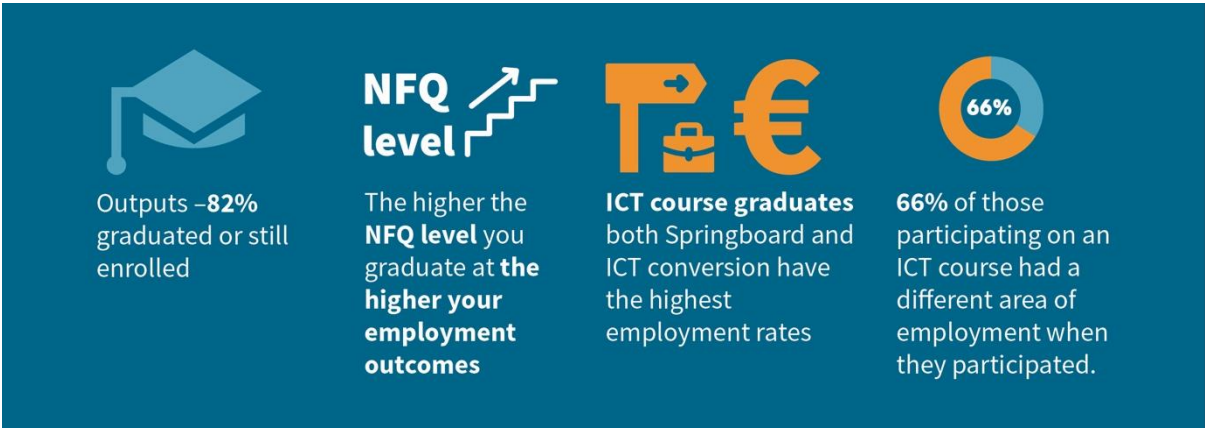
Section 1. Introduction to Springboard+

Springboard+ began in 2011 as part of the Government's Jobs Initiative to provide free and heavily subsidised upskilling and reskilling opportunities through higher education in areas of identified skills need. When the initiative was first introduced in January 2011, unemployment was at 15%, with over 400,000 people out of work. As a result, the programme has had a particular emphasis on upskilling people who are unemployed or in receipt of a social welfare payment. Since then, it has evolved alongside economic improvements to also address the skills development needs of those already in employment.

Springboard+ complements the core State-funded education and training system and is one of several initiatives designed to meet current and future skill needs of the Irish economy. 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. This year represents the twelfth phase of Springboard+.

Springboard+:10 Years at a Glance:





The COVID-19 Pandemic has had a considerable impact on the Irish economy and society. Significant supports were introduced by the Government during the crisis, including the Pandemic Unemployment Payment and the Temporary Wage Subsidy Scheme (later replaced by the Employment Wage Subsidy Scheme). The COVID-19 adjusted unemployment rate for October 2021 was 7.9% for all persons including those on the Pandemic Unemployment Payment. With this in mind, Springboard+ in 2022 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).

Springboard+ is managed by the Higher Education Authority (HEA) on behalf of the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science. An evaluation framework underpins the initiative, with ongoing monitoring of its impact. Evaluation reports are available via www.springboardcourses.ie/reports

Section 2. Programme Objectives

- The primary objective of Springboard+ in 2022 is to provide upskilling and reskilling courses to develop the talent base in Ireland in key growth sectors of the economy **by supporting those who are unemployed or Returners to gain 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. Providers should also be cognisant of the impact that COVID-19 has had on industries and how those displaced by the impact could be facilitated by the programme.
- To provide opportunities for **workforce development** to enhance the skill levels of those already in employment; to increase the national rate of engagement in Life-Long Learning; to reskill those whose current occupation may be at risk from technological and other developments.
- To enhance **collaboration between enterprise and higher education** to design and deliver relevant higher education courses that support job creation and expansion.
- To enhance the skills profile of the labour force to meet the targets and objectives in line with **Government policy**¹.

The following sections outline the eligibility requirements, funding structures, application, and evaluation process for Springboard+ 2022. It is highly likely that there will be changes to this process in 2023 due to the onset of the new HEA legislation, and the adoption of new functions by the QQI (QQI Amendment Act 2019) in conjunction with a government commissioned review by the OECD of the National Skills Strategy 2016 - 2025 and an examination of how Ireland is equipped to meet current and future skills needs.

Section 3. Application Criteria and Guidance

3.1 Provider and Course Eligibility

Courses submitted by providers must either:

A. Lead to a higher education and training award that is included on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) at Levels 6 to 9, from one of the following Irish awarding bodies:

- Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI), including combinations of modules from already validated courses 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
- Universities
- Technological Universities
- 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 criterion will be strictly enforced to safeguard learners and ensure that if they undertake a State-funded programme through Springboard+, the comparable NFQ level of that programme will be clear to the learner and can be confirmed by employers and education and training providers for the purposes of employment and progression. Providers will be required to submit a letter of verification from the awarding body as part of the application process in this instance.

3.2 Collaborative Proposals

Collaborative proposals from two or more providers will be considered for funding. 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. Collaborative proposals should be submitted by the **lead provider only** and not by each individual institution. The lead provider will also be responsible for the financial management and reporting of the programme.

3.3 Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) Validation

- Springboard+ funding will be subject to the proposed course being validated by QQI.
- The QQI validation process and criteria for proposed Springboard+ courses will be the same as for other kinds of courses. This is to ensure that Springboard+ courses are of a comparable quality. Validation is typically for **five years**.
- **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. This can take up to 25 weeks, but QQI will endeavour to expedite the process for proposed Springboard+ courses. While initial screening of these submissions may take place, QQI will only proceed with the validation process after they have been approved for Springboard+ funding. **Evidence that this process has commenced at the time of application is required. Upload facility will be available on the application form (Appendix 2).**
- Proposed courses may be marketed to learners before determination of the application for validation but following acceptance by QQI of a completed application if it is made clear that the courses are offered subject to being validated by QQI.
- The current version of the Programme Validation Manual for Courses of HET should be used for preparing applications.
- A template (Appendix 3) has been provided to confirm that courses have been validated by the QQI. Confirmation of validation must be completed and sent by the provider to the HEA by **1st September 2022**. Written evidence that the course has received QQI validation must be

submitted within 10 days of receipt of same from the QQI.

- Springboard+ courses leading to QQI awards must be validated for the 2022/23 academic year before any learners are enrolled.

3.4 Eligible Course Types

Funding will be available for:

1. part-time higher education courses **up to a maximum of 12 months** in duration
2. proposals for Level 8 and 9 ICT skills conversion courses both full-time (**max. 12 months**) and part-time (**max. 24 months**)

Please Note:

- Part-time courses must not exceed **17 class contact hours per week**. This is to facilitate participants continuing to seek employment and therefore receive a job-seekers payment, as well as to accommodate those already in employment. It is important that proposed attendance patterns, including timing of classes/lectures for courses, adhere to this requirement and are made clear to applicants. Proposals submitted must provide details of attendance arrangements to enable full clarification that they meet the contact hours' requirement. Credits should be aligned to the time commitment of the course. Returners as an eligible cohort for a course, the provision should reflect this with classes being provided during school hours
- It should be noted that intelligence gathering by the Regional Skills Fora managers has indicated that potential participants that are employed are increasingly looking for shorter programme provision.
- Part-time Springboard courses must lead to a minimum of 10 ECTS credits. Courses with fewer ECT credits will not be considered.
- Courses must fall under one of the **eligible discipline areas** (i.e. ISCED Codes), as outlined in Appendix 5. Courses outside of these discipline areas are ineligible for funding in 2022.

These areas were identified in collaboration with the Expert Group on Future Skills Needs (EGFSN), the Skills and the Labour Market Research Unit (SLMRU), and the Regional Skills Fora Managers.

- As in 2021, ICT skills conversion courses are sought on a one-year full-time *and* two-year part-time basis. We anticipate that there will be demand for both types of courses so Providers should consider the national skills requirements alongside the needs of their region in meeting this skills gap.
- 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.
- 1-year full-time and 2-year part-time ICT skills conversion proposals leading to awards of fewer than **60 ECTS credits** per annum will not be considered for funding.
- 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.

Proposed courses should be stand-alone courses 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.

- Full-time courses (except for one-year ICT skills conversion courses) are not eligible for funding.
- Courses must include a dedicated job readiness/job preparation component. Details of this provision will be required as part of course proposals including whether the component is credit bearing. It should be noted that it is not compulsory that the module is credit bearing. 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. This may be particularly relevant to courses designed for participants who have been displaced by COVID-19.

- A work placement or project-based, credited module must always be provided for participants who are Returners or Unemployed and in-receipt of a DSP payment. Where a Springboard+ course has a mixture of applicant types, a work placement may not be appropriate for those in employment and can be waived for these participants. However, if a work placement is sought or deemed suitable for a participant in employment, it should be encouraged.
- A work placement is mandatory for 1-year full-time ICT skills conversion courses and a work placement or credit bearing project is required for the 2-year, part-time ICT skills conversion.

Section 4. Target Student Cohorts

4.1 Cohort Categories

The following categories of applicant will be considered eligible for funding, subject to further guidance from the Department of Social Protection, the Department of Justice, and the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science. Full eligibility criteria for each applicant category will be confirmed in full and communicated to successful Providers prior to the 2022 launch.

Category	Previous Education Attainment
<p>1. Unemployed and in-receipt of a qualifying payment from the Department of Social Protection (DSP).</p>	<p>Individuals who already hold a National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) award at Level 5 or 6 or equivalent, with a previous history of employment;</p> <p>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.</p>
<p>2. Formerly Self-Employed</p>	<p>Individuals at all qualifications levels who may require new qualifications to return to self-employment or to enter employment.</p>
<p>3. Returners</p>	<p>Individuals who already hold an NFQ award at Level 5 or 6 or equivalent, with a previous history of employment; or</p> <p>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.</p>
<p>4. Employed</p>	<p>Individuals at all qualifications levels wishing to upskill or reskill to meet required skill needs.</p>

5. Recent Graduates	Individuals who have completed a full-time, NFQ Level 8 degree within the last 12 months.

Please note in courses (except 2-year part-time ICT skills conversion courses) where eligible applicants are a mix of all applicant categories, as outlined above, **Unemployed/Formerly Self-Employed applicants should form a minimum of 30% of the student cohort.** In instances where there are fewer eligible applicants from these categories, a 30% threshold may not be possible. In such circumstances Providers should consult with the HEA.

4.2 Returning Applicants

- Participants can enrol on a maximum of three Springboard+ courses in any five-year period. After this, applicants are required to wait two years before enrolling on another Springboard+ course.
- Applicants who have failed to successfully complete two Springboard+ courses within the past two academic years, are ineligible to apply in 2022-23.
- Applicants who enrolled in **just one course** from a previous year but did not complete, **are eligible to apply** again in 2022-23.
- Participants must have fully completed all Springboard+ courses from previous academic years before applying again. An applicant still enrolled on a 2021-22 course will be unable to take a 2022-23 course and will be blocked automatically by the application system.
- There is no requirement for participants to move up the National Framework for Qualifications ladder. This means that participants can take a second Springboard+ course at the same NFQ level, provided it is in a different skills area.

4.3 Priority of Eligible Applicants

Where there are more applications than places available, the HEA expects providers to award places to eligible applicants from priority cohorts first; This means that in all instances, **priority must be afforded to Unemployed / Returner applicants over those already in employment.** Special consideration should also be given to those who have not previously undertaken a Springboard+ course.

4.4 Unemployed 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, provided their status changed **after** the date of course commencement.

Section 5. Springboard+ Funding

5.1 Course Funding

- Providers are required to submit the total cost of delivering the course in their proposal through [SkillsDirect](#). Funding to successful Providers will be based on the course fee by reference to the number of credits to be provided. Providers should ensure that the full cost of the course is included in these costings.
- 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).
- HEA designated institutions (Appendix 6) and non HEA designated higher education providers (Appendix 7) whose quality assurance procedures have been approved under the 2012 Act (re-engagement/QA approval processes) will be eligible to apply for multi-annual funding of 3 years from 2022. This multiannual funding is subject to course validation being in place for each year of the multi-annual funding when the course commences. Multi-annual funding is dependent on funding being continued for the Springboard+ programme beyond 2022 and at the same level of funding. Where the amount of funding is reduced in future years lower ranked approved courses may only receive 1-year funding. This will be communicated to providers in advance of the 2023 process. The continuation of this multi annual funding beyond year 1 is dependent on a fill rate no lower than 75% in the 1st year (2022). Lower fill rates may result in a course being discontinued for the following year. Lower fill rates on courses deemed critical skill needs may continue to be eligible for multi annual funding. Critical skill need areas are ICT and Tourism and Hospitality (ISCED 06 and 1013,1015).
- Applicant providers who do not fit these criteria are only eligible for 1 year funding. These providers will be permitted to reapply for funding each year if they meet the eligibility criteria in subsequent years Call documents. In addition, courses must have a fill rate in the

previous year of 75% to be allowed to reapply except for critical skill needs set out above.

- A minimum of 85% of annual Springboard+ funding will be ringfenced for courses that are awarded multi-annual funding. A maximum of 15% of annual funding will be ringfenced for courses that are awarded 1 year funding in 2022.
- A limited Call for new applications for new courses may be made each year dependent on available funding from unfilled courses from the previous year. This will be subject to the emerging skills needs at the time.

5.2 Participant Fee Coverage and Contributions

- Fees are covered in full for eligible participants who are Returners, Formerly Self-Employed, or Unemployed and in-receipt of a qualifying DSP payment.
- Fees for NFQ Level 6 courses are covered in full for **all** eligible participants.
- Fees are 90% covered for eligible, employed participants on NFQ Level 7 to 9 courses, with providers collecting the remaining 10% from participants. Please note that in future financial audits, the HEA will check that this fee was requested and paid.
- Eligible 2022 graduates are 90% covered for ICT Conversion courses and will be required to pay the remaining 10% to providers. They are ineligible for other courses
- It is important to note that as in previous years, no participant on a Springboard+ course in 2022 will be eligible for support under the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science Higher Education Grants Scheme.

5.3 Managing Course Applications

- All Providers of courses funded through Springboard+ 2022 will be required to use the Springboard Application System (AMS) to manage course information, applications, and

offers, as well as return relevant data, as set out above. The AMS is accessible to registered providers via www.springboardcourses.ie. It is imperative that Providers update this on a regular basis to ensure that information on courses and participant records are accurate. Failure to do so may result in funding being withheld.

Section 6. Application Process

Proposals should be submitted via [SkillsDirect](#). Applications via other platforms will not be accepted. The deadline for submissions is **Wednesday, February 16th at 13:00**. It will not be possible to submit a proposal after this time.

The [SkillsDirect](#) portal opens in mid-January. It will be necessary to register for an account at that time, even if you have registered in previous years. The first person to register from each provider will be automatically assigned the role of “Provider Admin” by the system. Other users from the same provider can be added, but only one “Provider Admin” is possible.

6.1 Changes to the 2022 Application Process

- QQI submission for validation prior to application – form confirmation- Section 3 and Appendix 2
- List of eligible discipline areas – Appendix 5
- Proposals must be ranked– Section 6
- Limit on the number of proposals providers can submit – Section 6
- Requirement for a letter of confirmation where the awarding body is outside of Republic of Ireland – Section 3
- Confirmation Regional Skills Fora Managers viewed the draft submission from HEA designated institutions – Section 6
- President/CEO or Vice-President/Registrar Sign off – Section 6
- Multiannual Funding for Eligible providers – Section 5

Changes to the Online Application Process for 2022

- Opening Section requiring the following – course description, evidence enterprise engagement and demand for skills, evidence of demographic demand, identification of target cohort
- No requirement for Industry Support Letters

- No requirement for RPL Procedures document upload
- No requirement for Regional Skills Fora Manager Letters
- Changes to other sections regarding text boxes

6.2 Considerations in Advance of Applying

- **Maximum Number of Applications:** Springboard+ has a limited budget and is a highly competitive Call. As such, a maximum of 30 proposals is allowed for the majority of providers. Technological Universities can submit a maximum of 60 proposals, given their significant multi-campus/region nature. Providers are asked to be cognisant of the number of successful proposals from previous years when considering how many proposals to submit. When assigning a ranking of proposals please ensure a mix of skills and levels. Technological Universities should include the campus location in course titles.
- **Ranking Applications:** Applications must be assigned a rank based on the providers priority for funding of courses (i.e. you should rank the proposal you most want funded as #1 and so on). If a course proposal does not meet the eligibility requirements, it will not be considered, regardless of its ranking.
- HEA Designated institutions must consult with their **Regional Skills Fora Manager** regarding their draft ranked applications prior to upload to [SkillsDirect](#). The application form requires confirmation that this has taken place. The evaluation panel will assess the relevance of the ranking in non-HEA designated institutions. This may result in courses being moved up or down the providers ranking.
- The final submission should be signed off by the provider **President/CEO or Vice President/Registrar**.
- **Careers support services** at higher education providers should be consulted in the design of courses, employer engagement and identification of cohorts who would benefit from Springboard+ courses.

Course applications should:

- Be nationally and/or regionally focussed.
- Demonstrate clear evidence of engagement with enterprise/industry partners.
- Demonstrate that there is an available supply of applicants.
- Identify target cohorts for the course.
- Ensure the times of onsite classes are clearly highlighted in your application and consideration must be given to cohorts for whom the course is targeted.

6.3 Indicative* Timetable 2022

Call for Proposals issues	Thursday 16th December 2021
SkillsDirect portal opens	Mid-January 2022
Deadline for submission of proposals	Wednesday 16th February 2022, 13.00hrs
Providers notified of approved courses	Early Q2 2022
Contracts agreed with HEA, Providers upload information for applicants to www.springboardcourses.ie	Q2 2022
Applications for Springboard+ 2022 open via www.springboardcourses.ie	Q2 2022

*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.

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. Questions received up to close of business each Tuesday whilst

the Call is open will be included. The final FAQ will be uploaded on **Tuesday 8th February 2022**.

- The closing date for submission of proposals is **13.00hrs Wednesday 16th February 2022**. The online application system will not accept proposals submitted after this deadline.
- As outlined above any queries on the Call process for 2022 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.

Section 7. Evaluation Process

The HEA will appoint an independent process auditor who will oversee the evaluation process.

- A panel of independent evaluators will be assigned to the process. They will assess proposals in accordance with the criteria set out in Appendix 9 of this Call document. The number of panel members will be dependent on the number of applications received.
- As part of the evaluation process the Panel will have access to information on academic and employment outcomes from the Application Management System (AMS) on courses run in previous years through Springboard+. This will include fill rates and completion rates of all courses.

The assessment will follow a five-step process:

1. The HEA executive will review applications for eligibility regarding the information provided in Appendix 8. All eligible proposals will be assigned to the Independent Panel for the next stage of assessment.
2. The Panel will conduct individual remote assessments on applications assigned to them in accordance with the published evaluation criteria (Appendix 9). Proposals will be assigned a pass or fail based on the information provided. The Panel reserve the right to interview applicant providers on their overall application where there are significant queries on the application.
3. The Panel will convene to consider the final list of pass proposals based on evaluation criteria. This final agreed list will be given to the HEA Executive.
4. The HEA will establish a panel consisting of HEA Executive members and representative(s) from the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research Innovation and Skills. This panel will consider which proposals from the final agreed list (as outlined in step 3 above) to fund in 2022.

It is important to note that funding may not be available to fund all applications awarded a pass. Where this is the case funding will be awarded based on the following:

- A. Provider application ranking,
- B. The Minister may require prioritisation of particular eligible discipline areas post the submission of proposal where specific interventions are required to meet government policy commitments.
- C. NFQ level (a mix of levels is required to meet applicant cohort needs),
- D. Geographical spread (required to meet national and regional needs). CSO and the National Skills Bulletin will be taken into consideration under this heading.

It should be further noted that those proposals that are awarded funding are not guaranteed to receive the number of places they requested.

- 5. The final list of courses and associated places recommended for funding will be subject to Ministerial approval in accordance with the governance procedures. The Minister's decision is final. The Ministerial approved outcome will be reported to the HEA Board.

It is planned that notification of approved courses will be sent to Providers at the mid-end of April 2022. 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. Updating of information by Providers on approved courses to the online system www.springboardcourses.ie will be an important part of this process.

Section 8. Regulatory Information

The Higher Education Authority (HEA) makes this document available to course Providers who wish to submit proposal(s) for higher education courses as part of Springboard+ 2022. The document must not be used for any other purpose. Springboard+ is managed by the HEA on behalf of the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science.

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.

8.1 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.

8.2 GDPR

Springboard+ is financed by the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science. The ESF are currently determining their programme for 2022 and beyond and, although not confirmed, it is likely that Springboard+ will once again form part of that programme. Until this has been confirmed it is advised that Providers retain all applicant eligibility material. We will engage with you on requirements when we have confirmation.

[Springboard+ Privacy Statement](#)

8.3 Freedom of Information

Information held by the HEA on Springboard will be subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2014 (FOI Act), which was passed into law in October 2014 and repealed the 1997 and 2003 Acts. 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.heai.ie/en/freedom-of-information>

[HEA Data Privacy Notice](#)

8.4 ESF Funding

Springboard+ to 2020 was funded through the National Training Fund and formed part of the ESF Programme for Employability, Inclusion and Learning (PEIL) 2014-2020. The ESF are currently determining their programme for 2022 and beyond, and although not confirmed, it is likely that Springboard+ will once again form part of that programme. Until this has been confirmed, it is advised that Providers retain all applicant eligibility material. The HEA will issue guidance on ESF protocols when we receive clarification on the funds.

Please note that all approved Providers are subject to audit by the EU and other national bodies (including the DFHERIS, the HEA and their designated auditors). It is anticipated that a number of audits will be carried out in 2022. 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.

Providers who wish to make Springboard+ course proposals must submit their proposals online via [SkillsDirect](#). The deadline for submissions is **13.00hrs on Wednesday 16th February 2022**.

Appendix 1 Government Policies

- [Addressing the Skills Needs Arising from the Potential Trade Implications of Brexit](#)
- [Building Future Skills: the Demand for Skills in Ireland's Built Environment Sector to 2030](#)
- [Climate Action Plan 2021](#)
- [Expert Group on Future Skills Needs](#)
- [Future Skills Needs of the Biopharma Sector in Ireland, 2016](#)
- [Housing for All - a New Housing Plan for Ireland](#)
- [Ireland for Finance 2025](#)
- [Languages Connect](#)
- [Skills and Labour Market Research Unit Reports \(SOLAS\)](#)
- [Skills for Zero Carbon](#)
- [Technology Skills 2022](#)

Appendix 2 – QQI Validation Submission

Confirmation that courses have been submitted to QQI for validation prior to Springboard+ application.

Course Name	
Course Provider	
Course Leader	
NFQ Level	
ECTS Credits	
Length of Course	
Date submitted for QQI approval	
Duration of approval requested	

Course Provider sign off

Appendix 3. QCI Confirmation of Validation

Quality and Qualifications Ireland

Certification of Course Approval Springboard+ 2022

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

QCI Verification

Name:

Position:

Signature:

Appendix 4 – Non-QQI Confirmation of Validation

Name of Validating Body: _____

Certification of Course Approval Springboard+ 2022

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

Verification from Validating Body

Name:

Position:

Signature:

Appendix 5 - Eligible Discipline Areas (ISCED Codes)

0211 Audio-visual techniques and media production

Audio Visual, Media, Animation, Games Development

0212 Fashion, interior and industrial design

Need for design skills - product design, design innovation, creative design

0231 Language Acquisition

Languages for sales and customer services

0313 Psychology

Buyer behaviour, smart leadership.

0410 Business and administration not further defined

Stock Management, Quality Management, Supervisory Practice, Payroll, E commerce

0412 Finance, banking and insurance

Data Analytics Financial, Fintech, Regulation, Compliance and Risk, International Fund admin, Insurance

0413 Management and Administration

Business internationalisation, Business management, Lean fundamentals, International Trade and customs, Leadership, Supervisory Management, Entrepreneurship, Innovation, Creativity, Design thinking

0414 Marketing and Advertising

Marketing in a digital world, Virtual Selling, Selling Strategies, Digital marketing for SMEs

0417 Workskills

Resilience skills, Inclusion and diversity, Critical Creative thinking, Entrepreneurship, Transversal

0419 Business and administration not elsewhere classified

HR Management

0421 Law

Company Law, Corporate Administration

0488 Inter-disciplinary programmes and qualifications involving business, administration and law

Procurement, Tendering, Customer Experience

0511 Biology

Cell culture, Analytical Microbiology

0512 Biochemistry

Pharmaceutical Technology, Biopharmaceutical Analysis, Validation, Sterilisation Therapy, Chromatographic techniques, Advanced Spectroscopy,

0519 Biological and related sciences not elsewhere classified

International Regulatory affairs, Good Manufacturing Practice, Quality Management Biopharma/Pharma

0521 Environmental Sciences

Sustainability, Biocircular economy, Climate Change, Energy sustainability, Business sustainability

0531 Chemistry

Analytical Science, Drug formulation, Advanced Materials, Industrial instrumentation, Calibration and advanced PLC

0542 Statistics

Statistics

0588 Inter-disciplinary programmes and qualifications involving natural sciences, maths and stats

Data Analytics, Business Information Systems

0610 Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) not further defined

Information System Design / Interactive Design

0612 Database and network design and administration

Big data, Data Science, Data analytics, Networking systems, Maintenance Systems, Service Design

0613 Software and applications development and analysis

Cloud Technologies, Software Development Technologies, Mobile Technology, Programming, Software Engineers

0619 Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) not elsewhere classified

ICT Systems, Business Systems, Cybersecurity, Digital Forensics, Dev Ops

0688 Inter-disciplinary programmes and qualifications involving Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs)

0700 Engineering, manufacturing and construction not further defined

Good Manufacturing Practice, Process Safety, Lean systems and NewProductDesign - move

0710 Engineering and engineering trades not further defined

Building Services Engineering, Fire Engineering

0711 Chemical engineering and processes

Chemical Process Engineering Technologies

0712 Environmental protection technology

Water and Waste

0713 Electricity and energy

High and Medium Voltage Electrical Engineering, Renewable Energy, Industrial Electricity,

0714 Electronics and automation

Industry 4.0, Automation Engineering, Advanced PLCs, Automation and Control, Autonomous Vehicles, Robotics

0715 Mechanics and metal trades

Manufacturing Engineering

0716 Motor vehicles, ships and aircraft

Aviation, Leasing

0719 Engineering and engineering trades not elsewhere classified

Estimating for Mechanical and Electrical Engineering, Quality Engineering, Polymer processing

0720 Manufacturing and processing not further defined

Lean and Sigma, Introduction to best manufacturing Practice, Smart Manufacturing IOT

0721 Food processing

Food Safety, Food Hygiene, Food Science, Food Manufacturing, Food Innovation/Entrepreneurship

0723 Textiles (clothes, footwear and Leather)

Textile Manufacturing

0732 Building and civil engineering

Construction Site Management, Computer Aided Design CAD, Building Information Modelling BIM incl MEP Applications, NEAR Zero Energy Buildings NZEB, Retrofitting

0788 Inter-disciplinary programmes and qualifications involving engineering, Manufacturing and construction

0799 Engineering, manufacturing and construction not elsewhere classified

0819 Agriculture not further defined or elsewhere classified

0914 Medical diagnostic and treatment technology

Medical Technology, Medical Device Design, Product Design

0916 Pharmacy

Pharmacy Technician

0919 Health not elsewhere classified

Health informatics, Innovation, Interaction Design, Service Design

1013 Hotel, restaurants and catering

Culinary Skills/Arts, Chef, Revenue Management, Hotel Management

1015 Travel, tourism and leisure

Destination Leadership, Tourism and Travel

1022 Occupational health and safety

Occupation and Process health and Safety

1041 Transport services

Logistics, Supply chain, Transport Management, Freight Forwarding, Customs and Global Trade (Incl Brexit)

Appendix 6 - Eligible HEA-Designated Institutions

- Dublin City University
- Dun Laoghaire Institute of Art and Design
- Dundalk Institute of Technology
- Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology
- Institute of Technology Carlow
- Institute of Technology Sligo
- Letterkenny Institute of Technology
- Mary Immaculate College
- Maynooth University
- Munster Technological University
- National College of Art & Design
- National University of Ireland, Galway
- Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland
- St Angela's College
- Technological University Dublin
- Technological University of the Shannon
- Trinity College Dublin
- University College Cork
- University College Dublin
- University of Limerick
- Waterford Institute of Technology

Appendix 7 - Non HEA Designated Eligible Higher Education Providers (Eligible for Multiannual funding)

Carlow College, St Patricks
CCT College Dublin
Children's Therapy Centre Limited
City Education Group
Clanwilliam Institute
Dorset College
Dublin Business School
Dublin Institute of Design
Galway Business School
Griffith College
Hibernia College
Holmes Institute Ireland Limited
IBAT College
ICD Business School
IICP Education and Training Limited
Independent Colleges
Innopharma Education
Institute for Supply Chain Excellence
International College for Personal and Professional Development
International School of Business
Irish College of Humanities and Applied Sciences Limited
Irish Payroll Association
National College of Ireland
Saint Nicholas Montessori College Ireland
Setanta College
Sport Ireland
SQT Training Limited
The Open Training College

Appendix 8 – Eligibility Criteria HEA Checks

- Does the application meet provider and course eligibility requirements in section 3.1?
- If QQI validation is required – is there evidence process has been initiated. Is the form confirmation (Section 3) uploaded?
- Is the letter of confirmation uploaded where the awarding body is outside of Republic of Ireland – Section 2
- Does the application meet the discipline eligibility requirements (Appendix 5)
- Is there evidence that the delivery methods and on campus hours are suitable for the target cohort (s)?
- Is there sign off from RSF where appropriate?
- Is there President/CEO or Vice President Sign off?
- Does the application ensure that course contact hours do not exceed 17 for part-time courses?
- Does the application ensure that the course start, and end dates are aligned with criteria outlined in the call?
- Is there availability of Job readiness/work placement where it is relevant to the target cohort?
- Is there Work placement for ICT conversion courses as this is mandatory?
- Ensure the Minimum of 10 credits for Part-Time courses

Appendix 9 – Evaluation Criteria for Independent Panel

- Does the Course Description in Section 2 of the application clearly identify how it will facilitate participants to obtain labour market relevant skills?
- Has there been enterprise engagement in the development of this course and a clear indication of the enterprise demand?
- Has demographic demand evidence been provided at a regional and national level sufficient to run a course successfully?
- Have appropriate Target Cohorts been identified?
- Does the approach to delivery, the contact hours and associated credits provide confidence that this course will meet the needs of the target cohort?
- Assessment of cost