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13 December 2021

**Re: TUSEI Technological University Application**

Dear Presidents,

Thank you for your most recent letter of 9<sup>th</sup> of December 2021.

In his letter dated 2<sup>nd</sup> of December 2021, the Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science communicated his decision to postpone the granting of the Technological University of South-East Ireland (TUSEI) application for technological university status under s34(4)(b) of the TU Act, 2018. In accordance with s35(1), the Minister has set out in the accompanying appendix the conditions with which the applicant Institutes must demonstrate compliance.

The applicant Institutes must provide to the HEA sufficient convincing evidence of demonstrably meeting s28(1)(k)(i) of the Act relating to the capacity to perform the functions of a TU through having in place integrated, coherent and effective governance structures concerning academic, administrative and management matters. The HEA will report to the Minister based on the evidence provided by the applicant Institutes.

Noting the confirmation that the applicant Institutes have waived the 30- day appeal period, and in order to progress your technological university designation ambitions, we set out the process as follows:

A formal TUSEI submission to the HEA demonstrating compliance in accordance with conditions, by 10<sup>th</sup> of January 2022.

TUSEI presentations to a specially convened sub-committee of the HEA Board and executive led by the Chair of the HEA Board in respect of the above submission in January 2022 (indicative dates of January 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup>).

HEA committee meeting sessions to include (*inter alia*):

1. Overview
2. Governance and management oversight structures
3. IT, HR, and Student Services, administration and services towards one legal entity
4. Risks and plans for their management (protection of learners, transition plans, fall-backs)
5. External expertise (assist staff, develop capacity, partnership & collaboration)
6. Preparation for a new administration and governing body, post-designation
7. Close out session

While input from external advisors may constitute some of the input, we assume that the Institutes themselves will be present at and lead these meetings given the importance of this process. We would suggest that the Presidents and Governing Body Chairs would lead sessions 1 and 7, and that the individuals directly involved in the programme of work to meet the conditions such as set out in the Minister's letter would lead sessions 2 to 6.

This process is intended to enable the consortium to demonstrate to the HEA that the conditions stipulated by the Minister in his letter of 2<sup>nd</sup> of December have been met.

Further to this meeting, the sub-committee will bring this matter forward for consideration by the full HEA Board on 25<sup>th</sup> of January 2022, given the deadlines referenced in the Minister's letter, the effluxion of time and the serious issues to be addressed.

Finally, the HEA executive would be happy to engage informally with the consortium in respect of draft submissions and meeting plans as appropriate. The lead HEA contact for this process will be Dr Louise Callinan - [lcallinan@hea.ie](mailto:lcallinan@hea.ie).

Yours sincerely,



Dr Alan Wall  
Chief Executive

Cc: Mr Simon Harris, T.D., Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science  
Mr Michael Horgan, Chair, Higher Education Authority  
Mr John Moore, Chair, Governing Body, Institute of Technology Carlow  
Mr Jim Moore, Chair, Governing Body, Waterford Institute of Technology

## APPENDIX

### Conditions specified under section 35(1) of the Technological Universities Act 2018

The applicant institutes shall jointly demonstrate that:-

- Appropriate governance and management oversight structures are in place to ensure the development and monitoring of a programme of work leading to TU designation;
- The work of the consortium that was planned to occur post-panel review up to the date of designation relating to the domains of IT, HR, and Student Services is completed;
- A detailed plan is provided containing realistic and credible timelines that includes the timelines and deliverables required to ensure that sufficient governing structures in the areas of administration and services will be in place to allow the two separate institutes to successfully and safely become one legal entity upon the appointed date of establishment;
- There is an account of the services within these domains that, if not ready on the proposed date of designation, would hamper crucial operations, identifying risks and plans for their management, in particular the protection of learners during any transition to TU status;
- If the timelines included with these plans extend beyond the proposed date of designation, there are clear transition plans including fall-back options demonstrating that the TU can continue to act as one legal entity and have all crucial operations continue without interruption;
- Appropriate independent external expertise has been procured to assist existing staff, examine the potential for developing additional leadership capacity that can help foster greater partnership and collaboration and to prepare for a new administration and governing body, post-designation.