2019 ICT Summer Camp Provision

Technology Skills 2022 sets out a plan to build on the previous ICT Action plans and to provide appropriate education and training pathways for people to train, learn and upskill in a variety of high-level ICT Skills.

The HEA has allocated annual funding to the Higher Education Institutions (HEI's) under the *Information Technology Investment Fund* (ITIF) since the early 2000's. Funding under this initiative is provided for computing camps to encourage students to consider ICT and computing careers.   The ITIF is an annual allocation of €5,000 and is provided to the HEI's to support the continuation of summer camp provision for second-level students. In 2017 and 2018, the HEA provided additional allocations for the provision of ICT Summer Camps to support further provision of ICT summer camps by HEI's in the context of the continued high demand for ICT graduates.

Following from the success of these camps, the HEA allocated an additional €260,000 in 2019 to support further provision of ITIF and ICT summer camps by higher education institutions.   The ITIF and ICT Summer Camps are aimed at second level students, with a focus on female participation. The aim of both sets of camps is to encourage young participants to consider a career in ICT and especially computing careers.

In 2019, 18 higher education Institutions held 58 summer and autumn camps with overall participation of 8,652 students attending from all over the country. Female participation was 45.1%. It is important to note that within this overall total, TU Dublin Tallaght campus ran 104 one-day student outreach camps and a National Youth Reach Festival with significant number of students attending both events.

Several HEI's stated that while they had targeted a 50/50 gender split, it was hard to achieve in practice. However, it is intended that for any future camp provision that this would be addressed by expanding the number of schools targeted (all-girl schools) and running camps for Girls only in It should be noted that in 2019 seven HEI's did provide Girl only camps (total participation of 201 students). In some camps these were run by female lecturers and female class assistants.

Camps typically target transition year students and are typically of 5 days duration even though some were of a shorter duration i.e. UCD ran a one-day Computer Science Camp, TU Dublin, Blanchardstown Campus ran a two-day Gamer Summer Camp etc. A number of HEI's ran camps twice/three times over the summer period.