



NATIONAL ACCESS PLAN 2022 – 2026 CONSULTATION

**Student Submission on behalf of;
Aspire2 Youth Advisory/Alumni**

Aspire2 Youth Advisory/Alumni Student Submission

1.What aspects of equity of access to higher education currently work or do not work from a student perspective?

- Future You Ucd Mentoring and other access programmes need to be more equitable and not only given to some schools
- Disability education - people with disabilities don't have access to study certain things and often the only aid is DARE
- It is assumed that non-deis schools are better off and as a result don't need as many Supports, this is not the case. Many young people have additional needs and need additional supports

2.What is the biggest challenge for students in accessing higher education?

- We need more awareness of the helping hands/supports that are available before you arrive in University or further education
- Learning disability – Dyscalculia, dyslexia can prevent people from feeling equal
- Financial issues remain key barriers
- Education system - some subjects aren't available in all schools. This causes further barriers for students accessing education

3.What can make a difference for students accessing and completing higher education?

- Programmes like Aspire2 (CSR, business giving up there time) to inspire young people to dream and want more for their lives
- Money, COLLEGE IS EXPENSIVE OFTEN TOO EXPENSIVE to even imagine or dream about going there
- Fear of the unknown and potential lack of supports to help you succeed
- Transition feels very sudden and almost like you become disconnected from your secondary school - you move to secondary with your primary friends
- We need more transition to further ed and third level programmes
- new study environment - structure of college, subjects, modules (understanding this before entry)
- leaving home, skills associated living independently
- Susi grant - gives people financial aid and is a great support however some young people miss when their families are means tested and this can be by a very small amount of money
- Grinds - helps people achieve the max amount of points they can
- Aspire 2, other support groups - help us mentally, psychologically to prepare and dream about a brighter future
- Reduced prices on course work and books
- easier transition process, e.g. staying connected with secondary schools support from people they have the relationship with
- Bring us into college
- more guidance from within the college as that is something we are used to from primary and secondary school.

4.How has Covid-19 impacted on students e.g., academic, financial, health, college experience and how can we address these impacts?

Aspire2

- Miss of physical face-to-face education because of lockdown
- Lack of jobs to fund college due to lockdown
- Loss of motivation from being stuck inside all day.
- Catching covid stopping people from getting education especially if it's bed ridden
- Bringing people (college students) back into the college in small pods even. Especially first years.
- Bring secondary school people in to college to learn the campus
- One free book to people in college.
- Offer more jobs on college campus
- Find ways to help students gain back interest in college.