***TechMate: A best practice toolkit for driving sustainable acceleration towards gender equality in technology disciplines in HEIs* - IT Carlow, MU, TU Dublin and UCD.**

The objective of TechMate is to research, design and develop a toolkit of techniques and methods of best practice for recruitment and retention of female students of technology-focussed third level programmes. A PhD postgraduate student was recruited for one year (in May 2021) and additional funding was raised to continue with the delivery and evaluation of the TechMate artefact over the period of a PhD studentship.

Huawei Ireland have also funded the project to support

 the postgraduate student in progressing to PhD.

Current progress includes the completion of a comprehensive literature review from sources including governmental guidance, academic research papers and non-academic reports. Sources in languages other than English were considered also. Interventions or initiatives that have been shown to be effective have been categorised into four groups: Policy, Pedagogy, Influence & Support and Promotion & Engagement. *Policy* actions require high level strategic change and support. *Pedagogy* covers curriculum and delivery practices with the support of academics. Role models and mentors form the *influence* and *support* category while outreach activities, events and external collaboration constitute *promotion and engagement*.

This categorisation was presented as at the TU Dublin Graduate Research Symposium where it was awarded the Best Poster prize. It was also presented at the European University of Technology (EUt+)'s 'Empowering Diversity in Science' event organised by the Cyprus University of Technology in February 2022.

Next steps in the project are to develop the TechMate artefact which will provide recommendations and guidance on best practice initiatives available to HEIs in Ireland and to evaluate TechMate with the support of the INGENIC network.

The TechMate website gives details on the project.