

## 2018 Entrepreneurship Summer Camps Report

### Introduction and policy background

The National Skills Strategy 2025 included as one of its objectives to pilot innovative summer camps to promote entrepreneurial thinking, STEM and design skills among students<sup>1</sup>. In addition, one of the main objectives in the Action Plan for Education 2017 (Goal 4: “Build stronger bridges between education and the wider community”) is to “Create a stronger focus on Entrepreneurship, Creativity and Innovation”

**Creating a stronger focus on these three areas is vital to sustain our economic recovery, and to adapt our national skills base to meet the challenges of growth in the modern world. Our education and training systems needs to recognise this and nurture these talents<sup>2</sup>.**

Following the success of the first set of Entrepreneurship Camps provided nationally in 2017, the HEA provided a total allocation of €250,000 in 2018 to support summer camp initiatives in Entrepreneurship, Creativity, Design skills and Innovation for second level students to be run by higher education institutions. As in 2017 it was envisaged that these camps would provide high quality programmes that would help participants develop creative confidence, entrepreneurial thinking and leadership skills.

Following a call for proposals in February 2018, eighteen proposals were received from nineteen individual HEIs, including a joint proposal from two of the HEIs in Limerick. A total of 18 camps were run across the participating Higher Education Institutions.

Approved HEIs were requested to submit a report to the HEA on a standard template providing information on the number of participants, a brief description of the camp and their learning objectives and how they viewed the provision of the summer camps as fitting into the institutions Entrepreneurship, Business or related subject-area programmes. The HEIs also provided feedback from participants in the camps, in addition to suggestions for improvements to the initiative were it to run again in 2019

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<sup>1</sup> Department of Education & Skills *National Skills Strategy* (Dublin, 2015), p. 76

([https://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Policy-Reports/pub\\_national\\_skills\\_strategy\\_2025.pdf](https://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Policy-Reports/pub_national_skills_strategy_2025.pdf) accessed 14 Dec 2017)

<sup>2</sup>, Department of Education & Skills *Action Plan for Education* (Dublin, 2017) p. 17

(<https://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Corporate-Reports/Strategy-Statement/Action-Plan-for-Education-2017.pdf> accessed 14 Dec 2017).

## **Numbers and Demographics:**

Initially, funding was provided for 1,030 places; however, 749 secondary students participated in camps to date<sup>3</sup>. Appendix A sets out the details on each of the camps.

Based on reports of the camps held to date, 51% of participants were male and 49% were female<sup>4</sup>. A small number of providers had a 50/50 male/female split. It is not clear in these cases if this was because of any proactive recruitment policy implemented by the providers. Some HEIs had less than 40% female participation but hoped that the participation rate for females could be improved if the camps were run again in 2019. AIT stated that they would like to run a summer camp based around Girls in STEM and Girls in Technology if funding was secured in 2019.

When camps commenced, DCU encouraged participants to self-form teams but insisted on a gender mix. In DIT teams were divided to reflect the overall diversity of the group.

Many of the providers adopted a policy of reaching out to students attending DEIS schools, students from the travelling community and students from other groups which are underrepresented in higher education. As recommended in the call document, fees were reduced/waived to students in these categories. UCC noted that due to their engagement with The Cork Migrant Centre, six students living in Direct Provision, attended the camp in UCC. ITTRalee also reported that they had two students who attended with disabilities and participated equally in all the camps activities throughout the week. In CIT thirteen participants reported medical conditions on their application forms.

## **Common approaches to Camps**

As reported the overall purpose of the camps was to provide practical experience to second level students of all the steps from the generation of an idea to the development of the product in a fun and interactive setting. TCD stated that its camp sought to “develop student agency, creativity and enthusiasm for entrepreneurship that will outlast the programme”. In their report UCC referenced the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (2017) which states 1 in 6 people will aspire to start a new business in the next 3 years (20% of new business owners are aged 18-29). Therefore teaching entrepreneurship to senior cycle students is vitally important to equip them with necessary skills and knowledge for the journey in entrepreneurship.

Most of the camps were built around practical activities across a wide range of topics from green enterprise, electronic engineering, food development etc. DCU Camp participants developed individual “minimal viable product” robot prototypes based on LEGO Mindstorm. DKIT allowed camp participants to engage with modern technology (smart phones/tablets) to produce Vlogs on the theme of the camp. In DIT and GMIT,

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<sup>3</sup> Three HEI's held camps in late 2018/early 2019 and will submit reports in Q1 2019. The numbers of participants will increase, and this will be reflected accordingly in the report.

<sup>4</sup> The breakdown is based on the data submitted as part of the reports.

participants were provided the opportunity to work with 3D technologies such as laser cutters and 3D printers to prototype their ideas.

Feedback from participants indicated a preference for “hands on” practical activities over class-room based lectures and talks. Activities allowed participants to design and develop marketable products, thereby introducing participants to entrepreneurial thinking, i.e. through the development of core business and other “soft skills”.

Transversal skills which all the camps aimed to develop were:

- Teamwork and collaborative problem solving
- Planning, scheduling and organisation skills (using strategies such as the Business Model Canvas)
- Leadership and Communication skills
- Marketing/Digital Marketing
- Critical thinking
- R&D/Customer research

In addition, many of the camps were designed to incorporate the development of listening skills, empathy and social awareness. It was also very clear that the camps were designed to develop confidence and social skills in participants in terms of presenting their ideas not only to peers but also to industry representatives. For example, IADT camp participants presented to the Odeon Cinema Management Team. In DCU participants delivered pitched to a Dragons Den style panel, where participants were asked very specific business-related questions i.e. business lies, legal issues etc. DIT students delivered pitches to a panel including a representative from Intel.

Some camps included current under-graduate’s students as mentors/ambassadors in the camps. In TCD student teams worked closely with undergraduate start-ups through the accelerator programme gaining invaluable mentorship from students just a couple of years ahead. IT Tralee stated that their camp leaders (current undergraduates) also benefited from involvement in the camps and would be able to use their experience as part of final year projects, an outcome the Institute had not expected

### **Camp fit with Institutional Entrepreneurship and related subject area programmes**

AIT stated that their camp was a taster for the institute’s new BA in Design, Technology and Innovation Programme. Similarly, MU stated that their camp was designed and delivered by several faculty members and therefore participants had an opportunity to learn from different lecturers and student ambassadors and this served as a taster of programmes offered in the university.

NCAD “spotted a gap in the delivery of the second level enterprise module which does not have design thinking, design presentation and design for manufacture content. ... [The NCAD summer camp] will bridge the gap between second and third level programmes, particularly in design, business and engineering”

## **Site Visits/Field trips**

These were a feature in several of the camps. GMIT participants had field trip to the GMIT Innovation Hub. IADT stated that the linkage of the trips to camp activities was a very worthwhile exercise.

The LIT/MIC camp reported that after a visit to one of the companies, the students were so impressed that they asked if it was possible for them to do some work experience there and the CEO has recently contacted these students to make arrangements.

## **Feedback and recommendations for the future**

It was noted that on completion of the camp, participants were awarded with certificates of participation. In some camps prizes were given winning teams for example in UCD there was a video making challenge with a screening on the last day, participants voted, and 3D printed Oscars were presented to the winning Filmmaking Team.

There was an overwhelmingly positive reception to the initiative and all providers said they would be willing to participate in the initiative again. ITC incorporated reflections from students, teachers and facilitators to help inform the future development and refinement of programme delivery. Other providers said they would provide multiple camps and increase the numbers of participants from DEIS schools in future camp provision. Providers also included commentary and testimonials from both participants and parents which was extremely positive.

The MIC/LIT report noted that some of their participants continue to engage with one student having started a business nominated for a Young Entrepreneur Award at the Irish Women Awards 2018.

It was noted that in some cases uptake was lower than original registrations which was primarily attributed to the good weather experienced in summer 2018. Several institutes have stated that they will implement a small fee for registration in future years to increase commitment.

The following are some of the recommendations made:

1. The call and notification process should take place earlier in the year to allow for sufficient marketing and organisation of logistics and resources. (including Garda vetting). Early notification would allow for providers to reach out to students who had by that time finished school for the summer.
2. Provision for longer camp duration to provide for more time for project and off-site tours.
3. Organise an event among the Summer camp Organisers to share experiences etc. Centralised advertisement of schemes in national press,
4. To link the summer camp with the National Entrepreneurship competition organised by the LEOs.

## Appendix A – Details of Camps

Provider	Camp Title	Proposed No of Participants	Actual No of Participants	M	F
AIT	Ideate, Create & Innovate – Transforming our World through Design	60	61	36	25
CIT	Step up to the Mark	60	53	31	22
TU Dublin	IDEA - Innovation, Design, Entrepreneurship Academy	40	34	20	14
IADT	Summer Entrepreneurship Camp	30	14	7	7
DKIT	Entrepreneurship Programme	20	24	0	24
GMIT	Yep! Young Entrepreneur Programme and Young Entrepreneurs Summer Camps	21	58	38	20
ITC	UID8 Collaborate Design Camp 2018	30	76	33	43
ITTRa	GoalMine	100	105	50	55
LYIT*	DIC_TY Academy	100			
LIT and MIC	Empower	60	53	33	20
NCAD	Entrepreneurship, Creative Enterprise & Green Business	60	55	22	33
DCU	Entrepreneurship, Creativity & Innovation Summer Camp	30	30	15	15
MU	Entrepreneurship and Innovation Summer School	40	31	21	10
TCD	STEAM & ICE Summer Camp 2018	50	48	24	24
UCC	Entrepreneurial Thinking and Leadership Development Summer School 2018	30	28	11	17
UCD	UCD Innovation Summer Camp 2018	200	79	44	35
NUIG*	Innovate21	40			
UL*	Design Thinking for Business Innovation	60			
<b>Total</b>		<b>1,031</b>	<b>749</b>	<b>385</b>	<b>364</b>

Reports from LYIT, NUIG and UL will be received by end of Q1 2019

## Appendix B: Media

DCU:

<https://www.dcu.ie/access/schools-programmes.shtml>

DIT:

<http://lok8.dit.ie/creativearts/newsevents/news,articles/ditlaunchesideainnovationdesignentrepreneurshipacademyforseniorcyclesecondaryschoolstudents.html>

LIT/MIC:

<https://www.limerick.ie/discover/living/limerick-news/empower-summer-programme-inspires-next-generation-innovators>

<https://www.ilovelimerick.ie/empower-summer-programme/>

[https://careersportal.ie/colleges/college\\_news\\_item.php?sector\\_id=3&client\\_id=102&notice\\_id=1134](https://careersportal.ie/colleges/college_news_item.php?sector_id=3&client_id=102&notice_id=1134)

<https://www.tipperarylive.ie/news/news/317476/breaking-empower-summer-programme-inspires-the-next-generation-of-innovators-and-entrepreneurs-at-lit-tipp-campus.html>

TCD:

<https://irishtechnews.ie/over-40-teenagers-to-pitch-their-projects-tackling-global-and-local-challenges-tomorrow/>

<https://www.womenmeanbusiness.com/2018/08/lunar-takes-the-prize/>

<http://www.universitytimes.ie/2018/08/trinity-holds-social-innovation-incubator-for-teens/>

UCD:

<http://www.innovators.ie/summer-camp/>