

# **Draft Mission-based Performance Compact**

**2018-2021**

*between*

**National College of Art and Design**

*and*

**The Higher Education Authority**



## Context

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- This Compact is an agreement between the Higher Education Authority and Higher Education Institution and is the outcome of a process of strategic and performance dialogue between the two bodies.
- The purpose of strategy and performance dialogue is to align the missions, strategies and profiles of individual higher education institutions with national priorities, and to agree strategic objective indicators of success against which institutional performance will be measured and funding allocated.
- This Compact demonstrates a shared sense of the balance that is required between institutional autonomy and public accountability and a recognition that a diverse range of strong, autonomous institutions is essential for the overall higher education system to respond effectively to evolving and unpredictable societal needs.
- The Compact recognises that Higher Education Institution is an autonomous institution with a distinctive mission, operating within a regional, national and international higher education environment.
- The Compact recognises that there is a tension between providing a transparent framework of public accountability for performance in relation to funding, and risks of unintended behaviours related to measurements. It addresses this tension by requiring higher education institutions themselves to propose the qualitative and quantitative indicators against which their performance should be assessed by the Higher Education Authority.
- The purpose of this Compact is to provide a strategic framework for the relationship between the Higher Education Authority and Higher Education Institution. It sets out how Higher Education Institution's mission and goals align with national goals for higher education.
- This Compact also contributes to creating a transparent and accountable system of administration of State funding. To support this purpose, the Higher Education Authority and Higher Education Institution agree that this Compact will be published.

## The principles of State funding support

The principles under which State funding for higher education is provided are:

Institutional autonomy balanced with public accountability for high quality outcomes;

and

Core funding allocations that are predictable, fair and transparent, and that provide reasonable stability from year to year and in which funding follows the student.

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Provides for the establishment of the Compact and its term, and for the Higher Education Authority to inform Higher Education Institution of any actual or prospective changes to policy.	
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Sets out the Performance Funding Framework within which the HEA will allocate performance funding to Higher Education Institution.	
<b>3. Mission and Strategy Statement</b>	
Includes a statement of Higher Education Institution's mission and strategy. The <b>Error! Reference source not found.</b> also agrees to inform the Higher Education Authority of changes to its mission and profile.	
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Sets out Higher Education Institutions strategic intentions and objectives using standardised templates aligned to the published framework. These strategic intentions / objectives <i>must</i> align with the institution's own properly formulated strategic plan.	
<b>5. Annual Compliance Statement</b>	
Where significant or urgent governance or compliance issues arise, an institution may be deemed not to have met the minimum requirements of strategy and performance dialogue.	
<b>6. Agreement</b>	
Contains confirmation of the agreement between the HEA and Higher Education Institution, to be signed upon conclusion of the strategy and performance dialogue process.	
<b>Appendices</b>	
Where necessary, this includes additional material supplied by Higher Education Institution, including details of how objectives might be objectively verified. This appendix will include a quantitative data sets developed by the HEA and HEIs over the coming months. Institutions will be required to validate and finalise these institutional baselines by September.	

## 1. Establishment of the Compact

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The Higher Education Authority and Higher Education Institution agree that:

This Compact consists of this document and the accompanying data report on the performance

The term of this Compact is from September 2018 to September 2021 unless terminated earlier by agreement

Higher Education Institution acknowledges that policy underlying some or all of this Compact is subject to review by the Minister for Education and Skills or by the Higher Education Authority from time to time. The Higher Education Authority and Higher Education Institution agree that if changes need to be made to the Compact because of such a review, the Higher Education Authority will notify Higher Education Institution of this in writing and will consult with Higher Education Institution accordingly.



## 2. Performance Funding Framework

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Higher education Performance Funding will provide incentives for higher education institutions to improve overall performance in accordance with their own strategies and with their place in the overall system.

Performance Funding will be allocated by the HEA based on performance by reference to high level targets set out in the Framework. Targets must be agreed in strategy and performance dialogue with the HEA. The intention is both to improve the performance of the institution in key areas and to steer the institution closer to its agreed mission and profile and to its position in the overall higher education system. The degree of challenge and of realism inherent in the targets proposed will be evaluated and discussed in strategy and performance dialogue.

The Higher Education Authority and Higher Education Institution agree to review annually the effectiveness of implementation of the strategies and goals for achieving the agreed national and institution outcomes.

### 3 Mission and Strategy Statement

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Higher Education Institution's mission and strategy sets out its values and aspirations, what it does and how it can best serve the interests of its students, staff and key stakeholders. The Higher Education Authority and Higher Education Institution acknowledge that Higher Education Institution's mission and strategy may evolve.

Higher Education Institution and the Higher Education Authority recognise that Higher Education Institution is an autonomous institution that is responsible for determining its mission, its aspirations and its strategies for their achievement.

However, the Higher Education Authority must ensure that together the missions and profiles of the different institutions will lead to overall coherence of the higher education system as a whole and to completeness, ensuring that national needs are being met and without unnecessary duplication.

#### *Changes to the mission and strategy statement*

The Higher Education Authority acknowledges that Higher Education Institution may adjust its mission and strategy from time to time. Higher Education Institution agrees that the following will be the subject of strategy and performance dialogue with the Higher Education Authority and may result in a change to the Compact:

Any significant change that it proposes to make to its mission during the term of the Compact

Any significant change that it intends to make to its activities that could affect either the content or the practical application of its mission.

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Enter a short summary of your mission and strategy statement here along with a link to your institution's published strategy.

NCAD drives radical and creative innovation through excellence in research-led art and design education. NCAD empowers its students to shape the contemporary world through critical art practice, studio based learning, research and engagement.

NCAD is currently in the process of developing its institutional strategy. A preliminary draft strategy, shared with the HEA, is informing this process which is being led by the new Director and will be finalised with the newly appointed Board in June 2019. This Compact is framed by that ongoing process and will be finalised in early 2019 following a period of consultation with staff, An Bord, and key stakeholders

This Compact is framed by four draft strategic pillars that are emerging following College wide consultation in 2017 and further work with the College Management Team in 2018. A number of strategic initiatives are identified under each Pillar. These are initiatives that NCAD is committed to delivering and in many cases they are under way. The focus and the scope of the work will be developed further through the strategic process.

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**NCAD Compact Summary:**

**Draft Strategic Pillar 1: Agile and Relevant Learning**

SI 1a: Developing Flexible Pathways

SI 1b: Studio+ / Visual Culture+ ('Real World' Learning)

SI 1c: Studio+ / Visual Culture+ (International)

**Draft Strategic Pillar 2: A Space for Critical Thinking and Action**

SI 2a: Growing Postgraduate Research Enrolments

SI 2b: Research-Enterprise Engagement

SI 2c: Developing Staff Mobility

**Draft Strategic Pillar 3: An Open and Connected Institution**

SI 3a: Supporting Student Success

SI 3b: Broadening the Social & Economic Base for Art and Design as an Area of Study

SI 3c: Sustaining Good Student Progression

**Draft Strategic Pillar 4: Stable Foundations**

SI 4a: A Culture of Effective Governance

SI 4b: A Supported and Engaged Staff

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## 4. Development Plans and Key System Objectives

### Section summary

Institutions are required to set out a description of their proposed approach to deliver on each of the six key system objectives, with reference to the national targets as set out in the Framework.

- Institutions should detail a maximum of two institutional strategic priorities under each of the six framework headings.
- Each strategic priority should be accompanied by a description of the strategic initiatives, currently being implemented, or to be implemented over the three-year timespan of the compact (academic years 2018–2021).
- These strategic initiatives should be described with reference to the high-level targets as set out in the framework.

<b>Objective 1</b>	Providing a strong talent pipeline combining knowledge, skills & employability which responds effectively to the needs of our enterprise, public service and community sectors, both nationally and regionally, and maintains Irish leadership in Europe for skill availability
<b>Objective 2</b>	Creating rich opportunities for national and international engagement which enhances the learning environment and delivers a strong bridge to enterprise and the wider community
<b>Objective 3</b>	Excellent research, development and innovation that has relevance, growing engagement with external partners and impact for the economy and society and strengthens our standing to become an Innovation Leader in Europe.
<b>Objective 4</b>	Significantly improves the equality of opportunity through Education and Training and recruits a student body that reflects the diversity and social mix of Ireland's population
<b>Objective 5</b>	Demonstrates consistent improvement in the quality of the learning environment with a close eye to international best practice through a strong focus on quality & academic excellence
<b>Objective 6</b>	Demonstrates consistent improvement in governance, leadership and operational excellence.

### NCAD Draft Strategic Pillar 1: Agile and Relevant Learning

NCAD is committed to ensuring that its programmes are responsive to the changing nature of creative practice – supporting students to test their creative practice in real world contexts beyond the studio space during their time at NCAD. The creative sector requires practitioners to negotiate a space for their work – to adapt to different contexts and to work collaboratively. The strategic initiatives outlined below create opportunities for students across all disciplines to find a place for their work in 'real world' contexts and to broaden their experience to international contexts. This opportunity for embedded learning during their time of study will equip our students with the skills, competencies and attributes they need to become active citizens and thrive in the creative arts and industries.



Studio based learning can pose challenges for creating flexible part-time pathways for students. NCAD is committed to building on the success of its Continuing Education in Art and Design programme to establish routes for part-time pathways into the BA Fine Art and Design.

### **Strategic Initiative 1a: Developing Flexible Pathways**

As part of our commitment to the value of an education in Art and Design, NCAD will develop flexible pathways for students in Fine Art and Design at undergraduate level. Currently:

- The College offers students interested in pursuing an education in Fine Art the possibility of acquiring 60 credits at level 7 (equivalent to the first year of a BA in Fine Art), giving them the option of applying for advanced entry into a mainstream degree programme in Fine Art at NCAD or elsewhere.
- 15.5% of NCAD's undergraduate students are enrolled on a part-time programme.

Preparatory work has already been undertaken to offer students the possibility of acquiring 120 credits at level 7 from September 2019, giving them the option of applying for advanced entry into a mainstream degree programme in Fine Art, at NCAD or elsewhere:

- NCAD's part-time certificates have been revised from 20 ECTS to 30 ECTS programmes from September 2019.
- An outline Diploma programme (120 credits) is being explored by the School of Fine Art and the School of Education with a view to implementation in September 2020. This initiative would enable a 1% increase in undergraduate students enrolled on a part-time programme in 2020/21.

This initiative will enable NCAD to contribute to the HEA's high level target of increasing the numbers of HE entrants studying on a flexible basis (target 4.1.2), but it will also contribute to targets such as increasing the number of those aged 25-64 engaged in lifelong learning (4.1.1), increasing the tertiary attainment of 30-34 year olds (4.1.3), as well as working toward contributing to sustaining the expansion from underrepresented groups within HE (4.4.4).

The challenge for NCAD is to develop the means to enable students to undertake a further 60+ credits at level 8 and achieve an honours BA in Fine Art, and to explore the possibility of developing a similar offering within Design.

This ambition will be achieved as follows:

#### **Stage 1: Explore and assess a range of models for flexible pathways at undergraduate level**

Offering a studio-based education on a flexible basis and alongside full-time pathways poses challenges in terms of creating a meaningful learning experience for students. Further considerations include whether the model of education assumes an adult-education framework for learning or accommodates both adult-learners and school-leavers.

During the 2018/19 academic year, a range of models for flexible pathways at undergraduate level will be mapped, discussed with staff across the College, and assessed in relation to NCAD's:

- Strategic objectives,
- Educational ethos,
- Current part-time undergraduate pathways,
- Current use of space and campus development plans.



### **Stage 2: Build the staffing, spatial resource model for delivery**

Having identified a model that meets the needs of the College and our ambition to provide a flexible BA Fine Art pathway, a body of work will be required in terms of:

- Agreeing a broad outline of the programme in terms of content and structure,
- Mapping the staffing needs of the programme, how this will be managed, and how it will relate to the staffing of NCAD's full-time programme,
- Agreeing a broad outline of the programme in terms of content and structure,
- Mapping the staffing needs of the programme, how this will be managed, and how it will relate to the staffing of NCAD's full-time programme,
- Mapping the spatial resource required to deliver the programme and how this will be made available and managed in relation to the College's full-time programmes.

### **Stage 3: Implementation Plan**

Having established and addressed challenges to the viability of offering a flexible pathway to a BA Fine Art, a significant level of planning will be required to enable roll-out from September 2021:

- Refinement and accreditation of programme,
- Adjustment of patterns of spatial assignment use, to ensure continued effectiveness of existing UG programmes
- Negotiating agreement with staff and Union in relation to staff structures and opportunities
- Recruitment of staff, as appropriate, for delivery in 2021.

Implementation will enable a further 2% increase in flexible undergraduate enrollments, bringing NCAD's total undergraduate flexible enrollment from the current baseline of 15.5% to 18.5% in 2021.

During the course of 2020/21:

- The process of considering a range of further possibilities for developing flexible pathways in Design will commence, exploring questions of demand and industry appetite
- The process of considering the possibility of developing an 'access' initiative in partnership with local communities will commence.

### **Benchmarking of Initiative:**

Ireland's *National Strategy for Higher Education 2030* and *National Skills Strategy 2025*, and *Europe 2020* are the key national and international policies informing this strategic initiative. Through this initiative NCAD is working toward enhancing the flexibility of our higher education delivery (*HE 2030*, p. 54), creating "...more and easier opportunities for those in employment to engage in education and training" (*Skills 2025*, p. 72) and working toward enabling a greater share of Ireland's population completing tertiary education (*Europe 2020*, p. 11).

In order to better understand our current contribution to the performance of Ireland's higher education system in relation to providing flexible pathways for students, and to enhance our capacity improve the performance of both the College and the HE system as a whole, a benchmarking process in relation to this initiative will be carried out over the lifetime of the compact as follows:

## **Benchmarking Current Participation -**

### **Stage 1:**

A detailed mapping exercise will be undertaken to understand relationships between the following:

- Profile of students
- 'Kinds' of programme
- Profile of participation, including progression between non-credit bearing, audit and credit-bearing programmes.

### **Stage 2:**

Current patterns of participation within NCAD's part-time undergraduate-level programmes will be compared with equivalent patterns within Art and Design Higher Education in the UK, The Netherlands, Finland and Sweden.

In support of properly understanding the context for student participation in flexible HE in Art and Design in Dublin, a consultation will be undertaken with current students to understand:

- Factors influencing their participation in Art & Design HE on a part-time basis
- Factors affecting progression along existing flexible pathways.

## **Setting Targets -**

### **Stage 3:**

The understanding established through stages 1 and 2 of the benchmarking for this strategic initiative, as well as through building the staffing and spatial resource model for delivery of enhanced flexible pathways at undergraduate level within NCAD will enable targets to be set for:

- Overall levels of participation in flexible undergraduate programmes at NCAD
- Progression of students to award-bearing programmes.

## **Strategic Initiative 1b : Studio+ / Visual Culture+ ('Real World' Learning)**

Studio Plus/Visual Culture Plus is a new offer within NCAD that creates an optional year, taken between year 2 and final year, offering students supported and supervised opportunities to test their creative practice in 'real world' contexts. Having been piloted with Design students from September 2017, in September 2018 this initiative is being rolled out to all Design students and the pilot is being extended to Fine Art and Visual Culture students.

Developing Studio Plus/Visual Culture Plus, and making it available to all Design, Fine Art and Visual Culture students over the life-time of the Compact will mean that all undergraduate students in the College will be provided with the opportunity to undertake a work placement or work-based project as part of their undergraduate programme.

As part of their current curriculum, students on NCAD's Joint Honours Fine Art/Design and Education BA programmes undertake a series of school placements as part of their four year programme. Similarly, BA Visual Culture students undertake placements as part of their three year programme in a wide range of organisations such as: Adam's Auctioneers, Centre for the Study of Irish Art (CSIA, National Gallery of Ireland), National Museum of Ireland, Design and Crafts Council, Douglas Hyde Gallery, Irish Arts Review, Irish Film Institute, Office of Public Works, Project Arts Centre, Temple Bar Gallery + Studios.



In 2018/19, approximately one third of the student cohort entering their third year of undergraduate study (90 students) chose to engage with the Studio Plus/Visual Culture Plus programme. The social and industry partnerships through which 'real world' learning opportunities are delivered include:

- Involving students in the delivery of Enterprise Ireland Innovation Vouchers for companies such as Agrikids, MyVolts and Dog Day Solutions;
- Social Design projects with organisations such as Engineers Without Borders Ireland, Clean Coasts Ireland, Tick Talk (Lyme disease), Jigsaw and Everpress (mental health awareness), Mental Health Warriors, Climate Case Ireland, OFMG Consent;
- Commercial Design projects with partners such as Tribes Press, DIFF (film festival), the HSE, DCAF (comic arts), Common Denominator, Butlers Chocolates;
- Internships with companies such as McCannBlue (advertising), ESB, Red and Grey (design), SKMMP (fashion), Keypack (packaging), Cast Foundry (sculpture);
- Embedded learning in respect of contemporary Fine Art practice in contexts such as Mercer's Institute for Successful Ageing (St James' Hospital), Rialto Youth Group / Rua Red, Fire Station Artists' Studios.

In addition to the Studio+/Visual Culture+ initiative enabling NCAD to contribute to the HEA's high level target of all students having opportunity to undertake a work placement or work-based project as part of their course (4.1.4), it will also contribute to targets such as 20% of those graduating undertaking a study or training period abroad (4.2.3), increasing the number of innovation voucher project agreements with industry (4.2.4), and increasing participation in Work Placements Abroad through Erasmus+.

This ambition will be achieved as follows:

#### **Stage 1: Roll-out of Design Studio Plus, Pilot of Fine Art Studio Plus and Visual Culture Plus**

In 2018/19 Design Studio Plus is being offered as an option to all Design students who have successfully completed Year 2 of their programme. The number of places available to students will accommodate up to 50% of the student cohort. For Fine Art and Visual Culture students, Studio Plus/Visual Culture Plus options are being offered to all students who have successfully completed Year 2 of their programme but the number of places available is limited (a maximum of 35-40 places are available).

A further objective for stage 1 is to develop the resourcing model for Studio Plus/Visual Culture Plus to understand and enable planning in relation to space, workshop access and student support structures.

The programme of modules on offer in 2018/19 include:

- Internships within industry and cultural institutions for Design, Fine Art and Visual Culture students;
- Opportunities for Design students to develop and deliver projects for real clients - ranging from commercial companies to community activist projects - in multi-disciplinary creative teams within a Design Bureau ;
- Opportunities for Design students to undertake a structured series of engineering modules in UCD (with reciprocal opportunities being made available to UCD students);
- Residency opportunities in which Fine Art students will be embedded in contexts including St James' Hospital, joining the MISA Institute Creative Aging Programme, and Rua Red (Tallaght)/Rialto Youth Group;



- Opportunities for Fine Art students to create their own studio organisation as a means to test and experience a successful model of peer-led collaborative professional practice for emerging artists;
- Opportunities for Design, Fine Art and Visual Culture students to work within NCAD RADIO, an online platform, mirroring well established digital publishing platforms as a means to test an audience for their critical thinking and to encourage active collaboration between students;
- Opportunities for Design and Fine Art students to undertake a structured series of modules within the BA Visual Culture programme.

### **Stage 2: Expanding Availability of Studio Plus/Visual Culture Plus**

The primary focus in 2019/20 will be upon extending the range of options available through Studio Plus/Visual Culture Plus and expanding the availability of places. This will entail:

- In Design, expanding the possibilities for student exchange with UCD and increasing the number of places available and level of student take up to 60%.
- In Fine Art, expanding the number of partnerships through which Studio Plus is delivered, and increasing the number of places available to achieve a student take up of 30%.
- In Visual Culture, building partnerships through which Visual Culture Plus is delivered and increasing the number places available to achieve a student take up of 30%.

A further focus in 2019/20 will be reviewing and developing opportunities for building 'real world' engagement into all postgraduate courses.

### **Stage 3: Embed Studio Plus/Visual Culture Plus, Expand work-based opportunities in PG Programmes**

At undergraduate level, Studio Plus/Visual Culture Plus availability across Design, Fine Art and Visual Culture will ensure that:

- 60% of students will have the opportunity to undertake a work placement or work-based project as part of their programme

At postgraduate level:

- 50% of postgraduate programmes will offer work-based opportunities as part of the curriculum (baseline is 30%)
- A further 20% of programmes will be preparing to encompass work-based opportunities as part of the curriculum from September 2021.

### **Benchmarking of Initiative:**

A significant number and variety of 'real world' learning opportunities are embedded within NCAD's existing programmes, forming a key part of student learning and life at the College. Enhancing such opportunities through Studio+ / Visual Culture+ plays a central role in delivering NCAD's strategic ambitions as an outward facing institution, and is also informed by national and international policies such as: Ireland's *Strategy for Higher Education-Enterprise Engagement 2015-2020*, *National Policy on Entrepreneurship* and *National Strategy for Higher Education 2030*, as well *Europe 2020* and the *Skills Agenda for Europe 2016*. Extending the opportunities for our students to be accredited for time spent "in a work or service situation" (*HE 2030*, p. 59) through Studio+/Visual Culture+, enables "employers to access skills and research development opportunities in HE" (*Enterprise-Engagement 2015-2020*, p. 12; also *Europe 2020*, pp. 12, 17).

In order to understand our current contribution to the performance of Ireland's higher education system in relation to providing work-based learning opportunities, and to enhance our capacity to increase levels of participation in work-based learning across our programmes, a benchmarking process in relation to this initiative will be carried out over the lifetime of the compact as follows:

#### **Benchmarking Current Participation -**

##### **Stage 1:**

A detailed mapping exercise (range and levels of participation) will be undertaken to understand current provision in relation to:

- 'Real-World' Learning opportunities outside of Studio+/Visual Culture+
  - accredited internship/placement opportunities
  - non-accredited internship/placement opportunities
  - other work-based learning opportunities at (undergraduate and postgraduate) within NCAD
- Work-Based Learning opportunities within Studio+ / Visual Culture+
  - internship opportunities
  - Design Bureau/Micro Studio/Residencies

(with a focus upon establishing considerations informing student decisions in taking up or not taking up the opportunities presented by NCAD's 'plus year')

##### **Stage 2:**

- 'Real-World' Learning opportunities outside of Studio+/Visual Culture+
  - Build model to: track class groups that have/have not been offered work-based learning opportunity, and track which students have availed of such an opportunity;
  - Evaluate the range and characteristics of available work-based learning opportunities.

#### **Enhancing Benchmarking Capacity & Work-Based Learning Provision -**

##### **Stage 3:**

- 'Real-World' Learning opportunities outside of Studio+/Visual Culture+
  - Implement model for tracking work-based learning offer and participation
  - Programme Development - enhance & address gaps in non-'plus year' work-based learning opportunities
- Work-Based Learning opportunities within Studio+ / Visual Culture+
  - Internship opportunities - map employer engagement (their experience, reasons for repeat engagement, reasons for *not* repeating engagement)

##### **Stages 2 & 3:**

To support a fuller understanding of economic, social and cultural considerations informing student participation in the work-based learning opportunities provided through NCAD's 'plus year', we will continue to engage with students over the lifetime of the Compact to understand their choices around Studio+ / Visual Culture+.

#### **Strategic Initiative 1c: Studio+ / Visual Culture+ (International)**



An important element of the Studio Plus/Visual Culture Plus initiative outlined under Strategic Objective 1b is the option to undertake an Erasmus placement for either a full year or one semester and be eligible for the award of a BA International. As Studio Plus/Visual Culture Plus is made available and the offer extended across Fine Art and Visual Culture, we anticipate that student take up of Erasmus opportunities will continue to recover fully and increase.

Prior to 2015/16 NCAD had a strong track record of engagement with Erasmus, with an average of 60 students availing of Erasmus opportunities each year, including up to 25 as part of the Erasmus Traineeship Scheme. Arising from this level of engagement, the College has strong partnerships with significant art and design Colleges, and major Design companies across Europe. However, the change to a three-year undergraduate programme had a significant negative impact upon the College's level of engagement, leading to an average of 32 students availing of Erasmus study and training opportunities in 2015/16 and 2016/17.

The introduction of a BA International option for Design and Fine Art students has led to increased levels of participation in the Erasmus programme - 47 reported to date in 2017/18 with a further 15 +/- Traineeships anticipated. Of these, 7 participants received additional SISSI funding; awarded to NCAD for the first time in 2017/18 to support students from disadvantaged backgrounds travelling to Europe. Additionally in 2017/18, the college was successful in its first grant application for Erasmus International Credit Mobility (ICM) to support non-EU staff exchange. The College intends to expand this further over the life-time of the Compact.

Over the lifetime of the Compact we hope to achieve a level of take-up whereby 20% of those graduating from an undergraduate programme in NCAD in a given year will have undertaken a study or training period abroad. In addition to meeting this high level target (4.2.3), this element of the Studio+/Visual Culture+ initiative will also support NCAD in contributing to increasing participation in Erasmus+ in Higher Education and other Study and Work Placement Abroad (4.2.8)

This ambition will be achieved as follows:

#### **Stage 1: Extend Availability of One Semester Erasmus Opportunities**

The piloting of Studio Plus in Design during 2017/18 enabled greater take up of Erasmus mobilities for Design Students; whereas 38 students participated in Erasmus in 2016/17, 47 participated in 2017/18 (to date), with that growth enabled through Studio Plus. In 2018/19, Studio Plus/Visual Culture Plus will enable the following in 2018/19:

- 35 students from Design will take up an Erasmus opportunity
- 15 students from Fine Art will take up an Erasmus opportunity
- 3 students from Visual Culture will take up an Erasmus opportunity

Erasmus Trainee Scheme opportunities will be taken up by 10 non-Studio Plus/Visual Culture Plus students and graduating students (this is over and above students availing of such opportunities *through* Studio Plus).

#### **Stage 2: Further Extend Undergraduate Erasmus Mobilities, Assess Postgraduate Participation**

As the Studio Plus/Visual Culture Plus opportunity is available to a greater number of students in Fine Art and Visual Culture, the following levels of student participation in Erasmus mobilities will be achieved:

- At least 40 students from Design
- At least 25 students from Fine Art
- At least 6 students from Visual Culture



Erasmus Trainee Scheme opportunities will be strong focus in 2019/20, with the objective of increasing take up of such opportunities amongst Year 1 students, and non-Studio Plus/Visual Culture Plus Education, Fine Art and Visual Culture students and graduating students. With a target of reporting 15 Traineeships for non-Studio Plus/Visual Culture Plus students.

A further focus in 2019/20 will be:

- Engaging with students to understand barriers to the level of participation in Erasmus amongst postgraduate students, and
- Review NCAD's Masters-level programmes to explore how their capacity to support and encourage Erasmus engagement may be enhanced.

### **Stage 3: Develop Structures to Enable Postgraduate Participation**

As the Studio Plus/Visual Culture Plus opportunity is becomes embedded within the College, the following levels of student participation in Erasmus mobilities will be achieved:

- At least 40 students from Design
- At least 35 students from Fine Art
- At least 6 students from Visual Culture

Erasmus Trainee Scheme opportunities will continue to be a focus in 2019/20, with the objective of increasing take up of such opportunities amongst non-Studio Plus/Visual Culture Plus students to 20.

In 2020/21, our focus in relation to Postgraduate participation will be on:

- Making changes, as necessary, to all Masters-level programmes to support engagement with Erasmus
- Reviewing NCAD's Doctoral programme to explore the barriers to and possibilities for enhancing PhD students engaging with Erasmus.

By 2020, 20% of all BA students graduating from NCAD will have undertaken a study or training mobility abroad.

### **Benchmarking of Initiative:**

Ireland is a small open economy in which global 'connectedness' is a key enabler of success. Creating opportunities for our students to integrate overseas experience into their education will enhance their prospects as graduates, enhance the College's visibility and engagement across Europe and develop the relevance of NCAD's curriculum and the diversity of our learning environment. A number of national and international policies are informing this development, including *International Education Strategy for Ireland 2016-2020*, *National Strategy for Higher Education 2030*, *Ireland's National Enterprise Policy 2015-2025*, and *Europe 2020*.

In order to enhance our capacity to increase levels of student participation across our programmes in study periods and/or work placements abroad, a benchmarking process in relation to this initiative will be carried out over the lifetime of the compact as follows:

## **Benchmarking Current Participation -**

### **Stage 1:**

A detailed mapping exercise (range and levels of participation) will be undertaken to understand current and recent patterns of participation in terms of:

- Department / Programme / Year of Study
- Student Profile (age, access, disability)

### **Stage 2:**

Levels and patterns of participation will be evaluated and there will be engagement with students to understand barriers and enablers to participation.

## **Enhancing Future Participation -**

### **Stage 3:**

Where barriers to participation have been identified, models for addressing such barriers to participation in Erasmus will be explored.

## **Draft Strategic Pillar 2: A Space for Critical Thinking and Action**

NCAD is a centre of research excellence in Art and Design through critical practice, and evidenced through international collaboration and engagement with industry. Sustaining this role and effectively representing art and design within the traditional university sector will require building postgraduate numbers and deepening our engagement with industry.

### **Strategic Initiative 2a: Growing Postgraduate Research Enrolments**

In 2012/13, postgraduate students made up 19% of NCAD's student population, in 2017/18 the overall student population (level 8 and above) in NCAD was 873 students, 15% of whom are postgraduate students. Of the postgraduate students, only 19 are research students at doctoral level (approximately 2% of the overall student population).

Postgraduate students play a key role in sustaining the research and innovation ethos and culture within the College. The postgraduate space supports critical enquiry and discourse at the forefront of a discipline, with students playing a key role within the research ecosystem required to support doctoral and postdoctoral research.

While the focus of this strategic initiative is increasing postgraduate research enrolments (high level target 4.3.1), it will also contribute to high level targets such as increasing participation in lifelong learning (4.1.1), increasing tertiary attainment among 30-34 year olds (4.1.3), and increasing participation in Erasmus+ (4.2.8).

Over the lifetime of the compact, NCAD will expand postgraduate provision at Masters level and increase research enrolments by 10%.



This ambition will be achieved as follows:

### **Stage 1: Enhanced Communication and Recruitment Strategy**

Enhanced recruitment at postgraduate and doctoral level requires more effective communication of: the range of programmes on offer, the excellent research profile of staff at NCAD, the research and innovation context within which those programmes operate.

NCAD has a range of exciting postgraduate programmes across the fields of Fine Art, Design, Education and Visual Culture, and is expanding that offer in response to disciplinary need and opportunity.

To lay the foundations for an effective expansion of postgraduate numbers, the College will:

- Invest in consulting with stakeholders (internal and external) and building a communication and recruitment strategy in respect of existing and 'in development' programmes;
- Engage with postgraduate students and alumni to deepen our understanding of the transition from Masters to Doctoral level study, from a student perspective and in relation to the programmes on offer within the College;
- Invest in and develop a select number of key 'research directions' that harness and project the research and innovation expertise of staff, and support the recruitment and development of doctoral level researchers;
- Develop opportunities for potential doctoral candidates to access support in developing doctoral research proposals;
- Explore the feasibility of extending current postgraduate scholarship offer within the College to encompass doctoral researchers.

### **Stage 2: Expanded Postgraduate Provision & Establishment of Strategic Doctoral Scholarships**

Expanding postgraduate provision will involve the launch of new masters programmes, particularly in relation to Design, and the expansion and development of flexible pathways in relation to the College's masters programmes. Target postgraduate enrolment numbers to increase by 5%.

Having established a number of key 'research directions' within the College, support will be given to related doctoral recruitment through:

- Supporting staff to develop national and international research collaborations that encompass doctoral research,
- Invite and support research groups associated with College 'research directions' to develop a recruitment plan and resourcing model to support associated research enrolments,
- Invite and support Schools in developing recruitment plans for research enrolment,
- Engage with industry partners (cultural organisations, creative industries) to explore collaboration in funding and supervising doctoral research,
- Continue and expand provision of opportunities for potential doctoral candidates to access support in developing research proposals,
- Review and renew structured doctoral provision to reflect and support the recruitment needs of the College,
- Create one three-year doctoral scholarship, aligned with a College research direction.

### **Stage 3: Implementation**

- Target postgraduate enrolment numbers to increase by 5%
- Target research enrolment numbers to increase by 10%
- Commence delivery of renewed structured doctoral provision,

- Review and enhance provision of opportunities for potential doctoral candidates to access support in developing research proposals,
- Develop an implementation plan in respect of research enrolment plans at School-level and in alignment with NCAD's 'research directions',
- Create one three-year doctoral scholarship in collaboration with industry and aligned with a College research direction.

### **Benchmarking of Initiative:**

Research is important to NCAD. Many of our staff are leading practitioners and researchers in their field and this plays a vital role in the learning environment NCAD offers to students (undergraduate and postgraduate). As acknowledged in the *National Strategy for Higher Education 2030*, this is important for the personal and creative development of students but also as "These students will be the primary engine for transferring that knowledge to the wider society, either by jobshaping and entrepreneurship or as innovators within their chosen careers" (p. 63). As the leading Art and Design College in Ireland, and the only Art & Design HE provider in Ireland's University sector, NCAD has an important contribution to make to AHSS research in Ireland and internationally. Extending our wider postgraduate provision is important in terms of the critical culture of the College and as a point of access into doctoral-level study.

While NCAD has a rich, industry relevant and internationally recognised postgraduate offer, little work has been done to analyse and evaluate that offer in terms of levels of participation and capacity for expansion. Consequently, a benchmarking process in relation to this initiative will be carried out over the lifetime of the compact as follows:

### **Benchmarking Current Participation -**

#### **Stages 1 & 2:**

A mapping exercise will be undertaken to understand NCAD's current postgraduate numbers relative to a number of international comparators:

- Undergraduate student numbers
- Composition in respect of EU and International students
- National population and demographic
- Funding strategies and structures

Art & Design Colleges that might serve as a useful basis for comparison might include Glasgow School of Art (UK), Belfast School of Art (Ulster University, UK), Valand/HDK (University of Gothenburg, Sweden), Konstfack University of Arts, Craft and Design (Sweden), Design Academy (Eindhoven, The Netherlands).

### **Setting Future Targets -**

#### **Stage 3:**

The understanding established through the benchmarking for this strategic initiative will support an evidence-based setting of targets for future growth, balancing ambition and a realistic assessment of the resource landscape (potential students, finance, supervisory capacity).

## **Strategic Initiative 2b: Research-Enterprise Engagement**



Research in, through and about art and design at NCAD is oriented towards the real worlds of art and design practice – focused upon disciplinary excellence, relevance to contemporary art and design contexts, engagement with industry and diverse communities, and upon informing art, design and education policy.

Between 2012 and 2018, the research directions prioritised within NCAD were: User-first Design, Contemporary Practices in Art and Design, Creative and Critical Pedagogies, Irish Design History & Material Culture, and Design Sustainability. As the College renews its wider strategic vision, we are also reviewing how we frame the excellence and breadth of research pursued across the College.

NCAD has had significant international industry and academia collaborations in the area of user-first design: Task Furniture in Education (TFE, funded through FP7) and Practice-based Experiential Learning Analytics Research and Support (PELARS, also funded through FP7). The Task Furniture in Education project placed particular emphasis upon researcher development and mobility, and funded two (successfully completed) doctoral researcher projects at NCAD.

The College also delivers a number of very successful postgraduate programmes involving strong collaborative links with industry, such as (for example):

- MSc Medical Device Design works with leading international medical device companies such as Cook Medical, Hollister, Medtronic, Teleflex and Stryker, along with leading research hospitals and institutes such as St James's Hospital, The Mater Hospital, and the Royal College of Surgeons;
- MA Art in the Contemporary World with leading cultural institutions and organisations such as the Goethe Institute, IMMA, Cow House Studios;
- MFA in Fine Art with cultural organisations across Dublin, and with the National Forensic Medical Hospital Service.

The College has also engaged consistently over many years in funded European research projects working with Higher Education and Cultural institutions and organisations across Europe. Recent and current projects include:

- 'Our Many Europes', Creative Europe (2018): Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía (Spain), Consorci Del Museu D'Art Contemporani De Barcelona (Spain), Goeteborgs Universitet (Sweden), Museum van Hedendaagse Kunst Antwerpen (Belgium), Muzeum Sztuki Nowoczesnej W Warszawie (Poland), National College of Art and Design (Ireland), Stedelijk Van Abbe Museum (The Netherlands);
- 'Imagining Sustainable Glass Network Europe', Creative Europe (2018): North Lands Creative Glass (UK), Berlin Glas EV (Germany), National College of Art and Design (Ireland), Sabierdriba Ar Ierobezotu Atbildibu Stikla Maja (Latvia);
- 'In Public In Particular', Creative Europe (2015): Turku University of Applied Sciences (Finland), Artesis Plantijn Hogeschool Antwerpen (Belgium), National College of Art and Design (Ireland), Sveuciliste u Zagreb Graficki Fakultet (Hungary).

Over the lifetime of the Compact, NCAD will build on the research expertise within the College to develop two significant research projects in collaboration with national and international industry partners. In so doing it will contribute directly to the HEA's high level target in relation to increasing research projects between enterprise and the public research system (4.3.4), as well as working toward increasing HE research income derived from industry (4.3.3) and contributing to securing Horizon 2020 funding.

This ambition will be achieved as follows:

#### **Stage 1: Evaluation of Progress and Potential**



As the PELARS project comes to a close and NCAD's User-First research group reviews its research priorities, the evaluation of progress against priorities and in respect of the projects undertaken to date will be expanded to encompass:

- Developing priorities against which further funding can be sought, in collaboration with industry;
- Identifying appropriate industry and academic partners
- Applying for Enterprise Ireland Funding to establish feasibility and support the development of a funding application

### **Stage 2: Project Development, and Evaluation of Potential**

User-First Research Group: Develop project bid and submit for EU funding under Horizon 2020.

Medical Device Design: Consult with industry partners that have or have had a relationship with the MSc Medical Device Design programme in relation to the possibility for deeper collaboration in the area of Research and Development:

- Potential for development of doctoral level research collaboration,
- Potential for development of collaborative externally funded project,
- Other possibilities for extending existing collaborations with NCAD.

### **Stage 3: Project Development**

- If funding application is successful, then implementation of User-First Research project will commence; If funding application is not successful, assess feasibility and value of further developing project bid and resubmit.
- Engage research group in considering further research projects and identifying potential industry and academic partners.
- Develop priorities against which funding can be sought, in collaboration with industry, in the area of Medical Device Design
- Identify appropriate academic partners across Europe
- Apply for Enterprise Ireland funding to establish feasibility and support the development of a funding application.
- Conduct audit of research, including doctoral research, across the College to establish potential focus for seeking and securing funding in support of Postdoctoral Research.

### **Benchmarking of Initiative:**

As a College that places a strong emphasis upon engagement with communities beyond NCAD - be they communities of interest or of place - expanding the reach and value of our engagement with enterprise is important to our development. Much of the research taking place within Design at NCAD speaks to the priorities articulated in *Enterprise 2025, Innovation 2020, Engaged Research* (published by the IUA and IRC) and the *Strategy for Higher Education-Enterprise Engagement 2015-2020*. This strategic initiative sits within the broader trajectory of research development within the College and places particular emphasis on industry-academia partnerships that have a successful track record at undergraduate, Masters, Doctoral and Principal Investigator level within the College.



In order to enhance our capacity to increase research projects between enterprise and NCAD, a benchmarking process in relation to this initiative - focusing on two key research fields, user-first design and medical devices - will be carried out over the lifetime of the compact as follows:

#### **Benchmarking Current Partnerships -**

##### **Stages 1 & 2:**

A detailed mapping exercise will be undertaken to understand current provision in relation to:

- 'Whole of field' enterprise partnerships, from Innovation Vouchers to FP7 Industry-Academia research collaborations
- Patterns of development within NCAD's relationships with enterprise
- High value / high potential partnerships
- NCAD/NovaUCD collaboration

Design Colleges that might serve as a useful basis for comparison in situating this activity in an international context might include University of the Arts, London (UK), Aalto University (Finland), HDK (University of Gothenburg, Sweden), and Design Academy (Eindhoven, The Netherlands), Boston College (USA).

#### **Setting Future Targets -**

##### **Stage 3:**

The understanding established through the benchmarking for this strategic initiative will support strategic review and targeted development of NCAD's engagement with industry, balancing growth of access to HE Design expertise on the part of SMEs with the development of the knowledge transfer value of existing partnerships in areas of strategic interest to the College.

#### **Strategic Initiative 2c: Developing Staff Mobility**

NCAD has an experienced and effective Erasmus Office, and has created a structure that is extending participation in Erasmus Study across the College. NCAD's ambition to contribute to the HEA target of 20% of those who graduate in 2020 having undertaken a study or training period abroad is described above. Under Pillar 2 of our emerging Strategic Plan, NCAD would like to develop initiatives that will strategically extend our engagement in Erasmus+ in respect of staff mobility within Europe and, through the Erasmus International Credit Mobility (ICM) support non-EU staff exchange.

NCAD staff have taken up Erasmus mobility opportunities at a relatively consistent level over the years. In 2016/17, 9 staff undertook an Erasmus mobility, 7 of whom were academic staff and 2 of whom were non-academic staff. In 2017/18, 8 staff undertook an Erasmus mobility, 8 of whom were academic staff and 2 of whom were non-academic staff. Enhancing staff participation in Erasmus+ is of value to the College in a number of ways: it enhances our capacity to support students in taking up such opportunities; it contributes to quality enhancement across the College through learning from practices elsewhere; in due course, it will contribute to the College's capacity to further internationalise our curricula as well as our students and staff. It also critically contributes to our ambitions to develop research within the institution by connecting our staff to international research networks through which bids for research funding can be developed.

This strategic initiative makes a particular contribution to the HEA's high level target of increasing participation in Erasmus+ (4.2.8), and will also enable the College to work toward making a contribution to a range of other high level targets such as: increasing higher education research



income (4.3.3), improving international benchmarking across our activities (4.5.2) and enhancing quality management in line with international best practice (4.5.6).

**This ambition will be achieved as follows:**

**Stage 1: Evaluate Engagement to Date**

Expanding and getting maximum value for the College from staff participation in Erasmus+ requires understanding our pattern of engagement to date, and evaluating this in the context of NCAD's Strategic Plan. To this end:

- Data on staff participation to date will be collated
- This data will be evaluated in respect of:
  - Patterns of strong and weak participation across academic and non-academic areas and functions,
  - Patterns in respect of destinations of travel, and in respect of the origin of incoming Erasmus staff mobilities,
  - Levels of participation in areas that are of strategic importance in the context of NCAD's Strategic Plan.

**Stage 2: Developing a Strategic Plan for Staff Participation in Erasmus+**

Having analysed patterns of participation and their relationship to NCAD's Strategic Plan, agreeing how a more targeted approach to staff participation in Erasmus+ will require staff consultation and planning, in terms of setting priorities and establishing a realistic timeline for delivery. To this end:

- An outline set of priorities and their relationship to NCAD's Strategic Plan will form the basis of consultation with staff, involving -
  - Open invitation to all staff to submit feedback
  - A staff-survey, the focus of which will be a next iteration of College priorities for extending staff participation in Erasmus+.
- Developing an implementation plan that:
  - Is informed by consultation with staff, and
  - considers how any resourcing challenges posed by extending staff participation in Erasmus+ will be met.

**Stage 3: Implementation**

Having agreed priorities for extending staff participation in Erasmus+ and identified how resource implications will be met, the College will achieve a 20% increase in Staff participation in the first year of implementation.

**Benchmarking of Initiative:**

This particular initiative, as described above, is aimed at establishing a benchmark in relation to current levels of staff participation in Erasmus and wider international mobility, and developing a strategy through which to explicitly and purposefully expand upon this at all levels of the organisation.

Adopting a strategic approach toward developing staff mobility is important in terms of establishing NCAD as an 'international campus', and is also informed by national policies such as the *International Education Strategy for Ireland, 2016-2020* and *Enterprise Ireland Strategy, 2017-2020*, as well as by the *National Strategy for Higher Education 2030, Enterprise 2025*, and *Europe 2020*. In addition to serving as "a key mechanism for the professional development of teaching, technical,



management and administrative personnel and for the internationalisation of curricula" (International Education Strategy, p. 32), targeted staff mobility has the potential to enhance connections into "international innovation ecosystem[s]" (*Enterprise Ireland Strategy*, p.5).

### **Draft Strategic Pillar 3: An Open and Connected Institution**

NCAD is committed to connecting the work of our staff and students to the wider community and to broadening participation in art and design education. Supporting diversity is a core value in NCAD and the College has an extensive Access Programme and a strong commitment to broadening the societal base of our students.

Our current pre-entry access programme offers a series of linked opportunities for engagement to pupils in 34 primary schools and 42 post-primary schools in Dublin, with the majority of our linked partner schools holding DEIS band status. This programme of engagement - encompassing Access Days, Artist Mentoring Projects, Student Shadowing Projects and our Primary School Access Programme - is embedded across the College and in the School of Education's first and second year curriculum.

Post-entry support is increasingly mainstreamed within NCAD. For example, the Student Learning Support Service delivers Research and Study Skills support lectures to all students, thereby adopting a 'universal design' approach to the Visual Culture curriculum. There are also access study support groups along with disability and learning support provision for those who require it.

The College's ambition in support of Key System Objective 4 is to build a robust Student Success Strategy, informed by the principle of 'universal design', that supports a diverse student community to succeed and thrive within NCAD, and thus enhances our capacity to extend the diversity of our students.

### **Strategic Initiative 3a: Supporting Student Success**

As a small College in a domain that invites and sustains deep engagement on the part of students and staff, NCAD is committed to supporting student success. The College's staff:student ratio supports students in feeling connected and having a sense of belonging, and enables a strong focus on supporting academic achievement and pastoral care (working closely with students where circumstances threaten to overwhelm them). Nonetheless, as the College emerges from a period of intense financial challenge and significant organizational change, there is a need to take a more pro-active approach to student well-being and success across aspects of College life.

The NCAD Community Charter, published in January 2018, proposes education as a shared endeavour, a collaborative journey for students and staff, and articulates a collective aim of creating a stimulating and safe community at NCAD. From a College perspective, the process of building a robust Student Success Strategy over the course of the Compact will greatly enhance our capacity to meet this challenge.

In addition to meeting the HEA high level target of ensuring that all HEIs have a Student Success Strategy in place by 2020 (4.4.1), this strategic initiative will contribute to other high level targets such as: introducing employability statements for all NCAD programmes (4.1.5), enabling students to understand and avail of work-based learning opportunities (4.1.4), implementing National Plans for Access (4.4.2), improving completion rates for disadvantaged students (4.4.6), and improving problematic non-progression rates (4.5.3).

**This ambition will be achieved as follows:**



### **Stage 1: Foundations**

Enhancing students' experience as they make the transition into higher education in Art and Design has been a strong focus for NCAD's College Community Welfare Committee and the First Year Studies staff team over the last two years. The Welcome and Induction offered to first year students has been expanded, and SMART Consent workshops, jointly led by students and staff, have been introduced for all first years. Work is also underway on developing a Student Support Services Policy, to be published in September 2018.

In September 2018 a Student Support Services Policy, developed by the College Community Welfare Committee and informed by student feedback over several years through ISSE, NCAD's Annual End-of-Year Survey and the recent Institutional Review, will be published. This is a first step in laying the foundation for a Student Success Strategy, that will be advanced in 2018/19 as follows:

- May 2018, extend the focus of the College's End-of-Year Survey to encompass students' experience of belonging
- Enhance Welcome and Induction for Year 1 and expand induction programme for Year 2 students
- Evaluate student feedback from 2017/18 through the lens of belonging and perceptions of 'success'
- Consult with staff, students and student mentors to develop a pilot student success project that enhances the role of student mentors and focuses on addressing pressures around 'First Assignment – First Risk of Failure'

### **Stage 2: Enhancing Understanding**

The range of actions to be undertaken in order to enhance understanding of what a meaningful student success strategy for NCAD are quite diverse, and in 2019/20 will involve:

- Implementing the pilot student success project for NCAD's first year students is a key step in building a culture focused upon anticipating and enabling students to successfully overcome the challenges that face them,
- Gathering feedback from staff, students and student mentors over the course of the pilot project in order to refine, enhance and expand the pilot for 2020/21,
- Consulting with staff and students to explore understandings of -
  - What constitutes 'student success'
  - What are the barriers to 'belonging'
  - What if it's the wrong programme, wrong time?

### **Stage 3: Build the Strategy**

Building a Student Success Strategy that meets the needs of NCAD's students and is deliverable by the College will be a key focus in 2020/21, alongside continuing to enhance the support structures for, and experience of, our students. This will involve:

- Implementing a further iteration of the pilot student success project for NCAD's first year students,
- Delivering 3 pilot student success projects for Year 2 students, one each in Fine Art, Design and Visual Culture,
- Gathering feedback from staff, students and student mentors (as appropriate) over the course of the pilot projects in order to refine, enhance and expand provision for 2021/22,

- Finalise NCAD's Student Success Strategy, including identifying and planning for the resources needed to deliver it from September 2021.

#### **Benchmarking of Initiative:**

As we develop a Student Success Strategy for NCAD, we are cognisant that "...numbers entering and completing third level programmes in Ireland do not fully express the very broad spectrum of individual accomplishments, group victories and successful participation stories that are being written annually in higher education" (P. Gill *et al.*, in *How Equal?*, pp. 40-45, p.41). As access to higher education *and* to the creative and critical potential of art and design "...brings with it many benefits to the individuals who avail of [them] and to the wider society" (*National Access Plan*, p. 15), it is important that student success be understood and enabled as thoroughly as possible.

This strategic initiative, as described above, is closely involved in establishing a benchmark in respect of recent and current student experience in relation to the supports available to them within the College, and engaging in a step-by-step developmental process of enhancing those supports.

Going beyond this strategic process to establish benchmarks to inform and measure our progress will be carried out over the lifetime of the Compact as follows:

#### **Benchmarking Current Practice -**

##### **Stages 1 & 2:**

This will involve mapping current provision and situating that provision in relation to other HEIs, taking into consideration factors such as:

- Student numbers
- HE Funding structures
- HE Student Success Strategies (examples) and innovations in practice

#### **Setting Future Targets -**

##### **Stage 3:**

The understanding established through the benchmarking for this strategic initiative will support a realistic setting of targets, measures and timeframes for demonstrably improving the student experience and student success within and beyond NCAD.

#### **Strategic Initiative 3b: Broadening the Social & Economic Base for Art and Design as an Area of Study**

NCAD's experience to date suggests that particular barriers exist in relation widening access to higher education in Art and Design. Our hypothesis is that these barriers reflect concerns about Art and Design as a secure career path and, more broadly, the barriers that exist in our society in relation to a wide access to cultural capital. This situation has been emphasised by recent studies in the UK underlining the lack of social diversity amongst those working within the creative sector generally.

Our collaboration with PATH 1, *I Can Teach*, will allow us to expand our reach into the further education sector and we are in the process of drawing up a proposal to develop a structured programme in partnership with the Further Education and Training Support Services in ETBI.

Our PATH 2 collaboration has allowed eight students at NCAD to be supported as bursary recipients under the 1916 Learners and Leaders programme.



Our PATH 3 programme, *Bridges to Learning* presents exciting opportunities commencing with a Creative Arts Summer School that will introduce up to 60 students to the creative programmes available in the Leinster 1 Pillar, affording opportunities for support and research and reducing barriers to participation and perceived exclusion to the creative industries and in particular art and design.

NCAD will leverage the opportunity presented by the PATH fund to secure resources to support our ACCESS programmes into the future and to develop a deeper understanding of the barriers that are specific to Art and Design outlined above. In addition, and as part of delivering NCAD's strategic ambitions in sustaining and enhancing equity of access, the resource model for Access and Disability within the College will be reviewed to ensure that it continues to be effective in meeting our ambitions in respect of a enabling and supporting a diverse student population.

In addition to contributing to the HEA's high level target of implementing the strands of PATH to support the *National Plan for Equity of Access 2015-2019* (4.4.3), this strategic initiative will also work contribute to further high level targets, such as: sustaining expansion from under-represented groups in HE (4.4.4), increasing enrolments from DEIS Schools (4.4.5), and improving completion rates for disadvantaged students (4.4.6).

### ***Securing Resources***

NCAD will be extending its philanthropic base as a key part of its strategic ambitions. The PATH funded projects create a unique opportunity to demonstrate the impact and value of investment into ACCESS programmes such as the 1916 Bursaries, providing a strong base to develop philanthropic asks to support this work in the future. This objective will be aligned with our PATH planning to ensure a programme of engagement with potential donors during the funded programme creating the base for focused philanthropic asks during 2019.

### ***Broadening the social economic base for Art and Design as an area of study***

NCAD has developed an extensive network of art teachers in DEIS band schools in Dublin, and with the additional PATH funding will extend this network to include partners in ETB networks. NCAD's experience has demonstrated additional barriers to access to Art and Design arising from concerns about Art and Design as a secure career path and the social barriers that exist more broadly in relation to access to cultural capital. This has been emphasised by recent studies in the UK underlining the lack of diversity within the creative sector generally.

### **Achieving this ambition:**

NCAD will undertake the following initiatives as part of a long term strategy to greater understand the barriers that continue to affect diversity within the art and design field:

#### **Stage 1: 2018-2020, What don't we know - what do we need to know?**

For the duration of the PATH programmes, the College will closely review the evaluation process built into each strand to identify key findings that will help NCAD better understand barriers to participation from under-represented groups that are particular to our field.

#### **Stage 2: 2018-2019 - Resources, Processes, Models**

In September 2018 we will establish a Widening Participation Working Group with representation from both academic and student services departments across the College. A key objective for this Working Group during the first year of the Compact will be to identify



the resources and appropriate processes/models to initiate the research required to gain a deeper understanding of the barriers experienced and perceived by the participants who engage in the PATH programmes.

### **Stage 3: 2019-2020 - Understanding the Barriers**

In this year, the College will carry out the research project designed to:

- gain a deeper understanding of the barriers experienced and perceived by PATH participants and others (if the key findings emerging from the on-going evaluation processes within the PATH programmes suggest that this is appropriate),
- understand the impact of participation in PATH for the participant
- understand the impact of participation in PATH for participants' for families and communities.

### **Stage 4: 2020-2021 - Building Change**

The focus in this year will be on identifying:

- A range of actions and interventions that may help address the barriers identified through the research and wider evaluations of PATH,
- The resources needed to deliver this,
- Modifications required to the operational plan for the College to encompass such actions and mainstream key aspects of PATH initiative.

### **Benchmarking of Initiative:**

NCAD's commitment to 'principles of equality and social inclusion' are long-standing. The College is committed to the goal of the *National Access Plan* that seeks "To ensure that the student body entering, participating in and completing higher education at all levels reflects the diversity and social mix of Ireland's population" (p.6). As with the Supporting Student Success initiative, the 'Broadening the Social Economic Base' strategic initiative is also closely involved in establishing effective benchmarks in relation to current levels of access (see description of strategic initiative above). Going beyond this strategic process to establish benchmarks to inform and measure our progress will be carried out over the lifetime of the Compact as follows:

### **Benchmarking Current Practice -**

#### **Stages 1 & 2:**

This will involve mapping the current profile of economically disadvantaged and non-traditional students pursuing higher education at NCAD and situating that level of participation in relation to:

- Levels of participation across the Irish HE sector in general and in Art & Design in particular
- Successful Strategies/Initiatives in recruiting and retaining non-traditional students to HE in Ireland (examples)
- International examples of successful strategies/initiatives in recruiting and retaining non-traditional students to HE in general and to HE in Art & Design in particular

### **Setting Future Targets -**

#### **Stage 3:**

The understanding established through the benchmarking for this strategic initiative will support a realistic setting of targets and timeframes for demonstrably increasing the diversity of the student body at NCAD such that it reflects the diversity and breadth of experience and perspective of Ireland's population.

### **Strategic Initiative 3c: Sustaining Good Student Progression**

NCAD has had historically low non-progression rates of approximately 5-6%, across all stages of its undergraduate programmes. There was a disruption of this pattern in recent years:

- In 2014/15 there was a significant increase in non-progression rates, to 10%, from Year 1 to Year 2; this improved slightly in 2015/16, at 9%, and we expect further modest improvements in subsequent years;
- 2014/15 also saw a significant increase in non-progression for 'post-first year' students, jumping from an average of 6% to 15%; this dropped back to 7% in 2015/16 but remains a source of concern.

Close attention is being paid to non-progression rates across all undergraduate years, on the part of both student services and Heads of Department. Our assumption has been that the significant curricular change and the governance difficulties being experienced by NCAD were key factors in these changes.

Despite the recent improvements in non-progression rates, we are anxious to properly understand the nature of the difficulties experienced by students and, on the basis of a better understanding, develop and implement measures to improve student experience and restore historically low levels of non-progression.

**This ambition will be achieved as follows:**

#### **Stage 1: Student Consultation**

Through the Quality Assurance Steering Committee, and with the support of the Quality and Student Support Officer, the College will:

- Utilise ISSE and NCAD's Annual End-of-Year Survey to review student feedback between 2012 and 2017 to assess changing patterns in response,
- On the basis of that assessment, develop a series of surveys:
  - for current time-out students to identify issues affecting their decision to take time-out and influencing their likelihood of return to their studies;
  - registered students to identify factors that enable them to continue in their studies and factors that create pressures that may cause them to take time-out;
- Having considered the results of these surveys, invite students who have recently returned from time-out to participate in a focus group to explore their understanding of the issues that appear to have greatest impact upon students continuing in their studies as opposed to taking time-out, the factors that are most important in enabling students to return to their studies.
- Expand the Annual End-of-Year Student Survey to elicit more specific information in respect of factors influencing non-progression rates.

#### **Stage 2: Develop Student Progression & Retention Plan**

The understandings gained through qualitative research with students during stage 1 will:

- Inform the development of a draft Student Progression and Retention Plan,



- Support a College-wide consultation with staff in relation to that plan, led by Heads of Department and Heads of School
- Enable a resource plan for implementing the Student Progression and Retention Plan to be built
- Specify targets and KPIs for first year of implementation.

### **Stage 3: Implementation**

Establishing the effectiveness of the Student Progression and Retention Plan will require careful monitoring over several years. Consequently, implementation of the Student Progression and Retention plan during stage 3 will be accompanied by following:

- During the first year of implementation (and in subsequent years), student feedback in respect of the measures take will be gathered through bi-annual Programme Review Forums, the Annual End-of-Year Survey, and the ISSE,
- Structured interview with students requesting time-out (undertaken by Head of Department or a nominee from amongst the academic staff of the Department).
- Evaluation of progress against KPIs for first year of implementation,
- Specify targets and KPIs for second year of implementation.

### **Benchmarking of Initiative:**

As articulated in the *National Access Plan*, “access to higher education brings with it many benefits to the individuals who avail of it and to the wider society” (p.15). Gaining the full value of this benefit, as an individual and from a funding perspective, requires completing tertiary education (*Europe 2020*, p.11). Engaging students as partners in their education is a vital component in enabling students to persevere in their studies along what can be a difficult route at times (*Enhancing Student Engagement in Decision Making*, p.31).

### **Benchmarking Current Practice -**

#### **Stages 1 & 2:**

Comparing current levels of non-progression in relation to:

- Non-progression across the Irish HE sector in general and in Art & Design in particular
- Non-progression rates in Art & Design HE across Europe

Exploring:

- The value to NCAD of the Online Resource for Learning Analytics developed by the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning
- Successful Strategies/Initiatives in improving progression rates in Ireland
- Successful Strategies/Initiatives in improving progression rates in Art & Design HE across Europe

### **Setting Future Targets -**

#### **Stage 3:**

The understanding established through the benchmarking for this strategic initiative will support a realistic setting of targets and KPIs for sustained maintenance of strong progression rates across all sectors of the student population.

## **Draft Strategic Pillar 4: Stable Foundations**

NCAD needs to embed the best management practices required to ensure a stable foundation from which the institution can build and develop. At the core of this is effective management of our resources - people, finance and infrastructure - and an institution wide management culture that is driven by effective and informed decision making.

### **Strategic Initiative 4a: A Culture of Effective Governance**

NCAD's An Bord and management team have invested considerable resources into developing and implementing an effective Governance Improvement Plan within the College. NCAD now has a Corporate Governance Framework in place and this will be reviewed and updated annually. The focus for 2018-2021 will be to embed best management practice across the College, with a particular focus on putting in place the business systems required to deliver effective operational planning, financial management and HR management.

Following the appointment of An Bord in May 2018 the Chair and Director are building a governance work plan for An Bord which will ensure that the cycle of governance issues that required oversight of An Bord are scheduled and addressed in a timely manner. The work of An Bord will be supported by an operational plan directing the work of the College Management Team during the year and again ensuring that the work to ensure timely return of financial and governance statements is resourced and supported. The appointment of a new Head of HR and Staff Development in September 2018 will build on the remediation work of Forde HR to review the terms and conditions of all staff and to ensure compliance with public pay policy. This appointment will also enable NCAD to ensure it is operating to the highest levels of HR good practice and that all appropriate HR policies and procedures are implemented.

#### **Benchmarking of Initiatives:**

NCAD recognises that "At the heart of [the national HE] strategy is the recognition that a diverse range of strong, autonomous institutions is essential if the overall system is to respond effectively to evolving and unpredictable societal needs. Funding and operational autonomy must, however, be matched by a corresponding level of accountability for performance against clearly articulated expectations" (*Higher Education Strategy 2030*, p. 91). Progress in Implementing, and continuing to refine and improve, NCAD's Corporate Governance Framework over the lifetime of the compact will be measured in respect of compliance with statutory requirements and taking cognisance of codes of governance set out within the Universities Act and the Institutes of Technology Acts (key frameworks for Irish higher education).

### **Strategic Initiative 4b: A Supported and Engaged Staff**

NCAD's future ambitions and development will be achieved by an engaged and supported staff. NCAD's HR function has been outsourced to Forde HR since 2016. The absence of an in-house HR function for a number of years and lack of investment in CPD makes the delivery of an effective framework to support staff a priority for NCAD during the period of this COMPACT. The appointment of a new Head of HR and Staff Development in September 2018 will support this objective.



The strained financial circumstances of NCAD have had a significant impact on the provision of Continuous Professional Development for all staff, academic and non-academic. There has been little formal support for staff undertaking CPD since 2011, and no clear prioritisation in respect of the development of academic and non-academic staff. This was identified as a pressing issue for staff through the Institutional Review process undertaken by NCAD across 2016 and 2017, and reflected as an issue to be addressed in the Peer Review Report.

Acknowledging that the College is starting from a low base, the College will work to establish and implement a Continuous Professional Development Framework from September 2021. The main high level target addressed through this strategic initiative that concerning the implementation of a CPD Framework for academics in all HEIs (4.5.1), although the initiative will also contribute to improving total quality management, in line with best international practice (4.5.6) and supporting the implementation of the Gender Equality Task Force Action Plan (4.6.1).

**This ambition will be achieved as follows:**

**Stage 1: Recruitment and Assessment**

Driving the development of a CPD Framework for the College will require the appointment of a HR Manager, and the stabilisation of the HR Department of the College. This first stage will thus involve:

- Appointment of a HR Manager, and re-establishment of an HR Department within NCAD
- Review of CPD policies and practices across HE sector nationally, and in equivalent institutions internationally
- Consultation with staff in respect of CPD priorities in the context of the NCAD Strategy (in development) and the Institutional Review Quality Improvement Plan,
- Consultation with the Learning, Teaching and Assessment Committee in respect of initiatives emerging from their work in response to the Institutional Review QIP.

Arising out of the Institutional Review process, an interim approach to supporting the professional development of academic staff is being driven through the Learning, Teaching and Assessment Committee. (This Committee meets at least three times per year, reports to NCAD's Programmes Board and Academic Council, is led by the Head of Continuing Education in Art and Design, and has representation from across NCAD's four Schools and from within Academic Affairs.) Having conducted and reported on an audit of assessment practices across the College:

- In 2018/19 a series of workshops have been scheduled for staff across all Schools focusing upon Assessment Practices. The workshops will involve a peer-to-peer sharing of practice, with guidance from the Head of Continuing Education in Art and Design, and NCAD's Quality and Student Support Officer;
- In 2018/19 an audit of Learning and Teaching Practices across the College will be undertaken through the Learning, Teaching and Assessment Committee.

**Stage 2: Build a Resources Plan**

Having consulted staff and assessed CPD priorities in the context of NCAD's Strategic Plan, building a resources plan will involve:

- Confirming priorities for a College-wide Continuous Professional Development Framework

- Identify the resources required for the delivery of the framework, in a context of continued budgetary challenges.

In parallel with this process, and building on the continued work of the Learning, Teaching and Assessment Committee:

- A series of workshops will be planned and delivered that focus upon Learning and Teaching in Art and Design. The workshops will involve peer-to-peer sharing of practice, with guidance from the Head of Continuing Education in Art and Design, and NCAD's Quality and Student Support Officer;
- Consultation with Schools in relation to future priorities for peer-to-peer sharing of practice in the context of the emerging CPD Framework.

### **Stage 3: Build an Implementation Plan**

Having established the resources needed in order to implement Continuous Professional Development Plan that meets the learning and teaching, and wider development needs of the College, the final stage will be building an implementation plan that identifies how the necessary resources will be secured and how competing priorities and needs will be addressed over time.

As this is finalised, a further series of Learning and Teaching workshops, based on peer-to-peer sharing and critical development of practice will be delivered, with guidance from the Head of Continuing Education in Art and Design, and NCAD's Quality and Student Support Officer.

### **Benchmarking of Initiative:**

The absence of investment in the professional development of staff across all functions within NCAD is reflective of a period of severe challenge within NCAD and for NCAD within a wider funding landscape. Nonetheless, there is a clear need for NCAD to renew its commitment to "Empower[ing] staff to create, discover and engage in meaningful personal and professional development..." (*National Professional Development Framework for All Staff Who Teach in Higher Education*, p.1). Benchmarking and developing provision are entwined within this strategic initiative, with the benchmarking process being a key informant of developing CPD provision..

## **6. Annual Compliance Statement**

The HEA will take into account ongoing compliance with important foundational requirements such as:

Statutory quality assurance processes

Providing an annual statement required under their Code of Governance and with all other requirements of that Code

Providing details of satisfactory financial outturn, budget and financial plan

Employment control framework

Data returns to the HEA.




Where significant or urgent governance or compliance issues arise, such as unacceptable financial deficit, weakness in financial plans or major omissions or delays in returns, an institution may be deemed not to have met the minimum requirements of strategy and performance dialogue.

## 7. Agreement

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**To be completed following the conclusion of the strategy and performance dialogue process.**

The HEA and Higher Education Institution agree that the mission, planned profile and targets, as set out in the foregoing sections of this Compact, are consistent with the objectives set for the higher education system and are appropriate to the place of Higher Education Institution within the system.

Signed: 

Date: 21/3/2019

Chief Executive, Higher Education Authority

Signed: 

Date: 12.03.2019

Professor Sarah Glennie, Director  
National College of Art and Design

Signed: 

Date: 12.03.2019

Dr Richard Thorn, Chairperson  
National College of Art and Design



## Appendices

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We (Higher Education Institution) include the following appendices with our performance compact.

List the appendices here:

<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Appendix 1:</b> Providing a strong talent pipeline combining knowledge, skills & employability which responds effectively to the needs of our enterprise, public service and community sectors, both nationally and regionally, and maintains Irish leadership in Europe for skill availability
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Appendix 2:</b> Creating rich opportunities for national and international engagement which enhances the learning environment and delivers a strong bridge to enterprise and the wider community
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Appendix 3:</b> Excellent research, development and innovation that has relevance, growing engagement with external partners and impact for the economy and society and strengthens our standing to become an Innovation Leader in Europe
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Appendix 4:</b> Significantly improves the equality of opportunity through Education and Training and recruits a student body that reflects the diversity and social mix of Ireland's population
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Appendix 5:</b> Demonstrates consistent improvement in the quality of the learning environment with a close eye to international best practice through a strong focus on quality & academic excellence
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Appendix 6:</b> Demonstrates consistent improvement in governance, leadership and operational excellence
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Appendix 7:</b> Institutional quantitative data return (September 2018)