



lyit

| **Institiúid Teicneolaíochta Leitir Ceanainn**
Letterkenny Institute of Technology

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

2014/15



Contents	Page
1. Introduction	1
2. Strategic Planning	1
2.1 Strategic Plan 2014-17	1
2.2 Executive Board Strategy Day	1
3. Institute Collaboration	1
3.1 West/North West/Higher Education Clusters	1
3.2 Connacht Ulster Alliance (CUA)	2
3.2.1 CUA Expression of Interest	3
4. North West Regional Science Park	3
4.1 Construction Works	3
4.2 “Topping Out Ceremony” of the North West Regional Science Park at LYIT	3
5. Strategic Dialogue	4
6. Finance	4
6.1 Meeting with Elected Representatives	4
6.2 HEA/DoES/LYIT Working Group – Killybegs Campus	5
6.3 Meeting with Donegal County Council & DoES	5
7. International Activity	5
8. Institute Events	6
8.1 Chartered Surveyors	6
8.2 Scifest Presentations	6
8.3 Architectural Technology Showcase	7
8.4 Design Showcase	8
8.5 Information Day	8
8.6 Retail Programmes	9
8.7 Fire Safety Display	10
8.8 Read DL Launch	10
8.9 Student Events	11
8.9.1 Launch of Student Union Clubs and Societies Website	11
8.9.2 Tourism Student Success	11
8.9.3 Hoop Hoop Hooray – Health Promotion Initiative 2015	11
8.9.4 Sports Scholarships	12
8.9.5 Health Promoting Schools	12
8.10 Memorial Services	13
8.10.1 Seán O’Maolchallan	13
8.10.2 Niall Leonard	13
9. Conferences/Seminars	13
9.1 Golden Bridges Conference/Boston Visit	13
9.2 Drew University - Bundoran	13
9.3 THRIC – Conference	14
9.4 Dice Conference	14
9.5 Laurentic Conference	15

9.6	Home Grown Food Conference	16
9.7	Donegal Diaspora Seminar – Cultural Tourism Product & Creative Economy on the Wild Atlantic Way	16
9.8	IBEC NW Seminar	16
9.9	Northern Ireland School & Colleges Careers Association (NISCA) Spring Conference	16
10.	Visitors	17
10.1	Meeting with MEPs	17
10.2	Visit of Senator Therese Murray	17
10.3	Worcester State University	18
10.4	Visit of Mayor of Boston	18
10.5	St Lawrence College Visit	18
10.6	UMass Lowell Visit	18
10.7	Weifang Visitors	19
10.8	Worcester State University Delegation Visit May 2015	19
10.9	Students visit to San Francisco/California	20
10.10	Meeting with Leo Murphy, North West Regional College (NWRC)	20
11.	Miscellaneous	21
11.1	Lionra Meeting	21
11.2	Tip O'Neill Diaspora Award	21
11.3	MSc Innovation Management Conferring	21
11.4	Intertrade Ireland	22
11.5	Springboard	22
11.6	Meeting with Minister for Education & Skills, Jan O' Sullivan, TD	22
11.7	Ballyraine Training Centre	22
11.8	Frank Hewitt Retirement	23
11.9	IUA Symposium: 21 st Century Universities – Performance and Sustainability	23
11.10	Meeting Jason Whooley, Chief Executive, Bio-Marine Ingredients Ireland (BII)	23
11.11	Derry City Chamber of Commerce Dinner	23
11.12	Randox Opening	23
11.13	Allingham Arts Festival	24
11.14	Irish Survey of Student Engagement Report	24
11.15	Letterkenny Tidy Town Awards	25
11.16	Letterkenny Chamber Ball	25
11.17	Donegal Film Office Launch	25
11.18	Colmcille Winter School (Gartan)	25
11.19	National Action Plan for Jobs and Regional Skills Fora	25
11.20	National Teaching & Learning Forum	25
11.21	Business in the Community (BITC)	26
11.22	Donegal Dyslexia Association	26
11.23	Derry Chamber President's Lunch	27
11.24	Donegal Age Friendly Strategy	27
11.25	Colaiste Colmcille Ballyshannon Prizegiving	27

Appendix 1: Strategic Plan 2014-17

Appendix 2: CUA Expression of Interest

Appendix 3: IUA Symposium Agenda

1. INTRODUCTION

2014/15 was characterised by the development and approval of the Institutes' Strategic Plan 2014-17. Given the ongoing change arising from the implementation of the National Higher Education Strategy it was more challenging to agree on a final position. Following extensive internal and external consultation and taking on board the impact of HEA Performance Compacts and the changing higher education landscape, the Institute has set out a challenging yet realistic ambition for the next three years.

The financial cutbacks have continued across the sector with some slight respite for LYIT this year. It is hoped through the extensive contribution of all staff, that the Institute's financial concerns can be addressed in the coming year.

In this context I would like to thank Justin Walsh the outgoing SFC for his significant contribution over the last three years in difficult times. Through the implementation of our Strategic Plan, we are confident that we can continue to address the challenges thrown at us and to serve the region and particularly our students as best we can.

2. STRATEGIC PLANNING

2.1 Strategic Plan 2014-17

The Institute's Strategic Plan 2014-17 was approved by Governing Body on 26 November 2014. Following work on the design and printing of the document, Ms Caroline Faulkner, Senior Managing Director, Pramerica launched the Institute's new Strategic Plan on Monday, 15 June. The focus now is the implementation of the plan and the Institute is confident that it has the building blocks in place to deliver on the strategy (see appendix 1).

2.2 Executive Board Strategy Day

The Executive Board Strategy Day focussed particularly on developing an implementation plan for our emerging Strategic Plan 2014-17. It was decided that we needed a strong internal focus in terms of developing new programmes (particularly part-time programmes) and needed to concentrate on providing the best service we can to our student body.

This element of customer service while we have been praised for it in the past needs serious attention across all aspects of our work and this was communicated to all staff at our annual breakfast briefings this year.

3. Institute Collaboration

3.1 West/North West/Higher Education Clusters

The West/North-West Cluster is comprised of LYIT, GMIT, IT Sligo and NUI Galway. The cluster has made significant progress towards the goal of creating a dynamic collaboration in the context of the HEA's two priority objectives of academic planning and student pathways.

The Cluster participants met with the Higher Education Authority on 21 January 2015 in NUIG. The meeting was chaired by Tom Boland, Chief Executive of the Higher Education Authority (HEA) with Pat Harvey in the role of HEA lead. The meeting was attended by the Presidents, Registrars and the four additional members of the

Cluster Operations Group from each of the four institutions. The two Cluster programme managers were also in attendance.

The Cluster made a presentation on its interpretation of the Cluster plan focusing on the following aspects:

- a) Vision
- b) Structure and governance
- c) Opportunities within Higher Education and for the Region
- d) The 'How'
- e) The Barriers
- f) Communications
- g) Mapping and pathway exercises
- h) Other initiatives
- i) HEA vision
- j) Future priorities

The Cluster presentation provided a structure for a detailed and positive discussion with the HEA.

The governance structures for the West/North West Cluster are now well established. The Steering group, comprising the four Presidents, the Cluster Operations Group comprising the Registrars and one senior academic from each institution and the two programme managers liaise between the Steering group and the Operations Group.

The Steering group met on 12 May in IT Sligo where the Presidents were joined by the Director and the Chair of the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning who briefed the Steering Group on the work of the Forum.

The detailed pilot review for the discipline areas of business and engineering has completed its first phase. Academic planning review and student pathways for all programmes in these areas from levels 6 to 10 across the four institutions is now complete. New pathways for students were identified and new areas for potential development are being explored. The pilot identified opportunities for collaboration in teaching, learning and research across the four institutions which are now being actively developed.

LYIT and NUIG were successful in their joint bid under the Advanced Irish Languages Skills initiative. The bid has two elements: an MA in Conference Interpreting and the administration of a Centre of Excellence. Further collaboration within the Cluster on Irish language is underway.

LYIT submitted expressions of interest from seven staff members in response to NUIG's offer for structured PhDs. These applications are currently with the graduate studies office at NUIG for review.

3.2 Connacht Ulster Alliance (CUA)

The CUA Presidents Group met on September 14, 2014. Dr Brendan McCormack, former Registrar IT Sligo, was appointed as CUA Programme Manager on a five-year basis. Dr McCormack commenced employment on October 6, 2014. The position is part funded via the HEA's Strategic Innovation and Development Fund (SIDF) for a five-year period. A CUA Data Analyst, Anne Marie McCormack also commenced employment on 6 October.

The CUA is working on a number of projects, on an on-going basis, including standardised on-line Quality Assurance Surveys and a joint recognition of prior learning (RPL) policy. The CUA Registrars held a meeting of the CUA Student Union Presidents on the LYIT Killybegs Campus on September 30, 2014.

3.2.1 CUA Expression of Interest

The LYIT Governing Body at its meeting on 11 December 2014 decided that LYIT as part of the CUA should make an Expression of Interest to become a Technological University. Following the Governing Body decision, a draft document was provided for the Governing Body's consideration at its February meeting.

This document was also considered by the Institute's Executive Board and the Academic Council.

Following agreement at Institute level, LYIT, GMIT and IT Sligo members of the CUA, represented by their Chairs and Presidents submitted the Technological University Expression of Interest to Tom Boland, Chief Executive, HEA on Wednesday, 4 March 2015.

A copy of the document is in Appendix 2.

The CUA has been informed that the HEA will take six months to review the expression of interest. This is in line with the agreed TU application process.

The CUA Steering Group has discussed the development of a communication and consultation plan for internal and external stakeholders. Each institution has agreed to communicate with its own stakeholders in a manner appropriate to the prevailing circumstances. In advance of a formal response on the Expression of Interest from the HEA, the communication and consultation within LYIT was in the context of a broader engagement with staff specifically around the implementation of LYIT's Strategic Plan 2014-17.

Professor John Davies, University of Bath was invited to present to the CUA Steering Group on 2 July 2015. It was hoped to benefit from his broad experience dealing with similar groupings over the years.

4. North West Regional Science Park

4.1 Construction Works

Construction commenced on the North West Regional Science Park on 25 June 2014. Piling work was completed in July and foundations were completed by 3 August 2014. Modification works to existing CoLab kitchenette and entrance lobby were complete and work on the new water main from Port Road commenced.

Contractors were on schedule to achieve their contracted completion date of 23 April 2015, which would allow LYIT meet its commitments under the terms of the INTERREG IVA funding.

The official opening of the sister building in Derry was held at the new NWRSP building at Fort George on Tuesday, 16 September 2014. The Deputy First Minister, Martin McGuinness performed the opening and a number of staff from LYIT were in attendance as was the Chairman of the Governing Body.

4.2 "Topping Out Ceremony" of the North West Regional Science Park at LYIT

It was an historic day at Letterkenny Institute of Technology (LYIT) on Friday, 23 January 2015 at the Topping Out ceremony of the North West Regional Science Park project. This marked another positive step in terms of

the development of Innovation Centres in Ireland's Higher Education campuses with LYIT's Business Innovation Centre opening over 25 years ago. A further upgrade in 2000 resulted in the Business Development Centre, while 2010 saw the opening of the current CoLab, with support from Enterprise Ireland and the Department of Education and Skills. This centre, which is full to capacity, now houses 28 start-up companies employing over 100 graduate-level employees.

The North West Regional Science Park (NWRSP) project is delivered through an innovative Cross Border partnership between LYIT and Northern Ireland Science Park (NISP), led by the North West Region Cross Border Group (NWRCBG). It is supported by the European Union's INTERREG IVA Programme, which is managed by the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB). The NWRSP will allow the world renowned Science Park brand, operating model, and support programmes be brought to the North West at Fort George in Derry and at the CoLab at LYIT. This NWRSP project creates the first third generation Science Park in the Republic of Ireland, which is the first step to creating an All-Ireland Association of Science Parks and will further assist LYIT in building a regional innovation ecosystem turning knowledge into enterprise and building a new economy in Ireland's North West. The Science Park building will be officially opened later this year.

5. Strategic Dialogue

LYIT had its first bilateral meeting with the HEA regarding the Institute's performance against our compact targets for 2014 on Wednesday, 21 January 2015 in NUIG.

The Institute received communication from the HEA regarding the next stage of the Strategic Dialogue process. LYIT was asked to submit an up to date report on performance against metrics for 2014 by the end of June 2015. A further meeting with the HEA was planned for September 2015. The President and Head of Development attended a briefing session in the HEA on Wednesday, 10 June regarding the next stage of the Strategic Dialogue process with the HEA. The Institute submitted a self-evaluation template to the HEA on Monday, 22 June benchmarking our performance against targets for 2014

6. Finance

6.1 Meeting with elected representatives

Throughout 2013 and 2014, the Institute was engaged in extensive dialogue with the HEA regarding the financial challenges facing LYIT, with a particular focus on the amalgamation of the School of Tourism, formerly the Tourism College Killybegs, into LYIT and the impact that this amalgamation has had on Institute finances. In January 2015, Mr Tom Boland, Chief Executive of the HEA, wrote to the Governing Body Chairman and confirmed that the HEA is not in a position to provide any additional funding to meet the Institute's ongoing operating deficit.

Over a series of three meetings on 19 January 2015 and 6 February 2015, the Chairman, President and Secretary Financial Controller met with the six Donegal TDs to discuss the Institute's finances and, in particular, the School of Tourism. The President explained the history of the School of Tourism amalgamation and confirmed that specific funding for the School of Tourism, which had been promised in advance of the amalgamation, had failed to materialise. This has caused financial difficulties for the Institute in the intervening period, and has contributed significantly to recurring operating deficits in recent years. The situation is becoming more critical as each year passes, as the Institute's reserves are being depleted.

6.2 HEA/DoES/LYIT Working Group – Killybegs Campus

The final report from the above Working Group was sent to the Institute in late July requesting a Governing Body response. The Governing Body considered this report at its meeting in October 2014 and subsequently wrote to the HEA with its response.

6.3 Meeting with DCC & DoES

The President, SFC and Head of School of Tourism met with representatives of both Donegal County Council and the Department of Education and Skills regarding the sustainability of the Institute's Killybegs campus.

It is clear from Donegal County Council that the campus is an integral part of the Council's development plans for South West Donegal. The Department requested a document outlining the synergistic nature of the various strategies emerging and the Killybegs campus plays in these strategies.

This document was provided and at the time of completing the report a meeting with relevant stakeholders has been organised for November 2015.

7. **International Activity**

LYIT has a long and distinguished history of international education stretching back over 30 years, primarily based on our participation in the Erasmus Programme which supports international Higher Education exchange within Europe.

Consistent with Government Policy, Higher Education Strategy and LYIT's Strategic Plan, we are now leveraging this experience of incoming EU international students, to support the recruitment of non EU International Students. In doing this we are clear that our primary intention is to internationalise all of our students' higher education experience and prepare them for employment in an inter-culturally rich and globally connected world. Another benefit of recruiting non EU International students is that it represents a potentially significant source of non exchequer funding and although we are starting from a modest base we are confident that this activity will increase in future years.

Currently our target countries for non EU Student recruitment are the United States of America, Canada, Malaysia and China. In selecting North America we are working closely with Donegal County Council's Diaspora project and building on the long tradition of emigration to North America from Ireland's North West. We have established strategic partnerships with the State of Massachusetts and its Higher Education Institutions such as Lasell College, UMass Lowell and Worcester State University.

LYIT hosted incoming delegations from Worcester State University and UMass Lowell from the US, St Lawrence from Canada and Weifang from China. We are actively developing relationships with these partner institutions and expect an increase in our current 26 non EU students as a result. During Academic Year 2014/2015 LYIT was represented at key events in our focus countries including Malaysia, China, Taiwan, Vietnam, the US and Canada. Several of these events are in conjunction with Enterprise Ireland's Education in Ireland Initiative and others are with our LYIT representatives in the relevant countries.

To facilitate non EU International Student recruitment we are piloting an online promotional campaign which is creating over 200 international student enquiries on a monthly basis. This pilot is on-going in association with the Academic Schools and will be reviewed by the Heads of Department in June 2015.

*International Student Awards/Student Ambassador Awards/ International Student Awards at Farmleigh
23 April 2015*

This is the first year LYIT has had a Non EU Education Ireland Student Ambassador. Chern Yin Ng, a Malaysian student in first year Bachelor of Business, Accounting was our Ambassador Student for 2014/2015. Chern Yin wrote a number of blogs relating to studying in Ireland and studying at LYIT that were visible on both the LYIT and Education Ireland websites.

The President attended the International Student Ambassador Awards ceremony with Chern Yin on Thursday 23 April at Farmleigh in Dublin. The Minister for Education and Skills, Jan O'Sullivan, TD also attended the awards ceremony at Farmleigh. This event honours the Student Ambassadors for their contribution in supporting the work of Education in Ireland in attracting international students to study in Ireland. The ceremony honoured the Higher Education Authority's Government of Ireland Scholars on behalf of the Department of Education and Skills.

The Student Ambassador programme, managed by Education in Ireland, is aimed at attracting top students from priority markets to study in Ireland and is part of a Government led International Scholarship Scheme. The programme, now in its fourth year, involves almost 50 international students from nine countries – the USA, India, Canada, China, Brazil, Chile, Singapore, Turkey and Malaysia - representing 23 higher education institutions across Ireland.

This is a wonderful opportunity to have a distinctively Irish impact on those who may be our future industrial, academic and political partners.

8. Institute Events

8.1 Chartered Surveyors

The SCSi panel visit for accreditation of the BSc (Hons) in Quantity Surveying took place at LYIT on 12 March. The outcome of the visit was very positive with the degree being awarded professional accreditation. The honours degree is a four-year sandwich course with one year's placement incorporated in the award that is accepted as counting for one of two years in industrial practice that graduates must have completed before applying for their chartership examination, the Assessment of Professional Competence (APC).

The Society of Chartered Surveyors Ireland (SCSi) is the independent professional body for Chartered Surveyors working and practising in Ireland, formed as a result of the merger between the Society of Chartered Surveyors (SCS) and the Irish Auctioneers and Valuers Institute (IAVI). The SCSi works in partnership with the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS), enabling access to a worldwide membership network of over 100,000 construction, land and property professionals.

Following the recently adopted RICS system, LYIT has applied for partnership with the SCSi, the first stage of which was to achieve accreditation for a programme offered; the next partnership meeting will take place one year from now.

8.2 Scifest Presentations

The School of Science hosted Scifest 2015 on Friday 15 May. A total of 53 projects were submitted from Carndonagh Community School, Colaiste Ailigh, Loreto Convent and St. Eunan's College in Letterkenny, Crana

College Buncrana, Our Lady's secondary school Monaghan, St. Catherine's Vocational school in Killybegs, Pobalscoil Ghaoth Dobhair, Derrybeg and St. Columba's Comprehensive school Stranorlar. The prizes were as follows:

Award	School	Project Title
Discover Space Award	St. Eunan's Letterkenny	X-ray vision: seeing into space
Discover Space Teacher Award	St. Eunan's Letterkenny	X-ray vision: seeing into space
Irish Science Teachers' Association Award	St. Catherine's Vocational School, Killybegs	Can video games effect your adrenaline response?
Maths in Science Award	Loreto Covent Letterkenny	Newtons series
Sustainable Energy Award	St. Catherine's Vocational School, Killybegs	Do aerators save water and money?
PharmaChemical Ireland Chemistry Award	Crana College, Buncrana	Natural Indicator
Royal Society of Chemistry Education Division Award	Crana College, Buncrana	Natural Indicator
News Talk Best Communicator	St. Catherine's Vocational School, Killybegs	Diseases and how they spread.
Intel Award	Pobalscoil Ghaoth Dobhair, Derrybeg	Staidear ar ce chomh randamach is ata an mod suaithreamh ceoil
Abbott Runner-up Best Project Award	St. Columba's Comprehensive, Glenties	An investigation into wind, wave and precipitation patterns on the south-west Donegal coastline
SFI Discover Best Project Award	Crana College, Buncrana	Classroom or Class doom - an in depth analysis of the effects of using google classroom
LYIT Technology Award – Senior/Intermediate/Junior Winner	Pobalscoil Ghaoth Dobhair, Derrybeg	Ce chomh sabhailte is ata do phasfhocail?
LYIT Physical Science Award – Senior/Intermediate/Junior Winner	St. Catherine's Vocational School, Killybegs	Headstart!
LYIT Life Science Award – Senior/Intermediate Winner	Colaiste Ailigh, Letterkenny	Staidear a dheanamh ar an dearcadh ata ag diagoiri I dtrea na Garda Siachana
LYIT Life Science Award – Junior Winner	Carndonagh Community School	Moodful music

8.3 Architectural Technology Showcase

The Department of Civil Engineering and Construction held an Architectural Technology & BIM (Building Information Modelling) Showcase. This is the fifth Architectural Technology end of year exhibition to be held at LYIT and we were very pleased to include for the first time the work of the part-time Certificate in BIM (Revit) class of 2015. The exhibition was launched with an opening address by RIAI (Royal Institute of Architects of

Ireland) President, Robin Mandal, followed by a reception with music and refreshments for our guests to enjoy while viewing the up to the minute reflection of the innovations that are taking place in this progressive discipline.

During his speech Mr Mandal put the profession into which the graduates are entering into perspective and gave an insight into where architectural technologists can be most effective, projecting the pivotal role that they will play, alongside architects in areas such as retrofitting of buildings and sustainability.

The RIAI is proactive in developing the role of the Architectural Technologist, leading to the introduction of the RIAI Register of Technologists and a commitment to support a Statutory Register. As one of the six Institutes of Technology offering Architectural Technology, Anne Boner, Head of Department of Civil Engineering and Construction is a member of the expert panel writing the QQI National Standard for Architectural Technology which is expected to be published before the end of the year and form a precursor to the professionalism of the discipline in Ireland. Recent changes to the Building Regulations (Amendment March 2014) have meant that three categories of professionals are currently entitled to act as Design Certifiers – Chartered Engineers, Chartered Architects and Chartered Property Surveyors. It is envisaged that Chartered Architectural Technologists will also be added to the list when a Statutory Register has been established.

The Department of Civil Engineering and Construction at LYIT has taken a lead in developing Virtual Design and Construction (VDC) capabilities. The acquisition of Revit 3D software skills has been incorporated into all programmes and students of the different disciplines (eg Quantity Surveying, Architectural Technology, Building Services and Renewable Energy) learn to work together on Integrated BIM projects. The part-time Certificate in BIM (Revit) has been running successfully over the last academic year with approximately 20 industry professionals (from architectural or building services backgrounds) attending class one afternoon a week. More part-time courses (including Springboard) are being offered in the coming year as the demand for BIM courses grows.

8.4 Design Showcase

The 2015 LYIT Department of Design & Creative Media Graduate Exhibition opened at the Regional Cultural Centre in Letterkenny on June 9th, with in excess of 100 in attendance. There were mixed emotions as two prestigious colleagues and friends of many years are retiring from the department this year. The reality is of course, that creatives never retire! Collan Keegan and Michiel Drost will undoubtedly continue their work as designers for many years to come and so this was a celebration of a new beginning for Collan and Michiel along with their graduating students!

This year's exhibition is vibrant and varied and will appeal to all! The exhibition includes work from the Certificate in Photography, BA in Digital Media & Design (Degree & Honours Degree), BA in Visual Communications / Graphics (Honours), BA in Product Design, MA in Motion Graphics and the very first graduate work from the BA in Animation.

This exhibition is a testament to all the hard work and dedication put in by both students and staff alike throughout the academic year at Letterkenny Institute of Technology.

At the department of Design & Creative Media, innovation, curiosity, collaboration, an open exchange of ideas, diverse perspectives, environmental and social responsibility are all valued. Students are prepared to make a positive impact in their chosen fields—on global trends and markets. A highly skilled team of practicing professionals and academics work tirelessly with the students on innovative courses.

This was also noted at the recent DICE (Design, Innovation, Creativity & Enterprise) conference hosted by LYIT in April, where internationally renowned speakers and guests remarked on the high quality of work being produced by current LYIT students. The aim of all courses at the Department of Design & Creative Media is to develop the designer's perception, knowledge, skills and problem-solving abilities in order to prepare students for a successful career – and life. The graduates at LYIT have distinguished themselves in their chosen field both in Ireland and abroad. Some work for the large design agencies, while others have set up their own companies. We have a long standing relationship with our graduates, many of whom return as guest speakers to LYIT, adding not just value, but confirmation that our graduates are among the best in their chosen careers!

The department of Design & Creative Media offers courses across a wide range of disciplines from level 6 Certificate – to level 9 Master's Degree in state-of-the-art facilities. Courses include, Graphics / Illustration, Animation, Product design, Photography, Audio / Video, Web design, Interactive and Motion design. All of these courses include a business stream, which supports graduates who choose to set up their own design business. There are additional part-time offerings, which include courses in Basic Web Design & Development, Fashion Fundamentals, Photography and Music Technology.

2015 is the Irish Year of Design – which brings an additional celebration to the 56 graduating designers entering into an ever-growing Irish and international industry.

This year's Show was branded by Jennifer King – 4th year Visual Communications/Graphics. Live musical performance for the evening was provided by Marie Kelly (Engineering Dept.) on harp and Michael Carey (Business Dept.) on whistle.

The exhibition at the Regional Cultural Centre, Letterkenny will remain open to the public daily until 17 June.

8.5 Information Day

The Institute held an Information Day for prospective students on Wednesday, 20 August, from 11 am to 4 pm at the Letterkenny and Killybegs campuses. Staff were available to meet with prospective students and parents. Information desks were manned by personnel from:

- School of Business
- School of Science
- School of Engineering
- School of Tourism
- Student Services (Admissions, Access, Careers, Students' Union and other student services)
- Life-long Learning/Springboard.

The event was very well attended by prospective students and their parents. Students who had already received a CAO offer took the opportunity to view the facilities and talk to staff about the course they had been offered. Others sought advice on the courses available through CAO Available Places.

8.6 Retail Programme

Over 100 learners from years 2 and 3 of the Degree in Retail Management practice attended LYIT for 2 days in September. The Degree was developed in association with IBEC Retail Skillnet who are responsible for training in the Irish retail sector. The programme which is delivered in Galway and Dublin has learners from Ireland's most prestigious retail organisations. To mark the occasion a number of the Steering Committee members were also in attendance and were formally welcomed by the President of LYIT, Head of Development, Registrar and

Head of School of Business. Gretta Nash Cadden HR Manager Brown Thomas, and Chairperson of IBEC Retail Steering Committee in closing the visit, noted it was great to visit LYIT and to see its tremendous campus and facilities, and that the retail degree programme was an outstanding flagship of how industry and higher education can work in partnership. This innovative Work Based Learning Degree programme has attracted much national and international recognition for its design and delivery. The WBL Facilitator at LYIT and chairperson of IBEC Retail Skillnet have visited over 40 retail organisations in 2014 promoting the programme. Currently almost 200 learners are completing the programme. This initiative with industry expects to launch a Level 8 honours degree in September 2015.

8.7 *Fire Safety Display*

The Department of Civil Engineering and Construction presented a Fire Safety Engineering Showcase 2014 on November 28 which grew out of a request by former students working in the industry, to address current students. It consisted of presentations on what is on offer within the college and how it can be expanded to include research. One of the speakers was Dr Karen Boyce, Ulster, who has had several former students and indeed current lecturers of LYIT progress to Master's level. Two representatives from HILTI product suppliers also contributed towards the event.

Graduates Eamon Coll and Liam Curran related their experiences of the course at LYIT and how it successfully equipped them for their respective jobs based in the UK, which had them working on eminent projects around the globe. Then in the afternoon we had public sector employees Selina Kavanagh, HSE; Mark McGoldrick, Irish Prison Service and Glen Hamilton, Donegal County Council Fire Service who were the first graduates to successfully complete the Fire Engineering Course at LYIT, tell of their experiences, contributions and developments within their respective employment. Finally, we had Dr Mark Quinn who carried on his fire research to doctorate level after completing his studies at LYIT.

The overall perspective provided by this array of former graduates was overwhelming as it gave an insight as to where the students could reach to achieve their potential after studying the Fire Safety Engineering course at the LYIT. The feedback was very positive from the current students and gave them a great reason to feel they were doing something with a very clear future and employment prospects.

The event was sponsored by Maurice Johnson & Partners and Engineers Ireland (Donegal Region).

8.8 *Read DL Launch*

READ DL 2015 was a reading initiative inspired by the One Book, One Community project worldwide and pupils from numerous National Schools locally and throughout the County, Post Primary Schools many of them ETB schools and also Family Resource Centres were all involved again this year with at least 1000 books sponsored by LYIT and further copies have been distributed to libraries throughout the county.

All involved were undertaking the reading this year of the book ***Wonder by R.J Palacio***. The official launch took place on Friday, 30th January in the Central Library, Letterkenny. The reading period is from January 30th to March 26th and there was also in-school and community based competitions and events.

The closing ceremony for Read DL was held in Dunfanaghy on Thursday, 26 March. This was the culmination of a very successful event where the books read by the participants were sponsored by LYIT.

8.9 *Student Events*

8.9.1 *Launch of Student Union Clubs and Societies Website*

Three students from the Android App Society (Gearoid Maguire, Paulius Karbauskas and Denis Bourne) finalised the Clubs and Societies website for launch on Wednesday 24 September 2014. The project enables the students to complete a five credit elective in ‘industry studies’ from the Department of Computing. The students were mentored by Nigel Mc Kelvey, Lecturer and Thomas Dowling, Head of Department of Computing. They worked closely with Fiona Kelly, Student Union Administrator, to bring the website to launch stage, assessing similar websites from other Universities and Institutes of Technology in Ireland. Among the website’s features will be a section devoted to various clubs and societies, a weekly timetable of events and a live blog newsfeed section.

8.9.2 *Tourism Student Success*

Chef Ireland National Culinary Competitions (CATEX) RDS, Dublin

A team from LYIT School of Tourism travelled to Dublin from 16-19 February 2015 to compete in a variety of competitions at the Chef Ireland National Culinary Competitions and the Irish Cocktail Championships at the RDS in Dublin. This national competition is the highlight of the calendar in which all Hospitality and Culinary Colleges, both North and South, actively participate.

While there were many individual competitions, the main focus was on the Team Event – Cook-Serve – where a team of three culinary students and two hospitality students prepared and served a three course meal for ten people in 2 and a half hours. The team from LYIT’s Killybegs Campus were up on the first day, and there was some stiff competition from Tralee IT, Dundalk IT and Omagh College. Gold Medals were presented to kitchen chefs-de-cuisine Dylan Doherty, Marcella Furey and Claire Patterson, and restaurant chefs-de rang Girts Mihalkins and Stacey Grimes-Dunleavy. Lecturers Gabriel McSharry (Kitchen) and Patrick Brennan (Restaurant) were rightly proud of their students’ achievement.

Individuals also performed very well in the many other competitions. Sinéad Morrow won two Silver Medals in Kitchen for her Alternative Breakfast and Pork dish. David Stewart won a bronze for his Fish dish, while Stacey Carr-Kennedy won bronze for her Novelty Cake. Adrian McCarthy received two Certificates of Merit for his Senior Lamb and Senior Duck dishes.

Away from the heat of the kitchen, our bar-tenders were up against serious competition in the National Cocktail Championships but were always in the running. In the end, Michaela Leonard won a bronze medal. To cap off an already great week, Marcella Furey and Claire Patterson teamed up again for a Mystery Basket Cookery Competition and came away with well-deserved Bronze Medals. Success at the competitions was due to the support of a dedicated team of students and staff from those who travelled to Dublin and those who supported from Killybegs.

8.9.3 *Hoop Hoop Hooray – Health Promotion Initiative 2015*

On Friday, 1 May, 461 senior class children from seven local primary schools descended on LYIT, in an attempt to set a new Guinness World Record for the largest number of people working out simultaneously with a Hula Hoop – the culmination of a four-week Health Promotion Initiative – Hoop Hoop Hooray, developed and delivered by 4th year Sports Coaching and Performance students.

The Initiative was undertaken by the students as part of the assessment strategy of a final year module. The aim of the initiative was twofold, one to encourage children to be more physically active and two, to provide students

with an opportunity to apply the knowledge and skills they have developed during their four years at LYIT and gain valuable learning from doing. Students had to engage with the Principals of the local primary schools, promote their initiative, secure sponsorship, meet the evidence requirements set down by Guinness World Records, organise transportation and co-ordinate the actual day itself.

All of this they did to a very high standard. Feedback from the Principals, the teachers and the children was very positive. The students also had a very positive experience on what was one of their final days at LYIT. Evidence will now be collected and forwarded to Guinness who will inform us of their decision in the coming weeks.

8.9.4 Sports Scholarships

The award of sports scholarships took place on Monday 23 February at a lunchtime presentation in the Radisson Blu Hotel. The event marked the introduction of a 'development' scholarship along with the award of full sports scholarships to full time students of the institute who have impressed sufficiently in sporting excellence.

The development scholarship will be awarded to students, mainly 1st year students, who have potential to develop towards the full scholarship in future years under the proper coaching and support platforms that exist in LYIT. Recipients of the development scholarship receive €800, paid in 2 instalments, after having successfully completed semester examinations and course requirements. The full scholarship carries the award of €1,400, paid also in 2 instalments with the same academic requirements in place.

In addition to this support services such as chartered physiotherapy sessions, if necessary, to assist in progressing recovery from injury and some additional training is made available to the award winners.

Sports Scholarships were awarded to the following students of the institute:

John Kelly, Athletics-Shot Putt
Simon Archer, Athletics-High Jump
Danny Gallagher, Rugby
Jordan Toland, Soccer
Cathal McDaid, Soccer
Peter Doherty, Soccer
Darragh Gallagher, GAA
Anthony Browne, GAA
Daire McDaid, GAA
Brian Howley, GAA
Thomas Kerr, GAA
Lee Scanlon, Hurling
Prionsais O'Lionann, Hurling
Shaun Wogan, Basketball
Gemma Glackin, Ladies GAA
Cathy De Ward, Ladies GAA

The annual Student Awards night will be held in the Radisson Blu Hotel on Thursday, 19 March 2015.

8.9.5 Health Promoting Schools

The President was invited to attend, speak and present certificates at the above event in the Regional Cultural Centre on Wednesday, 2 May. This was an interesting event and one that LYIT can contribute to in the future.

8.10 Memorial Services

8.10.1 Seán O'Maolchallann

A Memorial Service was held in the Institute at 5.30pm on Monday, 16 February, for the late member of staff, Seán Ó Maolchallann, who passed away on 6 January this year. His immediate family from Letterkenny and Dublin attended, along with family members from Belfast.

8.10.2 Niall Leonard

A Memorial Service was held on Thursday, 28 May, for the late Niall Leonard, a third year Law student who died in July, 2012. Due to personal family concerns it had not been possible to hold a service till then. The service was attended by family members, friends, and staff and students of the Institute. It was presided over by the Chaplain, with several staff members participating in the readings and reflections. The Appreciation was delivered by Nancy O'Donnell, from the Department of Law & Humanities. Paul Hannigan, President of LYIT, also spoke and presented Niall's mother with his parchment in Higher Certificate in Legal Studies of Niall's academic achievement and a crystal memorial plaque. Music for the service was provided by Pat Campbell assisted by singers and musicians from the college community. Two members of Niall's family performed some of his favourite music. Most of Niall's classmates having since graduated and moved on to employment and further study, it was not possible for many of them to attend the service. Twenty former students asked that a message of their sympathy be read out at the service. Following the service, conversation and light refreshments were shared in the Nurses' Canteen.

9. Conferences/Seminars

9.1 Golden Bridges Conference/Boston Visit

During the week 6 – 10 October 2014; the President and Head of Development represented LYIT in association with Donegal Council and Derry City Council on a visit to Massachusetts including attendance at the Golden Bridges Conference.

This visit represents the next step in building relations between the North West of Ireland and the state of Massachusetts following recent visits to LYIT by Senate President Therese Murray, Worcester State University President Barry Maloney and Boston Mayor Marty Walsh.

During the week the delegation visited Massachusetts Life Sciences, Cambridge Innovation Centre in Boston, UMass Lowell/M2D2, Worcester State University, the Irish Emigration Centre, the Irish Pastoral Centre, UMass Dartmouth and New Bedford Port.

The President was a panel member at the Golden Bridges conference and over 300 people attended the Golden Bridges award lunch at which a number of recipients were honoured in recognition of their support for Massachusetts/North West Ireland linkages. Among the Award recipients was Michael Alexander, President Lasell College.

9.2 Drew University - Bundoran

The President and Head of Development attended the launch of the Drew University Annual Conference in Bundoran on Thursday, 15 January. This is a locally driven initiative that attracts over 100 participants from the

United States to the event in Bundoran annually. The Institute is happy to support this activity under the Donegal Diaspora banner.

9.3 *THRIC -Conference*

The School of Tourism, LYIT hosted the 11th Annual Tourism and Hospitality Research in Ireland Conference (THRIC) from 11 – 12 June 2015. The conference was held on the Letterkenny Campus and in the Radisson Blu Hotel, Letterkenny.

On the eve of the conference, (Wednesday 10 June) the School of Tourism in conjunction with Donegal Local Enterprise Office (LEO), Donegal Food Coast and Fáilte Ireland organised a Food Tourism Workshop focusing on ‘Developing the Food Tourism Experience along the Wild Atlantic Way’. Artisan Food Producers from Co Donegal were present at the workshop and displayed samples of their products.

Over sixty participants heard from four speakers: Artie Clifford (Head of Judging Panel) Blas na hEireann Awards discussed the judging process behind award winning artisan food; Dr Diane Dodd, Director of the International Institute of Gastronomy, Culture, Arts and Tourism, Barcelona outlined the European Region of Gastronomy Project and how this could be of relevance to food tourism enterprises located along the Wild Atlantic Way; John Mulcahy, Head of Food Tourism, Hospitality Education & Standards, Fáilte Ireland talked about Fáilte Ireland supports for Food Tourism in Ireland and Eve Anne McCarron from the Donegal Local Enterprise Office (LEO) detailed regional supports for artisan food producers, specifically focusing on the Donegal Good Food Initiative. On the morning of 11 June, the THRI Conference was opened by Minister Joe McHugh TD, Minister of State at the Department of Arts, Heritage and Gaeltacht Affairs. Nearly 100 delegates heard from four key note speakers from Ireland, England, Scotland and Spain. Pat McCann was the first keynote speaker and discussed ‘The Dalata Story: Developing an effective adaptable strategy - How a company can survive adversity and position itself for growth as the opportunity arises’. He was followed later on Thursday by Professor Kevin Hannam, Leeds Beckett University on ‘Developments in tourism motilities’.

Dr Diane Dodd addressed the conference on Friday morning focusing on ‘The importance of culture and food diversity for gastrodiploacy and tourism’. The final keynote speaker was Helen Campbell, Head of Global Branding and Marketing Communications with VisitScotland who talked about ‘A year in the life’ ... A look at how VisitScotland amplify the marketing opportunities delivered through the use of ‘themed years’. In total 33 research papers and extended abstracts were presented over 11 parallel sessions. One paper was presented by Les Roches/Laureate Universities Hotel School, Switzerland via video conference. A conference dinner was held on Thursday night in the Radisson Blu Hotel. Guests were treated to a presentation from Iain Millar, Unique Ascents who gave an insight to sea stack climbing in Co Donegal – extreme tourism on the Wild Atlantic Way. Both the conference and the workshop were supported by Fáilte Ireland and Donegal County Council.

9.4 *DICE Conference*

On 16 and 17 April last, the Department of Design & Creative Media at LYIT hosted DICE (Design, Innovation, Creativity, Enterprise) 2015. Over 200 designers, business owners and students registered to attend the event, which was funded by Honeycomb Creative Works as part of the department’s engagement with ID2015 (Irish Year of Design).

The conference aimed to discuss the role of design in adding value to business and society, both in the minds of practicing designers and clients, and as a source of inspiration to students and practicing designers in the broad region of the North/North West of Ireland.

We were most fortunate to have attracted global leaders from the design world as speakers. The disciplines from which they came reflected our offerings at the Institute. Our objective was to demonstrate that Irish designers, sometimes working in isolated locations can and have impacted upon world trends and markets.

Mr Colin McKeown, ID2015, opened the two-day event.

Belfast based Damian Cranny founder and director of Belfast based Big Motive Design made a dynamic entrance as first speaker followed by Corrina Askin – Animator and lecturer at LYIT. Corrina has designed and produced several animated series for TV including the very popular Joe & Jack. The young vibrant Dublin trio collectively known as ‘Post’ also took to the stage on the first day. As recent graduates of design, they offered great insight to the challenges and joys of setting up in business! The Local Enterprise Office offered insight into their plans for the County and their support for design and the creative arts within that plan.

LYIT Design Graduate and award winning designer Kieran Nolan shared his successes in the Games Design industry. Margo Harkin, award winning film & documentary maker impacted hugely on the audience with her passionate presentation of visually stunning material. Gerard O Rourke, founder of Geronimo presented from a slightly different angle, Gerard is immersed in the creative industries but is not a creator of content, he is the financial negotiator within the industry. Graphic Designer, Annie Atkins stole the show with her visuals! Annie was one of the design team on the Grand Budapest Hotel, who recently swooped the Oscar for Best Design. Christopher Murphy, best-selling author, speaker, designer and educator engaged the audience with his enthusiastic approach to digital start-ups. On the Thursday evening, The Stone Twins, twin brothers from Dublin, now based in Amsterdam, known for their concept-driven design made an outstanding presentation.

Additional presentations were made by CoLab, LEO, Alex Connock – design for film and TV, Keith Finglas – Innovation and Sligo based Toby Scott – on creative problem solving!

All in all, it was a wonderfully successful event with superb feedback from local and ‘distant’ communities. The Department of Design & Creative Media offers courses across a wide range of disciplines from level 6 Certificate – to level 9 Masters Degree in state of the art facilities. Courses include, Graphics/Illustration, Animation, Product design, Photography, Audio/Video, Web design, Interactive and Motion design. All of these programmes include a business stream, which supports graduates who choose to set up their own design business. We have additional offerings in the Life Long Learning space, which include, Foundations in Fashion and Music Technology. Our graduates have distinguished themselves in their chosen field both in Ireland and abroad. Some work for the large design agencies, while others have set up their own companies.

We have a long standing relationship with our graduates, many of whom return on a regular basis as guest speakers to LYIT, adding not just value, but confirmation that our graduates are among the best in their chosen careers!

We thoroughly enjoyed having both graduates and newcomers to our DICE conference at LYIT last month!

9.5 *Laurentic Conference*

The 7th Annual Laurentic Conference was held in LYIT on Friday, 8 May 2015. The Conference is held in memory of the loss in WW1 of the Canadian Ship Laurentic off Fanad Head.

The Conference builds on the long traditions of kinship and friendship across the Atlantic between the North West of Ireland and Atlantic Canada.

The themes of this year's Conference included developing our Marine and Maritime Resources from Ocean Renewables to Marine Tourism and how maritime communities can harness good practice in Applied Digital Technologies.

9.6 *Home Grown Food Conference*

LYIT hosted this conference in An Dánlann on 11/12 July 2015.

9.7 *Donegal Diaspora Seminar - Cultural Tourism Product & Creative Economy on the Wild Atlantic Way*

Nancy Gardella Executive Director Martha's Vineyard Chamber of Commerce; Ann Burke Vice President Economic Development Council Western Massachusetts and Gloria O'Neill President and CEO of Cook Inlet Tribal Council (CITC) Anchorage Alaska were invited to come to the county last month for a weeklong series of events to set the context, investigate the opportunity, explore the potential and seek to deliver a range of initiatives that will enable creative and cultural stakeholders to grow their business by taking advantage of the Wild Atlantic Way. They related their stories and strategies at events during the week and at an inspirational and thought provoking seminar entitled 'Cultural Tourism Product and Creative Economy on the Wild Atlantic Way' which was organised as part of the Council's Donegal Diaspora project.

This event, which took place at Letterkenny Institute of Technology, also included local input from Joan Crawford, Fáilte Ireland North West and Moira Ní Ghallachóir, founder of MNG and organizer of Rock agus Roam.

More than 100 people attended to listen to the various initiatives, strategies and ideas that had already proven successful in the US and at home. All speakers guided the audience through their project developments and how they managed to identify stabilization and then growth opportunities in their chosen fields.

They also fielded a range of questions from the local entrepreneurs and identified how, from their viewpoint, the Wild Atlantic Way opportunities could be maximized both as a business operating in the tourist economy or as a provider, such as an artisan, looking to establish a niche in this specialized market.

9.8 *IBEC NW Seminar*

IBEC hosted a half day seminar entitled "The skills gap: Making the right connections." in Sligo on Thursday, 21 May. Dr Gertie Taggart, Head of School of Science at LYIT participated in a panel discussion at the seminar. It is likely that as a result of ongoing discussions, a regional skills forum will to evolve in conjunction with the Regional Jobs Action Plan.

9.9 *Northern Ireland School & Colleges Careers Association (NISCA) Spring Conference*

LYIT sponsored this conference this year. The conference is an annual event and this year was held in the Glenavon House Hotel in Cookstown. As sponsors, the President, Paul Hannigan made the opening address where he challenged the audience of Guidance Counsellors to think creatively as to how the issue of cross border student mobility could be addressed for mutual advantage.

10. Visitors

10.1 Meeting with MEPs

On Monday, 16 February the President and Head of Development attended a meeting in North West Regional Science Park, Ft George, Derry with Joanne Stuart of Northern Ireland Science Park, and Martina Anderson, Sinn Féin MEP for Northern Ireland.

The meeting held at the request of Martina Anderson, MEP included a briefing on the NWRSP Project, an outline of LYIT's history of NW cross border regional engagement and a walk through of the facility.

On Friday, 27 February the President, Head of Development and CoLab Manager met Matt Carthy, Sinn Féin MEP for the West/North West Region at CoLab.

The meeting included a briefing on the NWRSP Project, an outline of LYIT's history of NW cross border regional engagement and a walk through of the new building.

10.2 Visit of Senator Therese Murray

Senate President Therese Murray on her visit to LYIT on Friday, 12 September announced the expansion of the Massachusetts Medical Device Development Center (M2D2) to Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. Dubbed "M2D2 Northwest," the successful medical device incubator will now hold incubator space at the Letterkenny Institute of Technology (LYIT) and the Clinical Transitional Research and Innovation Centre (CTRIC).

The opening of international medical device incubator space is the direct result of previous trade missions to Northern Ireland and Ireland led by President Murray.

Massachusetts holds international recognition as a premier research and development center for life sciences, biotechnology and medical devices. This exciting collaboration will offer assistance to Massachusetts-based companies looking to break into the European market while also attracting European companies that want to launch clinical trials in Massachusetts. The shared goal is to create an environment where research, innovation and commercialization can all take place and this is a big step forward for innovators and entrepreneurs in Massachusetts and beyond.

Founded in 2008, M2D2 is a joint UMass Lowell and UMass Worcester initiative designed to accelerate the development and launch of new medical device companies. M2D2 provides business development counselling, engineering and prototype development support, as well as clinical and regulatory path guidance, and has assisted more than 100 start-up companies and entrepreneurs since its inception.

In addition to following M2D2's business development model, M2D2 Northwest will provide "soft landing" services for start-up companies and entrepreneurs based in Ireland and Northern Ireland seeking to do business in Massachusetts, and Massachusetts companies seeking to do business abroad.

The partnership between UMass, Northern Ireland and Ireland will also include a monthly programming exchange between the academic institutions and opportunities for research by faculty and graduate students researchers and shared grants.

10.3 Worcester State University Visit

A delegation from Worcester State University, Worcester, Massachusetts (MA) visited LYIT from 15 – 17 September. The group included their President, Barry Maloney, Tim Murray, President and CEO, Worcester Chamber of Commerce, Senator Michael Moore, State Senate Co-Chair of the Higher Education Committee in the Commonwealth's legislature, Carl Herrin, Assistant to the President for International, Community and Governmental Affairs, Dr. Stephanie Chalupka, Associate Dean of Nursing and two students, one from the Criminal Law programme and the other from the Occupational Therapy course. The delegation met with the Executive Board and management from the Schools of Science and Business to discuss possible staff/student exchange programmes. Worcester State University is a liberal arts and sciences university. It offers more than 50 undergraduate programmes of study, 25 master's degrees, and post-baccalaureate programmes. The University has a student population of approximately 6,500 (full-time and part-time). A Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the two institutions during the visit.

10.4 Visit of Mayor of Boston

The recently elected Mayor of Boston, Marty Walsh whose parents come from Connemara visited Ireland. On the afternoon of Wednesday, 24 September he visited CoLab, this was a significant event and has arisen directly from the Institute's participation in the Golden Bridges event.

10.5 St Lawrence College Visit

Over the last number of years, Institutes of Technology Ireland has developed a Strategic Partnership with Colleges Ontario in Canada. As part of this International Collaboration, LYIT hosted an incoming delegation from St. Lawrence College Ontario, on 29 and 30 September.

The incoming delegation included Glenn Vollebregt, President, Lorraine Carter, Senior VP Academic and Don Young, Dean of Applied Science.

During their visit, St. Lawrence and LYIT signed a Memorandum of Understanding which will facilitate St. Lawrence students joining programmes in LYIT's Department of Design and Creative Media. The first incoming students from St Lawrence 2015 are expected in September 2015.

10.6 UMass Lowell Visit

Building on relationships developed during the Golden Bridges Conferences and in association with Donegal County Council's Diaspora Project, we recently hosted a high level delegation from UMass Lowell including:

- Chancellor Marty Meehan, UMass Lowell
- Prof Steve McCarthy, Director M2D2
- Dr Frank Talty, Co-Director, Centre for Irish Partnerships
- Victoria Denoon, Office of the Chancellor

Over the course of the visit a number of meetings took place focusing on the next steps in building this strategic partnership.

10.7 *Weifang Visitors*

Consistent with our new Strategic Plan and Government Policy LYIT is actively Internationalising our Learners Experience. Our priority targets in the initial phase of this activity include North America and South East Asia. In March 2013, John Andy Bonar Head of Development and Jill Murphy International Education Manager visited Shandong Vocational College of Economics and Business in Weifang, Shandong Province in China. To reciprocate our visit, in Dec 2014 the Chairman of SVCEB along with two Deans visited LYIT and signed a Memorandum of Understanding. SVCEB is a Chinese Government designated Centre of Excellence in the teaching of Accounting and they are interested in developing an International Accounting Partnership with our School of Businesses Accounting Programme.

LYIT had a delegation from Shandong Vocational College of Economics and Business visiting for a month. The nine visiting accounting lecturers are spending time observing the teaching practices and understanding of the programme content of our undergraduate Bachelor of Business in Accounting. The Chinese vocational college is interested in sending their second and third year students to LYIT to complete their accounting degrees. This is the second visit from Shandong Vocational College in recent months following a signing of an MOU in Dec 2014. Over the course of their stay in Ireland the Chinese teachers sat in on lectures at LYIT and took part in workshops with lecturers from School of Business. They also spent time sightseeing and learning about Irish lifestyle and culture.

10.8 *Worcester State University Delegation Visit May 2015*

A delegation from Worcester State University arrived Monday 18th May, a total of eight including Prof Linda Larrivee (PhD, Dean, School of Education, Health, and Natural Sciences), Dr Kelly Carson (Faculty member) and six nursing students. The visit was a follow on as part of an earlier hosted WSU delegation visit September (2014) and a further autumn visit to WSU by Paul Hannigan and John Andy Bonar. The delegation was facilitated on campus and visited a variety of HSE clinical acute and primary health care settings over the week visit. The delegation was afforded a tour of LYIT campus, clinical skills and an overview of the Pre-registration curriculum (including clinical placements circuits). This included a meeting with the NMPDU regarding the HSE West services and activities. Clinical site visits facilitated with our HSE stakeholders included: acute hospital, endoscopy unit, Donegal hospice, Parkview Psychiatric services, Sexual assault & Treatment unit and Intellectual disability services. The delegation also had an opportunity to meet some Stage 2 and 4 nursing students on clinical visits and had dialogue exchange regarding the programme structure and clinical experiences. Professor Larrivee convened meetings with Head of Departments of Science, Computing, International Officer, Law and Business studies. Additional visits included with Kevin O'Connor, (Director of Economic Development with Derry City Council) and a tour of Glenveagh National Park.

A farewell luncheon was organised Friday with nursing students, academic and clinical placement staff. The Chief Nurse Education Officer, Ms Judith Foley (NMBI) who was on campus that day also attended. The President and Head of Department made a formal presentation to the visiting Professor on behalf of the Department of Nursing and Health Studies official visit. The delegation departed back to Dublin on Saturday morning for the weekend prior to returning to USA Monday morning.

It is envisaged that this collaboration and exchange pilot programme will be built upon and replicated for a small cohort of nursing students and academic staff in spring semester, 2016. This is in anticipation of possible international exchange placement for nursing students in the future. The Head of Department is in continued communications for future project plans for the next academic year.

10.9 *Students visit to San Francisco/California*

Remembering the Fulbright sponsored visit of Brenda and John Romero last semester. In order to keep this connection live, and build on the enthusiasm it generated, a trip to The Game Developers Conference in San Francisco was suggested at the time. Funds were available and a short competition among the students to devise who would accompany Simon McCabe to California. John Regan and Kyrsi Bonham Noyle, both second year Games students, ended up with the lucky tickets.

A synopsis of the event from Simon:

The event, which took place at the end of February, is held across the three buildings of the Moscone Center in San Francisco. The auditoria ranges from lecture theatres, to small arena size which supported three cinema size screens.

The whole industry is represented including game developers, artists, musicians, educators, hardware companies, toy companies, network specialists etc. There was a notable theme which was of particular interest for the LYIT delegation including - Oculus or Virtual reality headsets. These will be available for Samsung phones before the end of the year, and for consoles by next year. The students tried a few of the alpha devices. The experience is immersive and claustrophobic. These are devices for the senses and in that regard push games ever more towards entertainment (and away from gaming mechanics). There was a definite sense that the industry needs this technology to happen, which is never a good sign for any industry

Free to Play (FTP) or rather what to do about free to play was another big theme. This business model has crushed many studios and the FTP sessions had a whiff of desperation about them that was obvious from their strength in numbers and the type of questions studio heads were asking e.g. How do we make money from this? There were no solid answers but there appears to be 'a change in the air'. A large part of the audiences were made up of e-generation which accepted FTP as the norm, but who were now of the view that the debate was about paying people for their work, a very novel idea. This is important and may have a broader effect on the web and web services. Games was and is at the avant guard of 21st century purchasing models, the fact that there is a growing and strong argument that 'things, even software, should be paid for' is not insignificant.

The final theme which was of interest to the LYIT delegation was germane to the broader networked world. It centred around Gamegate and the ethics and morality of social media. Following a fairly repulsive and explosive social media based bullying campaign in which a number of female gamers and gaming journalists received multiple death threats, the industry decided to do something about it. Several sessions were dedicated to standing against on-line bullying and offering solutions to the problem. While anonymity remains, the problem will remain, but again it was interesting to see the most connected of connected social groups begin to deal with its (and the broader connected societies) problems in a mature and reflective manner. One refreshing aspect to all of this was the number of female attendees at the conference. At least a third of all delegates present were female.

10.10 *Meeting Leo Murphy, North West Regional College (NWRC)*

The recently appointed Principal and Chief Executive of NWRC in Derry, Leo Murphy visited the Institute on 2 October. The Institute is currently developing a relationship with NWRC

11. Miscellaneous

11.1 *Líonra Meeting*

A meeting of the Líonra Board was held in NUIG on Wednesday, 1 April 2015. At this meeting it was agreed that the company would be wound up this year following the completion of the TESLA Conference in Galway in June. Líonra was a company established by all higher education institutions in the BMW region back in 1999. It was a precursor to the current regional cluster that has been established.

11.2 *Tip O'Neill Diaspora Award*

The annual Tip O'Neill Diaspora Award was presented to Massachusetts Senate President Therese Murray by the President of Ireland Michael D Higgins at a dinner in the Inishowen Gateway Hotel on Friday, 12 September 2014.

11.3 *MSc Innovation Management Conferring*

The Conferring for the MSc (Innovation Management in the Public Service) took place in the Millennium Forum, Derry on July 8, 2014. Sixteen senior civil and public servants from both sides of the border were conferred with a joint Masters from HETAC/LYIT and the University of Ulster. The Institute was represented by the President, Registrar, Head of School of Business and Head of Department of Business Studies.

This programme was developed by Letterkenny Institute of Technology and the University of Ulster in collaboration with the Office of An Taoiseach and the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister who were integral to deciding on the content, structure and philosophy of the programme. The Masters programme focuses on managing innovation through encouraging innovating communities of practice with shared interests, joint activities, discussions and shared practice. The structure is designed to maximise the scope for work based learning and to develop executive networks for sharing insights from their collective Public Service experience. The 10th Cohort of the MSc programme began on January 14, 2014 with 16 participants. The programme is delivered in eight blocks in Letterkenny, Derry, Dublin and Belfast. To date the programme has supported the development of over 175 senior public service managers, north and south, in over 55 departments and agencies.

Graduation List

Name		Organisation
Alison	Chambers	Neighbourhood Renewal, Dept of Social Development
Mark	Deeney	Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue service
Ursula	Donnelly	Donegal County Enterprise Board
David	Duggan	Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht
Barbara	Elliott	Department of the Environment
Carol	Graham	Department of Justice
Richard	Irwin	Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister
Leanne	McCullough	Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister
Martin	McMenamin	Health Service Executive
James	O'Boyle	Property Registration Authority
Kathryn	Semple	NI Direct
Hengameh	Smyth	IT Assist
Morna	Sullivan	Business Support Division, DFP

Roger	Sweeney	Irish Water Safety
Jonathan	Tate	Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue service
Liam	McIntyre	Letterkenny Institute of Technology

11.4 *Intertrade Ireland*

On 8 September, a delegation from Intertrade Ireland including Peter Grant, Oonagh Monaghan and Niall O'Somachain met with the President and Head of Development, to brief them on the new Fusion Programme.

11.5 *Springboard*

LYIT was successful in the following programme submissions to this year's HEA funded Springboard initiative.

Name	Target Enrolment	Funding Approved
BSc Construction Contract Mgt	16	€60,976
BSc Virtual Design and Construction	20	€81,760
BSc Construction Informatics	20	€74,380
Cert in IT Support	50	€160,000
HD Financial Services Technology	10	€47,280
HD Computing	25	€111,250
MA Accounting	8	€51,440
MSc Marketing Practice	8	€57,040
Cert Wind Energy Technology	12	€78,000
MSc Computing Systems & Software Security	12	€68,400
PgD in Big Data Analytics	20	€104,000
Total	201	€894,526

11.6 *Meeting with Minister for Education & Skills, Jan O'Sullivan, TD*

The President in his role as Chair of IOTI led a delegation to meet Minister O'Sullivan on Tuesday, 30 September. The agenda for the meeting was as follows:

- Funding (recurrent, capital, tuition fee income, €25m 'borrowed' from the HEIs, HEA top-slices, borrowing framework)
- Need for modern employment contracts
- Timing of legislation with particular reference to appointment of new Governing Body members

It is clear from the subsequent budget that some small progress had been made regarding some of the funding issues.

11.7 *Ballyraine Training Centre*

Over the summer, via Life Long Learning, LYIT offered a 10-week Introduction to Digital Photography Programme to 15 Learners from Ballyraine Training Centre. The Programme was organised between Ballyraine TC supervisors, Sinead Lynagh and Mena Mc Cauley and Peter Dobson of LYIT's Development Office. The programme was delivered by Declan Mc Grath, part-time Lecturer in Digital Photography.

The Programme concluded on Friday, 5 September with an Award Ceremony when LYIT President Paul Hannigan presented Certificates of Achievement to all 15 Learners who were joined by their family and friends for the celebrations.

11.8 Frank Hewitt Retirement

The Chairman of the Governing Body and President attended this function in NISP, Belfast on 25 September. Frank Hewitt was a very powerful supporter of the NWRSP project and was instrumental in ensuring the project developed in both Letterkenny and Derry.

11.9 IUA Symposium: 21st Century Universities – Performance and Sustainability

The President in his capacity of Chair of IOTI attended a dinner in the Provost's House in Trinity College on Sunday, 28 September in advance of the IUA conference the following day. He also participated as a panel member in the discussion forum at the conference.

The focus of the conference was to look at the future funding of higher education in Ireland. It was attended by senior officials from both the Department of Education and Skills and the HEA. A copy of the programme for the day is included in appendix 3.

11.10 Meeting Jason Whooley, Chief Executive, Bio-Marine Ingredients Ireland (BII)

The President and Head of Development met with Jason Whooley former BIM, Chief Executive and newly appointed Chief Executive of BII. This will be a significant development for Killybegs and South West Donegal and BII is anxious that LYIT will be included from the beginning.

A further meeting with the Institute's Executive Board and Mr Whooley is planned for early November in Killybegs.

11.11 Derry City Chamber of Commerce Dinner

The President attended the above event on Friday, 17 October. The event was attended by the Deputy First Minister, Martin McGuinness, MLA and Mr Sean Sherlock, TD, Minister of State at Department of Foreign Affairs.

11.12 Radox Opening

The President and several other colleagues from LYIT visited Radox in Dungloe for the announcement of the creation of 500 jobs over the next five years. The Institute has already a number of graduates working with Radox and there are numerous opportunities for further engagement.

Members of LYIT management Paul Hannigan, Justin Walsh, Dr Gertie Taggart, Dr Joanne Gallagher, Dr Jim Morrison, Mr Billy Bennett and John Andy Bonar represented LYIT in a meeting with Radox Teoranta on Tuesday 10, February 2015.

In attendance for Radox were:

- Mark Campbell, Senior Manager
- Ciaran Richardson, Radox Teoranta R&D Manager
- Christina McFadden, Radox Teoranta Engineering Lead

- Andrew Sharp, Radox Teoranta Software Lead
- Pauline Bradley, Finance Manager
- Linda Magee, Global Human Resources Manager
- Ivan McConnell, Radox Group R&D Manager

Over the course of the morning long meeting, Radox presented their Dungloe 2020 Plan, we had a guided tour of the facility and a round table discussion took place on areas of potential collaboration including opportunities in Science, Engineering, Computing and Marketing, Sales and Administration.

On Thursday, 30 April, as a follow up to the special Executive Board Meeting held in Radox, Dungloe in mid-February, LYIT hosted a visit from a high level group from Radox consisting of Ciaran Richardson, R and D Manager, Christina McGroddy, Engineering Team Lead, Andrew Sharp, Software Team Lead and Ivan McConnell, Radox Group, R and D Manager.

Over the course of the morning long visit, the Radox team had a presentation on LYIT, a tour of the campus and met in bilateral meetings with LYIT key staff in Science, Engineering and Computing.

11.13 Allingham Arts Festival

The Allingham Festival (6th-9th Nov) is a Creative Arts & Literary Festival in the northwest of Ireland, Ballyshannon, Co. Donegal. The Festival is positioned to encourage innovation, networking and development of creative industries with the region.

'Creativity Across Borders' was this year's theme which incorporated a unique '[Inspiring Creativity](#), [Engaging Enterprise](#)' event followed by a stellar lineup including; [Neishaw Ali \(SpinVFX/'Game of Thrones'\)](#), [Theo Dorgan](#) (RTE), UPROAR Comics, author Donal Ryan, music from [Slow Place Like Home](#) & Ryan Vial, plus exhibitions and workshops by among others, the design students from LYIT and University of Ulster as well as local writers, artists & poets.

Paul Hannigan, President LYIT, chaired the keynote speakers forum which included NI minister Culture, Arts and Leisure Carál Ní Chuilín, Director of the Irish Arts Council, Orlaith McBride, CEO Local Enterprise Office Michael Tunney and Minister Joe McHugh (Minister of State at the Department of Arts, Heritage and Gaeltacht Affairs and the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources with Special Responsibility for Gaeltacht Affairs and Natural Resources). Michael Margey, Head of School of Business, was a speaker at the panel discussion for creative thinking within education and industry in the NW. The aim of this event was to stimulate discussion and debate around the possibilities of creative endeavours as an enterprise hub for the northwest.

LYIT Design students responded very positively to a recent invitation for submissions to "Poetry in Motion", a moving image competition open to 3rd level colleges as part of the Ballyshannon based Allingham Festival. A screening of the submissions took place on November 6th at the Abbey Centre, where one of our submissions received an award. Design staff and students participated in a number of workshops / events during the course of the Festival. This provided a wonderful opportunity to network with Design staff and students from other colleges and to gain valuable insight from international industry experts.

11.14 Irish Survey of Student Engagement Report

The launch of the Irish Survey of Student Engagement (ISSE) Report on results from the 2014 implementation of the ISSE will take place on Tuesday, 4 November in DIT.

11.15 Letterkenny Tidy Town Awards

LYIT received an award for 'Caring for the Environment' at the recent Tidy Town Awards. This accolade is a fitting recognition of the work of our Estates Office staff in ensuring the Institute is presented so well on an ongoing basis.

11.16 Letterkenny Chamber Ball

This year's Event in the Silver Tassie on Friday 14th November was particularly well supported with over 300 people in attendance.

North West Regional Science Park @ CoLab sponsored the Best Innovation category at this year's Business Awards.

The Shortlisted Companies were: Uppiddee, Sita and Laressa Feeney & Co. and President Paul Hannigan presented the award on behalf of NWRSP to the Category winner Laressa Feeney.

11.17 Donegal Film Office Launch

The President attended the official launch of the Donegal Film Office Website on Friday, 16 January 2015. The launch was performed by the actor Sean McGinley who spoke glowingly about Donegal as a film location and the facilities on offer here. Great credit is due to Aideen Doherty, Donegal County Council for her ongoing work on this project.

11.18 Colmcille Winter School (Gartan)

The President chaired the Saturday afternoon session at the Winter School where Mr Seamus Neely, Chief Executive of Donegal County council, presented on Local Government reform.

The Junior Minister for the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government, Paudie Coffey, TD also spoke at this session and closed the conference.

11.19 National Action Plan for Jobs and Regional Skills Fora

The Department of Jobs Enterprise and Innovation has decided that there will be regional jobs action plans developed by the end of July 2015. An initial meeting of stakeholders for the Border region was held in Cavan on Thursday, 12 March.

This was followed up by more focussed meetings in Sligo and Carrickmacross. The outcome from these meetings are currently being collated and will be presented at a further stakeholders meeting.

One outcome of the initial deliberations was the establishment of a Regional Skills Forum. These fora will be established in each of the regions and the Border region will be split in two with a North West and North East forum. The initial meeting of the North West forum was held in IT Sligo on Friday, 1 May.

11.20 National Teaching & Learning Forum

The work of the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education has entered the next stage of its work plan.

The Roadmap for Building Digital Capacity was launched in February 2015. The recommendations in the report support the view that progress in building digital capacity in Higher Education will only be fully realised by collaboration across the sector. The research funding call announced in April is strategically aligned to bolster ‘collaboration for national impact’. Two types of proposals will be directly funded: sector- wide projects focused in building digital literacy and digital engagement for students and teachers; and discipline specific pedagogies. The Forum launched the consultation for the establishment of a National Professional Development Framework for those who teach in Higher Education in March. Consultation will run until June 10th 2015.

Professor Sarah Moore (Forum Chair) and Dr Terry Mc Guire (Forum Director) visited LYIT on Monday, 11 May as part of the consultation process and meet with managers and lecturers. The session provided an opportunity for LYIT to contribute directly to the consultation on Professional Development Framework and to ask questions on the research funding call.

Forty-eight seminars are scheduled between November 2014 - June 2015. Each seminar focuses on a different aspect of the enhancement theme of Teaching for Transitions; in most cases the seminars are live streamed which supports remote participation

11.21 Business in the Community (BITC)

Over the last 5 years LYIT has evolved a very interesting, mutually beneficial relationship with BITC, supporting our engagement agenda with the Donegal Schools community.

BITC is an initiative of the Department of Education's Schools Completion programme targeting disadvantaged post primary schools and attempting to improve schools' completion rates.

Since 2010 LYIT has partnered under the BITC Programme with Carndonagh CS and Rosses CS and acted as the employer in the schools-employer relationship that underpins the programme concept. Annually approximately 20 pupils from both Carndonagh and Rosses participate in the 6-day programme which consists of visits to LYIT, work shadowing, interview preparation and interview practice and feedback sessions.

In addition, via BITC, LYIT has been able to provide support to the Senior Management Team in Carndonagh CS as they work to introduce a self-study, peer review type of whole school continuous improvement programme.

This year LYIT has partnered with BITC to offer a Coder Dojo workshop on Saturday, 16 May when Nigel McKelvey Lecturer in Computing will run a one-day workshop for 20 Teachers which will then allow them to roll out Coder Dojos in their own schools.

Finally, this year LYIT is working in partnership with BITC and Donegal ETB to support an Enterprise and Innovation Day in An Dánlann for 150, 16 year olds from 15 schools/centres across Donegal who will undertake a day long series of workshops in creativity, entrepreneurship and innovation.

11.22 Donegal Dyslexia Association

The annual awards ceremony for the above initiative was held on Monday, 27 April, in the Institute. A record number of students received awards this year and despite the constant fight for resources the association continued to go from strength to strength. LYIT has supported the initiative for the last 17 years.

11.23 Derry Chamber President's Lunch

On 20 May the President and Head of Development represented LYIT at the Derry City Chamber of Commerce President's lunch in Beech Hill Country House Hotel. A capacity crowd of over 300 guests attended the event, which was hosted by Chamber President, Gerry Kindlon from Seagate. Entrepreneur and Derry City native, Peter Casey, was the guest speaker.

The President and Head of Development were the only ROI representatives at the event, which was sponsored by the NWRSP Project.

11.24 Donegal Age Friendly Strategy

LYIT has been an active participant in the development of the above strategy. On Friday, 22 May the strategy was launched by Daniel O'Donnell on behalf of Donegal County Council. The Institute will continue to be involved in the implementation of the strategy.

11.25 Colaiste Colmcille Ballyshannon Prizegiving

The President was invited as guest of honour to this event on Friday, 15 May, where he addressed the school population.

APPENDIX 1

Strategic Plan 2014-17





lyit

Institiúid Teicneolaíochta

Leitir Ceanainn

Letterkenny Institute
of Technology

STRATEGIC PLAN

Our Commitment to the
North West Gateway Learning Region

2014-17



**Institiúid Teicneolaíochta
Leitir Ceanainn
Letterkenny Institute
of Technology**

Bóthar an Chalaigh, Leitir Ceanainn
Contae Dhún na nGall, Éire

Port Road, Letterkenny
County Donegal, Ireland

Telephone +353 74 918 6000
Fax +353 74 918 6005

www.lyit.ie

Contents

Foreword	4
Chairman's Statement	8
1. Introduction	10
2. Mission, Vision & Core Values	12
2.1 Mission Statement	
2.2 Vision Statement	
2.3 Core Values	
3. Strategic Domains & Objectives	16
a) Learning and Teaching	
b) Student Experience	
c) Research, Innovation, and Enterprise	
d) Collaboration and Regional Engagement	
e) Sustainability and Resource Utilisation	
4. Institutional Targets & Functional Area Plans	24
4.1 Mission-based Performance Compact	
4.2 Institute Benchmarking	
4.3 Functional Area Plans	
5. Plan Development	30
5.1 Strategic Planning Context	
5.2 Strategic Plan – Environmental Scan	
5.3 Consultation on Draft Documentation	
6. Bibliography	42





Foreword

The framing of this Strategic Plan has been particularly difficult given the turmoil that higher education has endured over the last six years. In setting out on the implementation of our previous plan from 2007-13, we were optimistic about what lay ahead. Our plan was based on the Government backed National Development Plan 2007-13 which was hugely optimistic. In 2007 LYIT had become a designated institute under the Higher Education Authority (HEA) and the Tourism College Killybegs had become our fourth academic school. Given the focus on cross border engagement we were also ambitious and excited about our emerging North West Gateway Alliance with the University of Ulster.

While the ambition remained and a great deal of good work was achieved over the lifespan of the previous plan, this was continuously overshadowed by the impact of funding cuts and staffing reductions, even though we continued to increase our student enrolment and expand our course offerings.

The advent of the National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030 (January 2011) brought a new set of parameters for the development of Irish Higher Education. A significant focus of the strategy was the development of a coherent framework of higher education that would facilitate system-wide collaboration. The suggestion of regional clusters and technological universities presumed a restructuring of the sector, while the emphasis on teaching and learning and the engagement agendas focused on new policy directions.

Throughout this time LYIT remained faithful to the main thrust of the previous plan. Through strong engagement from staff a new modularisation and semesterisation framework was implemented in 2007 and subsequently revised in 2012. The impact of this was to change significantly how programmes were offered at LYIT and to create more choice and flexibility for students.

From a capital development perspective we invested in the expansion of CoLab and the securing of funds for the development of the North West Regional Science Park, again on a cross border basis. Our Wind Energy Centre in Killybegs was launched in 2011 and our new science facilities were opened by An Taoiseach, Enda Kenny, TD in 2012.

There was also substantial change in the profile of our staff with many experienced staff retiring in 2012. The current staff have really put their shoulders to the wheel to continue to provide a positive service to our students.

HEA's Towards a Future Higher Education Landscape (February 2012) set core objectives for regional clusters of collaborating institutions together with the criteria for the re-designation of two or more merged Institutes of Technology as a Technological University.

The Connacht-Ulster Alliance (CUA) was signed in July 2012 to cover collaborative activity between LYIT, IT Sligo and GMIT; through this alliance LYIT is committed to delivering on jointly agreed strategic objectives that meet the needs of the Connacht-Ulster region.

HEA Report to the Minister (April 2013) detailed the strategic dialogue and performance funding model proposed for the higher education sector and recommended the establishment of five regional clusters. LYIT was included in what is now referred to as the West/North West Cluster with the other members of the CUA and NUI Galway.

In October 2013, LYIT submitted its first draft Mission-based Performance Compact to the HEA for the period 2014-16. Compacts underpin the move to performance funding and for LYIT the compact was completed at a time when the Institute was only beginning the work of framing Strategic Plan 2014-17.



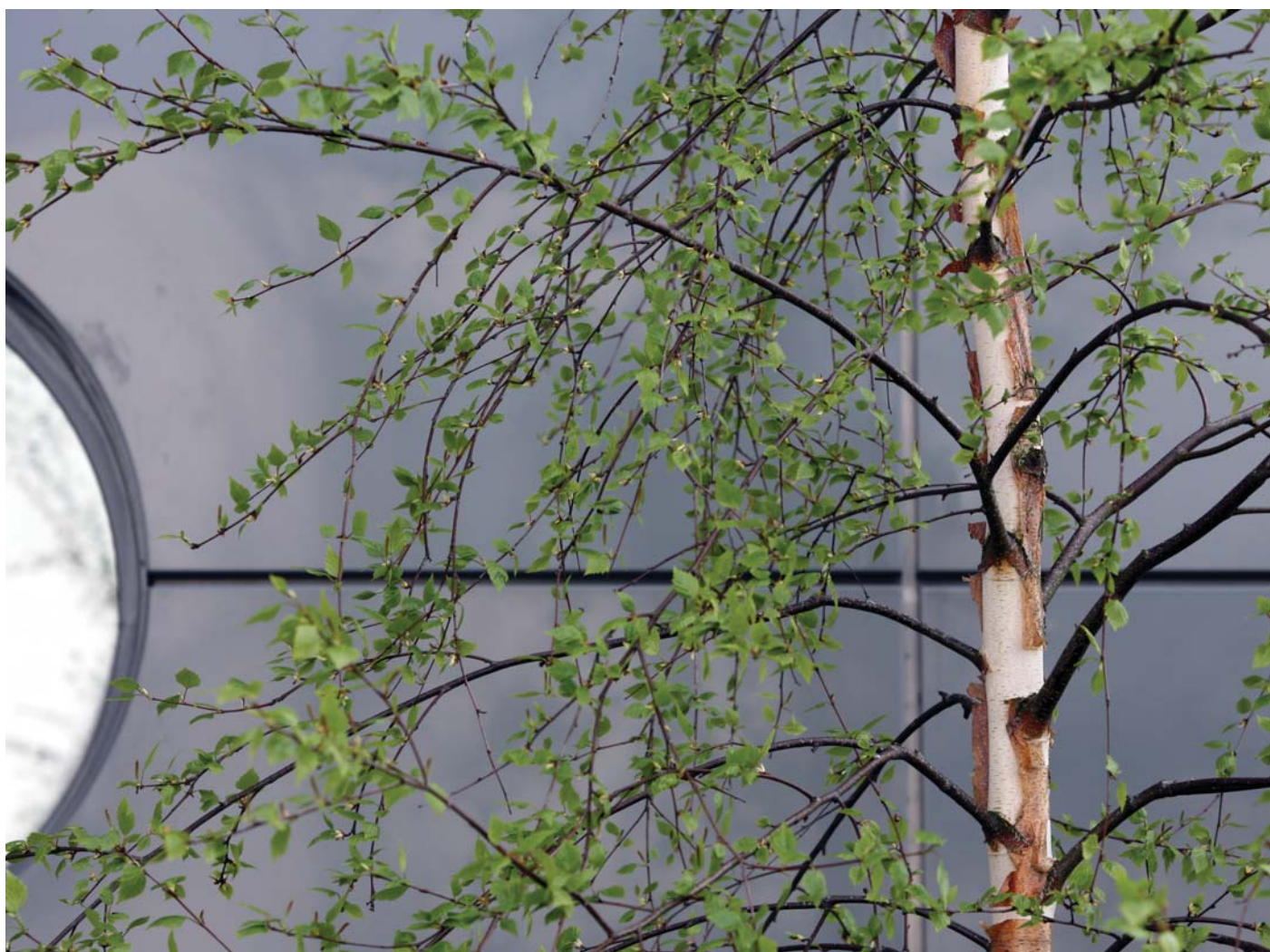
So in developing a plan for the next three years 2014-17 all of what has gone before and all of what lies ahead has been considered. The plan reflects the agreed performance compact with the HEA and therefore performance metrics have emerged naturally through the process.

Collaboration dominates the higher education landscape and the Connacht-Ulster Alliance (CUA), the West/North West Cluster and the proposed cross-border higher education cluster will all define the future of LYIT.

We must concentrate on what LYIT can deliver for this North West Gateway Learning Region, working with all relevant stakeholders whether on the island or elsewhere to ensure that the region we serve continues to prosper for the future.

Our commitment is laid out in these pages, we are optimistic about our future and we hope to build on the emerging green shoots in the recovery of the economy. We will continue to be at the vanguard of change and to ensure that all our actions result in a better result for our students, staff and relevant stakeholders. The turmoil of the past number of years is likely to continue but we need to be able to ride this wave and deliver on our ambitions.

Paul Hannigan
President





Chairman's Statement

A plan by its very nature is aspirational and expectant. A good plan needs a degree of inbuilt flexibility as well as a focused and united team to see it through to fruition. As Chairman of the Governing Body since October 2013, I am confident that our LYIT team can achieve the results aspired to under this plan.

Looking to the future the proposed Connacht-Ulster Alliance Expression of Interest for Re-designation as a Technological University, is a reflection of the greater positivity in the region following a period of severe austerity and gloom.

The Strategic Plan encompasses a spirit of collaboration and shared interest in achieving a sustainable economic, social and cultural environment which will train and retain graduate talent in the region.

Wishing all associated with this plan continued success and assuring you of the constant support of the Governing Body membership.

Fintan Moloney
Chairman





1. Introduction

Strategic Plan 2014-17, *Our Commitment to the North West Gateway Learning Region* is LYIT's third strategic plan. The two previous plans had five year timeframes; however, with the significant change currently underway in higher education in Ireland it was decided on this occasion to opt for a more focused implementation period. The timeframe is effectively three academic years and a significant impetus will be applied to deliver on this ambitious agenda.

Reference in the title to the North West Gateway reflects LYIT's continued commitment to cross-border collaboration and this nationally strategic region. Collaboration is a key focus of this plan with LYIT's participation in two regional clusters and ongoing involvement in the Connacht-Ulster Alliance. In addition, this plan also sees a renewed commitment to the further development of our Killybegs campus.

A consultation process was established with stakeholders to capture their input into the plans development. A significant body of relevant background documentation was made accessible to internal stakeholders including a review of activity during the timeframe of the previous strategic plan, an identification of matters likely to influence higher education policy over the lifetime of the new plan, and a detailed profile of our region. The final strategy was significantly revised to address detailed feedback obtained via meetings organised at departmental and function level across the Institute.

Strategic Plan 2014-17 includes a revised Mission Statement and a revised Vision Statement and the articulation of Core Values that replace previously detailed Institute Values.

High level objectives are grouped into five strategic domains: Learning and Teaching; Student Experience; Research, Innovation, and Enterprise; Collaboration and Regional Engagement; and Sustainability and Resource Utilisation.

Enhanced operational planning and implementation will be achieved through new functional area plans that break the objectives down into constituent actions, establish an appropriate sequencing of actions with attributed timelines, set out metrics for measuring achievement of objectives, identify responsible post-holders, and facilitate tracking of progress against each individual objective.





2. Mission, Vision & Core Values

2.1 Mission Statement

Letterkenny Institute of Technology will confirm its significant national profile for excellence in higher education through the pursuit of an ambitious development agenda informed by public policy, strong regional engagement, and a fundamental commitment to a student-centred ethos.

- **Nationally Significant**
- **Regionally Engaged**
- **Student Centred**

2.2 Vision Statement

To be widely recognised as a leading higher education institution for the quality of our graduates and our employment-focused education programmes.

To retain the excellent relationship that we enjoy with our student body and be an exemplar for student services and campus facilities.

To play a key role in driving the development of the North West region through research, innovation and enterprise initiatives and our well established partnerships with education and industry bodies.

To support the implementation of public policy and particularly the national higher education strategy, exploiting LYIT's particular strength and track record on cross-border engagement.



lyit

**Institiúid Teicneolaíochta
Leitir Ceanaínn**

**Letterkenny Institute
of Technology**



2.3 Core Values

- i) **Integrity** – We are accountable, honest, transparent, and responsible in all our activities.
- ii) **Inclusion** – We are welcoming, respectful, supportive, and student-centred.
- iii) **Ambition** – We are continuously challenging ourselves to deliver on the aspirations of our students, staff and external stakeholders.
- iv) **Excellence** – We are committed to a best practice approach that encompasses all Institute interests with an emphasis on learning and teaching, research, and the student experience.
- v) **Region** – We are focused on delivering for this nationally strategic region through engagement with development agencies, employers and the broader community.
- vi) **Collaboration** – We are determined to deliver on the potential of regional clusters and existing strategic alliances, and further develop partnerships to achieve the Institute's mission.



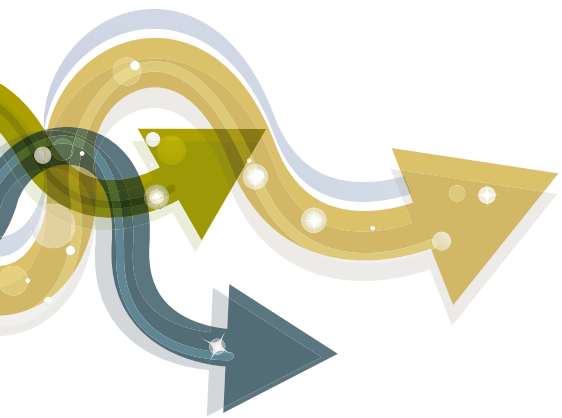


3. Strategic Domains & Objectives

A. Learning and Teaching

LYIT is committed to ensuring that students can fulfil their potential by empowering learners to take greater responsibility for their own learning on high quality coherent programmes of study that are closely aligned with the needs of employment.

- i) Develop our student-centred culture and further support students to fulfil their potential; important initiatives will include easing the transition into higher education, encouraging students to take greater responsibility for their own learning, and preparing students for a lifetime of learning.
- ii) Assist lecturing staff with their continuous professional development, including: developments in their particular discipline area, trends in teaching and learning, new technologies, and initiatives of the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning.
- iii) Foster excellence in curriculum design to ensure a portfolio of programmes of the highest quality reflecting existing strengths in the STEM area; the resulting portfolio will be aligned with national and regional policy objectives, best practice in teaching and learning, innovative assessment methodologies, QQI award standards, and student demand.
- iv) Enhance structures at an Institute level that will underpin students' career ambitions and offer pathways to employment in partnership with employers; initiatives will include integrated career supports, generic and transferable skill development, industry visits, service learning, and work experience.
- v) Implement procedures that recognise the increasingly many ways in which students may wish to access programmes of study, ensure greater parity in terms of access for part-time students to programmes and services, further develop RPL mechanisms, and ensure that the standard of award made is independent of the mode of study.
- vi) Build on our success as a national leader in widening participation by growing student numbers assisted via the Access Office (The Curve), enhance supports for these student groups, coordinate these activities with the academic schools, and further integrate Access processes within the Institute's quality assurance framework.



B. Student Experience

LYIT is determined to build on the excellent relationship that we enjoy with our student body by working collaboratively with students on all aspects of student services and campus facilities to contribute towards an improved student experience.

- i) Prioritise the student experience in all aspects of Institute activity by embedding a service ethos that is focused on excellence, informed by strong engagement with students and is underpinned by documented quality assurance procedures.
- ii) Ensure that all educational delivery spaces are state of the art, comprising flexibly resourced general teaching spaces together with sufficient additional specialist facilities, and complemented by access to up to date learning resources.
- iii) Review and enhance the Institute's virtual learning environment (VLE), this will involve an examination of opportunities presented via new technologies and consideration of best fit models for blended learning.
- iv) Enhance student-centred support services so that they are easy to access, integrated, and responsive; these services will be shaped by significant engagement with students to ensure services continue to meet the demand of a growing student population.
- v) Improve the campus experience for our increasingly diverse student body by ensuring the suitability of Institute facilities and access to attractive spaces for social interaction and recreation.
- vi) Develop supports for both incoming and outgoing international students, continue supports for lecturing exchanges, encourage language learning and cultural understanding, develop collaborative initiatives with both national and international partners, and deliver on revenue generating opportunities.

C. Research, Innovation, and Enterprise

LYIT is focused on building a suitable framework of research supports to sustain and grow existing research centres, leveraging collaboration with partner institutions; in addition the Institute will continue to offer a broad suite of services to local enterprise through CoLab and the NWRSP.

- i) Develop a revised Research Plan that will prioritise established research centres (particularly the WiSAR Gateway - an EI Technology Gateway Network research centre), encourage emerging research areas with evident potential, make provision for improved research leadership, embed research skills and exposure to research within undergraduate programmes, link with the research objectives of the individual Schools, and set out the supports to sustain research activity.
- ii) Engage with the Institute's schools, research staff and collaboratively with partner institutions to ensure that LYIT retains Research Approval from QQI at Level 9 and Level 10 of the NFQ and work to extend Research Approval and Research Accreditation to cover areas where the Institute has demonstrated strengths.
- iii) Enhance the research experience of research students by meeting the general principles governing researchers as set out in The European Charter for Researchers, the development of a new Research Student Handbook will be important in this regard.
- iv) Ensure that available Institute supports for enterprise and industry are easily accessible through a single point of contact and develop additional services through the North West Regional Science Park (NWRSP) and via the Institute's incubation, enterprise, research and development centre, CoLab.
- v) Establish at Institute level a North West Industry and Employment Forum (comprising representatives of employers, relevant policy-making bodies, development agencies, and national and international experts) and exploit its potential for the economic development of the region and the valuable underpinning it can provide for the Institute.



D. Collaboration and Regional Engagement

LYIT is dedicated to maximising the unique benefits arising from our inclusion in two regional clusters and through strong engagement with stakeholders play a key role in regional development and promoting the region's rich cultural heritage.

- i) Establish an effective Regional Cluster of HEIs in the West/North-West region leveraging our involvement and commitment to the Connacht-Ulster Alliance, and build on a history of cross-border collaboration through the establishment of the cross-border North West FE and HE Cluster.
- ii) Map regional learning pathways with partner FEIs and HEIs to provide clearly articulated progression opportunities for students with a focus on revitalising the ladder of progression, including the provision of new opportunities for students to access a broad range of high demand programmes.
- iii) Develop and implement a plan for active engagement with stakeholder groups to assist them in pursuit of their respective agendas including community groups, schools, public service employers, private industry, and development agencies; this engagement will address regional development and include a focus on promoting the region's heritage and particularly the Irish language.
- iv) Detail and execute a tailored student recruitment plan that builds on effective Institute communications, targeted marketing activity, strong school liaison, good quality programme literature, innovative social media presence, and a high quality website.
- v) Exploit the economies of scale of working collaboratively with a network of providers in relation to shared services and also progress resource intensive activities, such as, eLearning, postgraduate provision, research supports, and internationalisation endeavours.

E. Sustainability and Resource Utilisation

LYIT is committed to achieving greater coordination between its various policy and strategy bodies, improving Institute capacity for data capture and evidenced based decision making, and taking significant strides in strategy implementation.

- i) Review the operation of the Institute's key policy and strategy bodies (Academic Council, Executive Board and Executive Council) to provide for their ongoing efficient operation, implement identified good practice to ensure these bodies support each other and the Governing Body to achieve the Institute's mission.
- ii) Enhance operational planning and develop new functional area plans that will set out how the broad objectives detailed in this strategic plan will be addressed.
- iii) Ensure that through the implementation of the Human Resources Plan: LYIT continues to be an environment conducive to productive engagement, Institute staff are provided with the necessary supports to deliver on LYIT's mission, staffing levels are appropriate, and that provision is made for planned Institute growth.
- iv) Establish a risk based approach to assessing potential strategic projects with a particular focus on unintended mission drift, financial risk, and reputational risk; and further develop the existing planning framework through the Academic Council and Executive Board which will inform the revision of the Institute's portfolio of programmes.
- v) Engage in an open and transparent way with the HEA through the strategic dialogue process and the transition to performance funding, build Institute capacity in terms of data capture, identify appropriate key performance indicators, align targets for individual functional areas with the agreed compact, and measure performance against these targets.







4. Institutional Targets & Functional Area Plans

4.1 Mission-based Performance Compact

The first draft of LYIT's Mission-based Performance Compact with the HEA was submitted in early October 2013 when work was commencing on this strategic plan. The compact reflected Institute thinking at the time and the completed compact provided a framework for this strategic plan's development. A matching of strategic domains in this plan with the objective groupings in the Mission-based Performance Compact will be an important focus of the functional area plans.

LYIT Strategy 2014-17 Strategic Domains	Mission-based Performance Compact Elements
A. Learning and Teaching	1. Regional Clusters
B. Student Experience	2. Participation, equal access and lifelong learning
C. Research, Innovation and Enterprise	3. Excellent teaching and learning and quality of the student experience
D. Collaboration and Regional Engagement	4. High quality, internationally competitive research and innovation
E. Sustainability and Resource Utilisation	5. Enhanced engagement with enterprise and the community and embedded knowledge exchange
	6. Enhanced internationalisation
	7. Consolidation

A number of specific targets have been set out in the compact and these targets will now form an important part of the targets in the functional area plans. The key principle is that Strategic Plan 2014-17 encompasses all elements of Institute strategy including the Institute's Mission-based Performance Compact.

In addition, the criteria for a Technological University (TU) have also informed the targets to be achieved in the functional area plans.



4.2 Institute Benchmarking

The HEA has now published Institutional and Sectoral Profiles for both 2010/11 and 2011/12. These profiles are comprehensive in nature covering over 80 different data measures for each of the 7 Universities, 14 Institutes of Technology, and 6 other colleges. LYIT has commenced using this information to benchmark Institute performance and this data has also been used to establish realistic targets to be achieved through the implementation of this strategic plan.

This HEA data for each higher education institute is presented under ten headings: Student Numbers, Disciplinary Mix, Participation, Internationalisation, Teaching and Learning, Research, Knowledge Transfer, Staff, Financial Data, and Space. LYIT performs strongly in terms of participation criteria: students from County Donegal, students from our region, students from semi-skilled/unskilled families, mature students, and students with disabilities. Progression represents another strength for LYIT with levels of non-progression from year 1 to year 2 in most instances substantially lower than the average for the IoT sector. The Institute is also better than average for attracting higher percentages of students both from other EU countries and non-EU countries. Challenges for LYIT are in areas impacted by institutional scale, such as, total student numbers and expenditure per student.

U-Multirank is a multi-dimensional system for ranking of universities and colleges covering particular aspects of higher education: research, teaching and learning, international orientation, knowledge transfer and regional engagement. The U-Multirank project provides independent rankings of HEIs and is supported in its initial years by the European Union.

U-Multirank facilitates the comparison of more than 850 HEIs, 1,200 faculties and 5,000 study programmes from 70 countries. Data made available in March 2014 covered only four fields of study (Business Studies, Electrical Engineering, Mechanical Engineering and Physics) with LYIT being only one of four IoTs included from a list of 10 Irish HEIs.

It is evident that benchmarking of HEIs through the HEA profiles, the results from the Irish Survey of Student Engagement (ISSE) and the annual National Employer Survey will be an increasing feature of higher education planning in Ireland in the future and LYIT is determined to use all of this data to help focus Institute development over the lifetime of this strategic plan.



4.3 Functional Area Plans

Key companion documents for Strategic Plan 2014-17 are the following functional plans:

Learning and Teaching	Estates
Research	Technology
Quality	Service Development
Academic Schools	Innovation and External Engagement
Financial	Killybegs Campus
HR	Collaboration

The strategic plan commits to building Institute capacity in terms of data capture, identifying appropriate key performance indicators, and aligning targets for individual functional areas with the agreed compact. HEA's Guidelines for completion of mission-based performance compacts (July 2013) provides a very useful framework for monitoring achievement of individual objectives.

The compact provides an important resource in terms of monitoring and verifying the achievement of individual objectives, however, it does not assist in setting out the many component actions to be completed or identify an individual senior manager with responsibility. To bolster operational planning, additional columns on *Component Actions*, *Ownership*, *Progress*, and *Comments* have been included in the functional area plan template.

The template for each objective in the Mission-based Performance Compact requires the statement of the Institute objective, identification of a performance indicator, baseline data, and the selection of interim targets for the end of 2014 and 2015, and final targets for 2016.

In terms of LYIT's annual functional area plans, these elements of good practice from the performance compact have been adopted and revised.

That is:

- *Objectives* that LYIT has set to be achieved by the end of Strategic Plan 2014-17.
- *Performance indicators* by which achievement of the component actions associated with the objective can be monitored or assessed – these should be high-level or key performance indicators only, although they need not be quantitative. In some cases the indicators might relate to processes completed rather than metrics or values attained.
- *Baseline* for the performance indicator from which progress will be measured –this is the verified position from which the institution is starting the academic year.
- *Targets* that the institution has set in relation to each component action associated with the objective for the current academic year.

A template for monitoring achievement of objectives will be an integral part of each functional area plan. The monitoring template will break each strategic objective down in terms of component actions, ownership, performance indicators, baseline position, targets, progress (quarterly) and allow for additional comments.







5. Plan Development

A small Steering Group was established in September 2013 to help guide the Institute through the development of the successor to Strategic Plan 2007-13. The group was charged with identifying best practice in strategic planning, completing an appropriate environmental scan, coordinating internal and external consultations, drafting various elements of the emerging plan, and completing a final plan taking cognisance of feedback received.

A digital repository of important documents was made available to Institute staff at the end of January 2014. This repository included all relevant HEA publications, LYIT submissions to HETAC and the HEA for the period 2007-13, the strategic plans of all IOTs and Universities in the country, and a number of best practice guides for developing higher education strategic plans.

The consultation process commenced with a plenary session on 24 January 2014 involving three external speakers: Mr Tom Boland, Chief Executive of the Higher Education Authority (HEA); Professor Philip Nolan, President of the National University of Ireland, Maynooth; and Dr Mary Fleming, Head of the School of Education NUI Galway.





5.1 Strategic Planning Context

To coincide with this very successful Institute seminar the Steering Group released its first document Strategic Planning Context. This document was drafted to inform the development of Strategic Plan 2014-17 and contains a summary of LYIT activity from 2007-13, including an examination of the Institute's operating environment and an Institute profile for December 2013.

Brief summaries of initiatives addressed in this first document are presented below:

5.1.1 North West Gateway Strategic Alliance (NWGSA)

On 17 February 2008 the Minister for Education and Science, Mary Hanafin, TD, announced details of the allocation of funding under Cycle 2 of the Strategic Innovation Fund (SIF). Among the successful projects was the North West Gateway Strategic Alliance (NWGSA) proposal which was aimed at developing closer collaboration between LYIT and the University of Ulster. The proposal was costed at €1,786,000, with €893,000 coming from the Strategic Innovation Fund (SIF).

SIF aimed to stimulate innovation in higher education and research through collaboration between institutions. The North West Gateway Strategic Alliance project was a collaborative proposal with the University of Ulster.

In the proposal the argument was made that the proposed alliance was in line with government policy on both sides of the border and particularly the priority under All-Island Co-operation in the National Development Plan (NDP) 2007- 2013 for: A significant upgrading of higher education capacity in the North West and the border region through strategic alliances between the educational institutions, North and South.

It was also pointed out in the proposal that the National Spatial Strategy (NSS) 2002-2020 focuses on providing better balanced social, economic and physical development through nine gateways or engines of growth. Letterkenny with Derry is designated as a linked gateway and the only cross-border gateway, the North West Gateway. Specifically, under regional development, the NDP refers to strengthening innovation capacity at LYIT through collaboration with University of Ulster. The Regional Development Strategy for Northern Ireland 2025 Shaping Our Future (2001), highlights the importance of strengthening the role of Derry as the regional city and transport hub of the North West.

The aim of the project was to develop a blueprint for a significant upgrading of higher education capacity in the North West and border region through a strategic alliance between LYIT and the University of Ulster.



5.1.2 LYIT Institutional Review 2008

The context for the self-evaluation encompassed a strong LYIT focus on improved resource management, continued roll-out of Strategic Plan 2007-13, an examination of Institute activity over the previous five years, and in particular a review of the application of LYIT's award making powers under delegated authority from HETAC since 2004. In addition to the prescribed HETAC objectives, institutions had the option to include additional objectives as part of the review process and LYIT included The North West Gateway Strategic Alliance project.

The institutional review was submitted in December 2008 and the HETAC expert panel, chaired by Professor Tom Collins, visited the Institute from 19-21 January 2009. The panel commended the Institute in relation to a number of areas but significantly stated that they strongly commended the achievement of the Institute on the north south agenda and for the approach to north south cooperation through the North West Gateway Strategic Alliance. The panel also stated the initiative is particularly noteworthy, as the criteria and terms of reference set out for the Strategic Innovation Fund (SIF) did not provide for such a proposal.

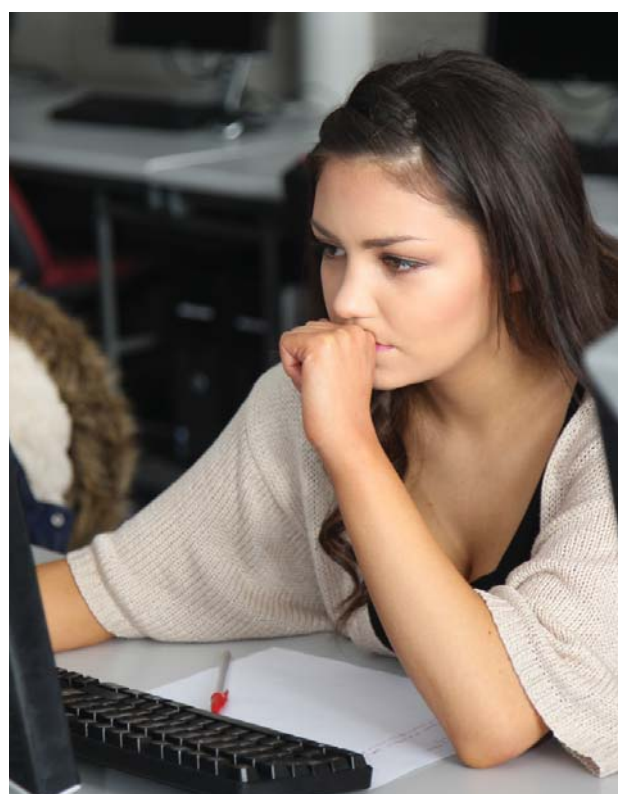
5.1.3 PRTL Submission 2009

An LYIT research submission, with significant support from the University of Ulster, was developed in 2009/10 to seek funding under Cycle 5 of the HEA administered Programme for Research in Third Level Institutions (PRTL). LYIT's PRTL submission was presented in two parts, an infrastructure project, the Science and Technology Research Facility (STRF) and a structured PhD proposal, the North West Research Doctoral Programme (NWRDP). The deliverables identified for these proposals included provision of a state of the art science research facility, development of a structured PhD programme, establishment of research teams, generation of strong research output, further development of the collaborative research effort to achieve critical mass, and to become a magnet for attracting high value employment to the region.

Funding of the NWRDP would have provided access to research expertise and world class facilities at the two University of Ulster centres of excellence and to programmes and structures for supporting PhD education at the University. This collaborative proposal brought together the top biomedical research

department in the UK (RAE 2008, Health Professions and Studies), the Biomedical Sciences Research Institute at University of Ulster's Coleraine campus, and the Centre for Applied Marine Biotechnology (CAMBio) at LYIT for three work packages. The fourth involved the University of Ulster's Magee (Derry) campus based Intelligent Systems Research Centre, an internationally recognised centre of excellence, and LYIT's Wireless Sensor Research group (WiSAR).

Both proposals were successful under Phase I of the PRTL assessment process; however, the proposals did not secure funding after the final phase (Phase II) despite the international panel recommending that the NWRDP project be funded. The international peer reviewers for the NWRDP proposal "were convinced that if the project is successful, the impact regionally would be enormous." The international peer reviewers for the STRF proposal noted "Given what is proposed here and the regional significance the peer reviewers believed that this should be considered at a senior Government level rather than through PRTL and regional support should also be sought."





5.1.4 Periodic Programme Evaluations 2012

Significant Institute activity was required in 2011/12 to complete the Periodic Programme Evaluation (PPE) process across all four of the Institutes Schools. Section 4 of the Institute's Quality Assurance Handbook provided the template for the development of the PPE documentation and the Academic Council was strongly engaged in the second part of the academic year, working with academic managers to ensure the documentation was in line with quality assurance processes and the Revised Framework for Modularisation and Semesterisation. The PPE process was completed following the visits of the four External Expert Groups to the Institute in May 2012:

- School of Tourism, 22 May 2012.
- School of Business, 23 May 2012.
- School of Science, 24 May 2012.
- School of Engineering, 31 May 2012.

5.1.5 Connacht-Ulster Alliance and the Regional Cluster

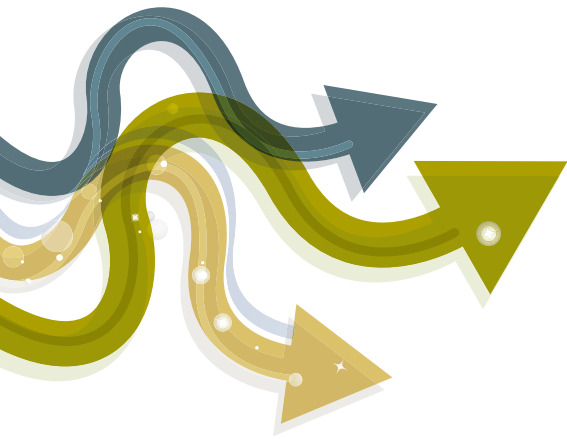
In the aftermath of the publication of the HE Strategy a structured engagement took place with all five IoTs that make up the Lónra network: LYIT, IT Sligo, GMIT, AIT and DKIT. Arising out of these discussions a Strategic Alliance Agreement was drafted to cover collaboration between the three IoTs in Connacht-Ulster (Alliance). Through this alliance the partners LYIT, IT Sligo and GMIT commit to deliver on jointly agreed strategic objectives to meet the higher education needs of the Connacht-Ulster region.

This alliance is to be characterised by:

- leadership of the social and economic development of the Connacht-Ulster region, through enhanced access and the provision of industry-relevant and professionally focused programmes of higher education
- vibrant working relationship with the business community, including employers in the Connacht-Ulster region, who will have a corporate role in providing direction and guidance on the education provision. The collective suite of programmes offered by the Alliance will be developed to meet the needs of employers, students and the wider community
- flexible teaching and learning platform that builds on its established reputation for cost effective and online delivery
- enhanced student access, transfer and progression pathways between and through the institutions in the Alliance
- externally acknowledged as a high profile higher education alliance in the European Higher Education arena in its provision of learning and teaching that is informed by applied research
- a higher education alliance delivering an internationally recognised and valued learning experience for students, leading to greater employment opportunities, as indicated by the demand for its programmes and graduates who are employable upon completion of their programmes of study
- through partnership, delivering its services more cost effectively and efficiently
- more direct and effective access by the business and the wider community to the full range of knowledge transfer, business support and incubation services.

The focus will be on areas such as:

- flexible learning delivery
- research and innovation
- bespoke delivery for industry
- links to local education and training boards
- international student recruitment and staff development.



5.1.6 North West Regional Science Park

In November 2012, it was announced that LYIT in association with Northern Ireland Science Park (NISIP), Belfast, would receive funding of €14 million for the North West Regional Science Park (NWRSP) project in the NSS joint gateway of Letterkenny/Derry. This is a very significant all-island Interreg/SEUPB award designed to build a 50,000 sq ft Science Park in Derry and extend LYIT's existing CoLab by an additional 20,000 sq ft. Project partners include the Northern Ireland Science Park (NISIP) Foundation Ltd, LYIT and the North West Region Cross Border Group (NWRCBG).

The NWRSP is a business support and technology transfer initiative to:

- Encourage and support young innovation led, high growth, knowledge based businesses and those seeking to expand;

- Provide an environment where larger and international business can develop specific and close inter-relations with the centres of knowledge creation in the North West for their mutual benefit;
- Have formal and operational links with centres of knowledge creation such as Ulster and LYIT as well as other higher education institutes and research organisations.

5.1.7 Institute Profile

In terms of the Institute's profile the document details:

- Full-time Student Numbers
- Part-time Enrolment
- Programme Portfolio
- Institute Finances and Staffing
- Research, Innovation and Enterprise Activity

5.2 Strategic Plan – Environmental Scan

The document Strategic Plan – Environmental Scan was made available to staff on 28 February 2014. The first part of the document summarised key policy documents including the National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030 (January 2011), HEA 's Towards a Future Higher Education Landscape (February 2012), HEA Report to the Minister (April 2013), Graduating to Success: A Higher Education Strategy for Northern Ireland (April 2012), Review of Apprenticeship Training In Ireland (December 2013). The summaries concentrated on elements that would give an insight into how higher education in Ireland would evolve in the medium and longer term, possible opportunities for LYIT over the period of the new strategy, and specifically opportunities in respect of cross-border collaboration.

The second part of the document includes a profile of our region and relevant national data is presented. This profile includes population by county, summary statistics for Donegal, population by age groups, education attainment, employment data, Leaving Certificate data for 2013, and distances between locations of HEIs. A number of maps convey population density, detail populations of large towns, examine population growth by county between the 2006 and 2011 censuses, and look at population movement out of Dublin between 2006 and 2011. The higher education institute attended by the 2013 Leaving Certificate cohort of Donegal students is also detailed. In terms of Northern Ireland, demographic data is presented by new Local Government District.





5.3 Consultation on Draft Documentation

The first outline of the new strategic plan was considered by each of the Academic Council's committees prior to the Academic Council meeting of 7 March 2014. Following feedback from the Council a revised outline of the plan was drafted for consideration by Institute staff.

Meetings were organised at school and functional level to capture the views of Institute staff. In order that all meetings considered similar matters the following five questions were posed.

- Question 1:** Outline your views on the future of the IoT sector and identify possible options for LYIT in the evolving landscape.
- Question 2:** Are the suggested revisions to the Institute's Mission statement an improvement? Identify other aspects that could be considered in rewriting the Mission.
- Question 3:** Are the suggested revisions to the Institute's Vision statement an improvement? Identify other aspects of the Institute that could be considered in rewriting the Vision.
- Question 4:** Review the Guiding Principles and suggest amendments that could improve these principles.
- Question 5:** In terms of the strategic domains and the 25 objectives listed, comment on the appropriateness of the domains and identify particular objectives that could be further strengthened.

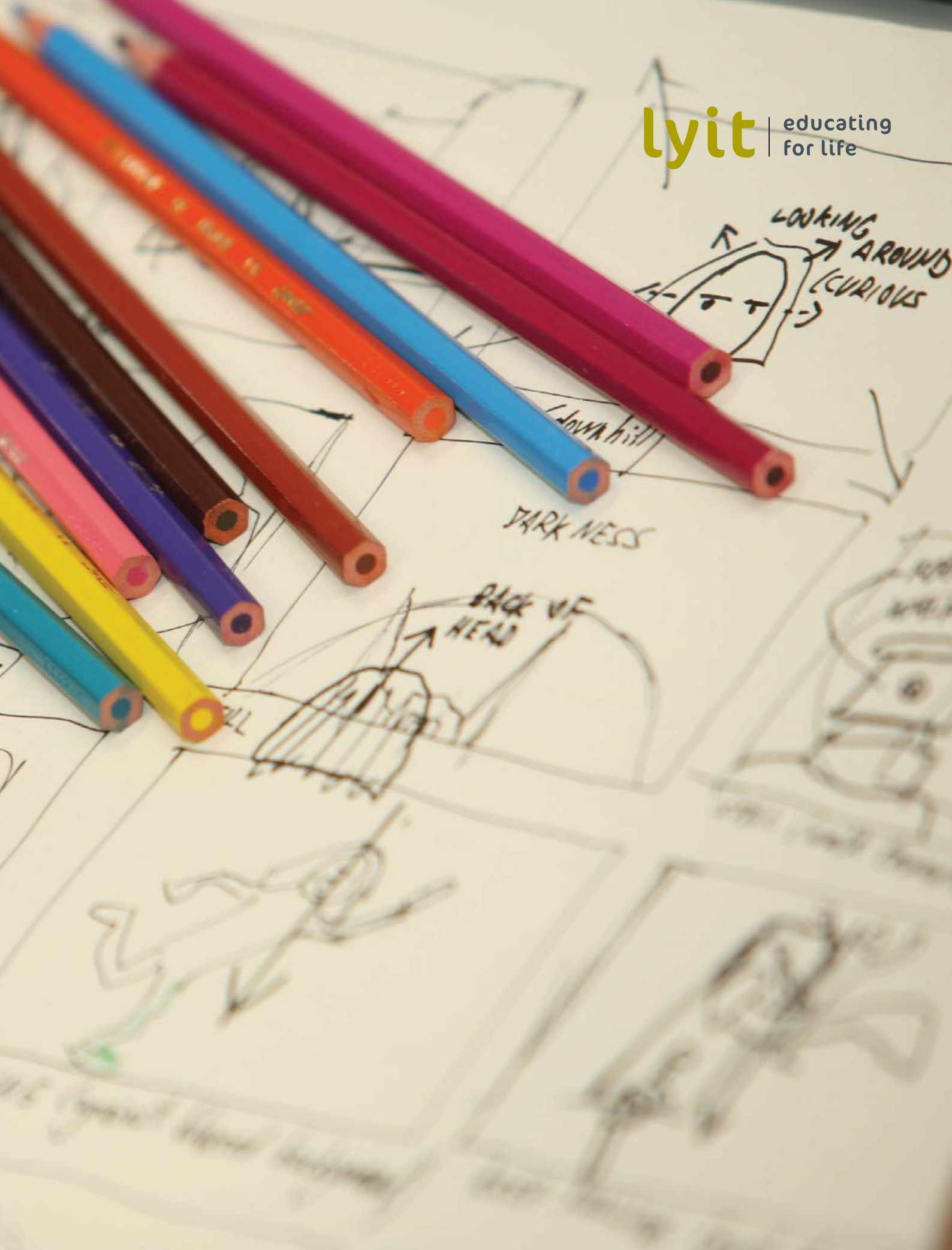
Eight meetings were held with more than 125 staff members in attendance in the run up to the Easter break. The evident commitment by staff in considering the documentation and actively engaging with the consultation process has generated an important resource for shaping Strategic Plan 2014-17.

This staff feedback helped in providing greater focus to both the Mission Statement and Vision Statement and the individual objectives. There was general agreement on the objective domains and in the most part on the focus of the individual objectives; however, a small number amendments were suggested. It was clear that staff did not feel that the proposed Guiding Principle fitted into the outline plan and these were replaced by the simpler Core Values in the revised document.

A summary of staff feedback to the five questions was compiled and circulated to the Academic Council committees on 29 May 2014 together with a further revision to the outline strategic plan.

A Special Meeting of the Academic Council was convened on 13 June 2014 to consider all aspects of the development of Strategic Plan 2014-17. The President committed to continue engagement with the incoming Academic Council with a view to tabling a final plan at the Governing Body in November. This continued interaction with the new Academic Council was facilitated through the Council's Planning Committee. The final plan was agreed at the Governing Body on 6 November 2014.







6. Bibliography

6. Bibliography

- 1) Department of Education and Skills (DoES) (2011) *National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030*
- 2) Department of Education and Skills (DoES) (2014) *General Scheme of Technological Universities Bill*
- 3) Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (2014) *Action Plan for Jobs 2014*
- 4) Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI) (2012) *A Study of Future Demand for Higher Education*
- 5) Forfás (2012) *Report of the Research Prioritisation Steering Group*
- 6) Grant Thornton (2014) *A Changing Landscape: Review of the Financial Health of the Irish Higher Education Sector*
- 7) Higher Education Authority (HEA) (2008) *National Plan for Equity of Access to Higher Education*
- 8) Higher Education Authority (HEA) (2013) *Report to the Minister for Education and Skills on System Reconfiguration, Inter-Institutional Collaboration and System Governance in Irish Higher Education*
- 9) Higher Education Authority (HEA) (2013) *Towards a Performance Evaluation Framework: Profiling Irish Higher Education*
- 10) Higher Education Authority (HEA) (2014) *Higher Education System Performance First Report 2014-2016 Volume I Report of The Higher Education Authority to the Minister for Education and Skills*
- 11) Higher Education Authority (HEA) (2014) *Higher Education System Performance First Report 2014-2016 Volume II Institutional and Sectoral Profiles 2011-12*
- 12) IBEC (2012) *National Survey of Employers Views of Irish Higher Education Outcomes*
- 13) NI Department for Employment and Learning (2012) *Graduating to Success: A Higher Education Strategy for Northern Ireland*
- 14) *Review of Apprenticeship Training In Ireland* (2013)
- 15) Solas (2014) *Further Education and Training Strategy 2014-2019*





APPENDIX 2

CUA

Expression of Interest



CONNACHT-ULSTER ALLIANCE

Comhghuaillíocht Chonnacht-Uladh



Expression of Interest

for

Re-designation as a Technological University

Léiriú Spéise in Athainmniú mar Ollscoil Theicneolaíochta

4th March, 2015

Table of Contents

1	Executive Summary	1
1	Executive Summary – as Gaeilge	2
2	Introduction	3
2.1	CUA Governance	3
2.2	Collaborations across the CUA	3
3.	The Connacht-Ulster Region	6
3.1	Profile of the Region	6
3.2	The Institutes of Technology in the West/North-West Region	7
4.	Rationale for a TU	9
4.1	The case for a TU in the West/North-West of Ireland	9
4.2	Scoping the vision and mission for a TU	10
5.	Proposed Profile of the TU for the West/North-West of Ireland	11
5.1	TU Profile	11
5.2	Teaching and Learning in the TU	11
5.3	Research, Development and Innovation in the TU	13
5.4	Leadership in Regional Collaboration and Engagement	14
5.5	Staff Deployment and Development	16
5.6	International Students and Collaboration	16
5.7	Planning & Governance	17
6	Towards a Technological University for the West/North-West	18
6.1	Achievements against the TU Criteria	18
6.2	Institute and Student Profile	18
6.3	Staff Profile	19
6.4	Teaching and Learning & Curriculum Development	20
6.5	Research and Innovation	20
6.6	International Profile	22
6.7	Leadership, Management & Governance	22
7.	Concluding Remarks	24
	Bibliography	25
	Appendix 1: Memorandum of Understanding establishing the Connacht-Ulster Alliance	30
	Appendix 2: CUA Guiding Principles Towards Achievement of Technological University (TU) Re-Designation	35
	Appendix 3: Examples of International Regionally focussed, multi campus universities	36
	Appendix 4: CUA Combined Profile 2012/13	39
	Appendix 5: Future CUA Profile	43
	Appendix 6: Definitions of the TU criteria	46
	Endnotes	50

1 Executive Summary

The Institutes of Technology of GMIT, LYIT and IT Sligo, having due regard to their history and achievements, hereby commit to coming together to be re-designated as the Technological University (TU) for the West/North-West of Ireland.

We recognise the leading role the three Institutes have played and continue to play in the social, cultural and economic activities of our regions and believe that in coming together we can bring about a “step change” across these activities in order to realise the full potential of the wider region encompassing almost one fifth of the land mass of the Republic of Ireland.

Our vision is that the TU will be a differentiated organisation, complementary to the existing traditional universities, serving diverse communities of learners and practitioners across a highly dispersed, mostly rural community via its multi-campus. The TU will be a leader in the communities it serves, the key producer of work ready graduates, a key partner and driver of research and innovation, a key attractor of investment to the region and a key partner in the retention of such investment. It will be a driver of change, the key national leader in blended education encompassing traditional methods of delivery coupled with state of the art online and distance learning, a provider of education to more mature learners, a nexus of continuous professional development and the National Centre for Life Long Learning.

Historically, the region had a lower level of higher education qualifications relative to the rest of the country. In recent decades, the three IOTs have had a transformative impact in raising the educational profile of the region. Re-designation as a TU will allow us to further

augment the region’s educational profile and maximise opportunities to attract and retain the best graduates.

Having a long track record of collaboration, the three Institutes appreciate the importance of shared trust among the partners in developing any initiative of this nature. It is also important that the stakeholders of each institution are clear about the benefits accruing to them through this engagement. With a clear focus on these two factors, the alliance has a solid foundation on which to build stronger and closer collaboration.

The Institutes are, and will continue to be active participants in the West/North-West Cluster with NUIG, a key objective of which is to ensure rational provision of Higher Education in the region.

While any new entity will face challenges, the important question is: ‘how can this initiative benefit the region and its people?’ The most recent Western Development Commission report December 2014^[1], predicts that while the population of the region will grow, it will have a smaller percentage share of the national population by 2030 and there will be a drop in the working age population. The challenge for the CUA and all its stakeholders is to create a virtuous cycle through higher education provision, graduate employment, industry and community engagement which can reverse these trends and enhance the development of the region.

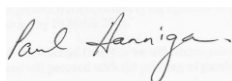
The submission of this Expression of Interest from the Connacht-Ulster Alliance is in compliance with Stage1 of the requirements for Technological University re-designation, as stated in *Process and Criteria for Designation as a Technological University*.



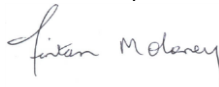
Michael Carmody
President, GMIT



Des Mahon
Chair, GMIT



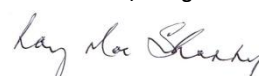
Paul Hannigan
President, LYIT



Fintan Moloney
Chair, LYIT



Vincent Cunnane
President, IT Sligo



Ray McSharry
Chair, IT Sligo

1 Achoimre Fheidhmeach

Leis seo gabhann Institiúid Teicneolaíochta na Gaillimhe-Maigh Eo, Institiúid Teicneolaíochta Leitir Ceanainn agus an Institiúid Teicneolaíochta, Sligeach orthu féin, agus meas cuí acu ar a gcuid staire agus éachtaí, teacht le chéile lena n-athainmniú mar Ollscoil Teicneolaíochta (OT) larthar/larthuaisceart na hÉireann.

Aithnímid an príomhról a bhí agus atá ag na trí Institiúid i ngníomhaíochtaí sóisialta, cultúrtha agus eacnamaíochta ár gcuid réigiún agus creidimid, ach teacht le chéile, gur féidir linn mórathrú a chur ar bun sna gníomhaíochtaí sin d'fhonn cumas iomlán an réigiúin níos leithne a chomhlíonadh, réigiún a chuimsíonn beagnach an cúigiú cuid de thalamh Phoblacht na hÉireann.

Is é ár bhfís gur eagraíocht dhifreáilte a bheidh san OT, ag comhlánú na n-ollscoileanna traidisiúnta atá ann cheana féin agus ag freastal, trína campais éagsúla, ar phobail ilchineálacha foghlaimeoirí agus cleachtóirí ar fud pobal atá thar a bheith scaipthe agus ar pobal tuaithe é den chuid is mó. Ceannródaí sa phobal ar a bhfreastalaíonn sí a bheidh san OT, beidh sí ar an bpríomhtháirgeoir céimithe atá réidh chun na hoibre, príomh-chomhpháirtí ó thaobh taighde agus nuálaíochta de a bheidh inti agus beidh sí taobh thiar de chuid mhór den dul chun cinn sna réimsí sin, beidh sí ina príomheagraíocht ó thaobh infheistíocht a mhealladh chun an réigiúin agus beidh sí ina príomh-chomhpháirtí ó thaobh infheistíocht den sórt sin a choinneáil. Tionscnóir athruithe a bheidh inti, an príomhcheannaire náisiúnta in oideachas cumaiscthe a chuimseoidh modhanna traidisiúnta seachadta chomh maith le foghlaim ar líne agus cianfhoghlaim den chéad scoth, soláthraí oideachais d'fhoghlaimeoirí níos aibí, lárionad forbartha gairmiúla leanúnaí agus an Lárionad Náisiúnta d'Fhoghlaim ar feadh an tSaoil.

San am a caitheadh, bhí leibhéal na gcáilíochtaí ardoideachais níos lú sa réigiún seo ná mar a bhí sa chuid eile den tír. Le roinnt deicheada de bhlianta anuas, bhí tionchar claochlaitheach ag na trí Institiúid Teicneolaíochta i dtaca le hainm an

réigiúin a chur in airde ó thaobh oideachais de. Ach bheith athainmnithe mar OT, cuirfear ar ár gcumas cur a thuilleadh le próifíl oideachais an réigiúin agus cuirfear an méid is mó deiseanna agus is féidir ar fáil chun na céimithe is fearr a mhealladh agus a choinneáil.

Tá na trí Institiúid ag comhoibriú lena chéile le fada an lá agus tuigeann siad an tábhacht a bhaineann le muinín a bheith ag na comhpháirtithe as a chéile agus tionscnamh ar bith den chineál seo á fhorbairt. Tá sé tábhachtach freisin go mbeidh páirtithe leasmhara gach ceann de na hInstitiúidí soiléir maidir leis an tairbhe a bhainfidh siad as an tionscnamh seo. Agus iad ag díriú go soiléir ar an dá chúinse sin, beidh dúshraith dhaingean faoin gcomhghuaillíocht ar a dtógtar comhoibriú níos láidre agus níos dlúithe.

Tá agus beidh na hInstitiúidí ag glacadh páirt i gcnuasach an lathair/an larthuaiscirt le hOllscoil na hÉireann, Gaillimh. Ceann de phríomhchuspóirí an chnuasaigh seo ná soláthar réasúnach Ardoideachais a chinntiú sa réigiún.

Cé go mbeidh dúshlán roimh aonán nua ar bith, is é an cheist thábhachtach: 'Cén chaoi a rachaidh an tionscnamh seo chun tairbhe an réigiúin agus na ndaoine atá ina gcónaí ann?' S tuarascáil is déanaí ó Choimisiún Forbartha an lathair (Nollaig 2014)^[1], déantar tuar, cé go mbeidh fás ar dhaonra an réigiúin, go mbeidh sciar céatadánach níos lú den daonra náisiúnta aige faoin mbliain 2030 agus go mbeidh titim ar líon na ndaoine atá in aois oibre. Is é an dúshlán do Chomhghuaillíocht Chonnacht-Uladh agus dá páirtithe leasmhara ar fad ná fáinne óir a chruthú trí sholáthar ardoideachais, fostaíocht do chéimithe, tionsclaíocht agus rannpháirtíocht an phobail, rudaí a bheidh in ann na treochoí sin a aisiompú agus cur le forbairt an réigiúin.

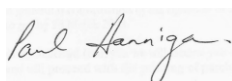
Tá an Léiriú Spéise seo ó Chomhghuaillíocht Chonnacht-Uladh ag cloí le Céim 1 de na riachtanais le haghaidh athainmniú mar Ollscoil Teicneolaíochta, mar atá ráite sna Próis agus Critéir d'Ainmniú mar Ollscoil Teicneolaíochta.



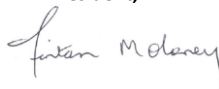
Michael Carmody
President, GMIT



Des Mahon
Chair, GMIT



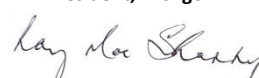
Paul Hannigan
President, LYIT



Fintan Moloney
Chair, LYIT



Vincent Cunnane
President, IT Sligo



Ray McSharry
Chair, IT Sligo

2 Introduction

The evolution of the higher education (HE) sector in Ireland has been pivotal in enabling the country's rapid social and economic development over the past 40 years^[2, 3, 4, 5]. Underpinning this achievement was the creation of Regional Technical Colleges (RTCs) in the 1970s, their subsequent autonomy in 1993 and re-designation as Institutes of Technology (IoTs) in 1997. Since then, increased academic autonomy has led to dramatic developments in the scale of the IoTs, the profile of the student body, the range and level of programmes, and the extent of engagement with regional enterprises and the community through bespoke programmes, student work placements, RDI activities, and in facilitating greater access to higher education. Continued evolution and development of the sector will be vital for Ireland's future success^[6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11]

The National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030^[12] signals the Government's intention to develop a coherent and sustainable HE system to meet economic and social needs of the country, as part of its broad ambition to create an export-driven knowledge economy^[13]. The document also offers the possibility for IoTs to achieve re-designation as Technological Universities (TU).

In 2012, the HEA developed a set of criteria for the process of re-designation as a Technological University^[14]. Also in 2012, GMIT, LYIT and IT Sligo started working together (as the Connacht-Ulster Alliance – CUA), with the ambition of achieving the criteria for re-designation as a TU. The CUA partners have made a substantial contribution to raising the educational profile of the region and to attracting innovative enterprises into the region, and have demonstrated their capability to evolve over the last 40 years to meet regional needs. The CUA is committed to continuous change to meet the future needs of the region. The ambition to become a TU will focus and deepen its regional embeddedness and its level of engagement with enterprises.

2.1 CUA Governance

The three Institutes of Technology established the CUA in July 2012, through the signing of a formal MoU (see Appendix 1). This was approved by each Governing Body with the support of each Academic Council. A set of 'Guiding Principles' has been agreed between the three Presidents that provides a framework for engagement (see Appendix 2). More recently, as part of the Mission Based Performance Compact, the three institutions formally stated the common strategic objective^{a1} of pursuing a trajectory that achieves re-designation as a Technological University.

Governance and management structures established to date include a **Steering Committee** (Chairman –Martin Cronin, Chairman, InterTradeIreland and past CEO of Forfás, and past IDA Director of Operations - , 3 Presidents, 3 Registrars and 3 Senior Executive members) and an **Operational Group** (3 Registrars and 3 Senior Executive members), supported by a **Project Management team**.

2.2 Collaborations across the CUA

The steering committee has been meeting monthly since 2012. Operational Plans have been developed to map and achieve the TU criteria and other strategic collaborative objectives. These plans have been reviewed and updated annually. The operational objectives focus on building relationships and establishing a process for working on collaborative projects. Projects substantially completed and implemented across the CUA over the last 2 years are outlined in Table 1.

A meeting with public representatives from the region was held in September 2012, to create awareness and to garner support for a TU. This was strongly endorsed by representatives from across all political parties^b. Further stakeholder meetings are planned during Stage 2 of the TU application process.

¹ See endnotes on the last 2 pages of the document

Project	Objective
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mapping of programmes and progression across the CUA 	To understand the profile of CUA programmes on offer (now incorporated into the work of the West/North-West Cluster)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) project 	Provision of online tools to make RPL portfolio submissions and assessments easier. In addition, a CUA Level 9 staff training module was developed and accredited. (see: www.myexperience.ie)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A CUA Institutional Research Repository 	To increase dissemination of CUA research outputs (see http://cual.openrepository.com/cual)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A system of reciprocal book borrowing for students of the CUA 	To improve access to CUA library facilities for existing students
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students Union Project: 'Fit in Body, Fit in Mind' 	To provide information and support to students and 2 nd level pupils on the significant social issue of mental health. This was a promotion by the three Student Unions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Online academic quality assurance 	Implement common online student feedback forms
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scoping of a cross-CUA online exams management system 	To provide a more efficient and secure system of managing exam paper generation, approval and circulation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Joint staff CPD training initiatives 	To share the resources of staff training on an on-going basis
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A CUA Data Sharing Protocol 	To ensure good governance of inter-institutional exchange of data
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A CUA virtual Careers Fair between the three Careers Offices 	To share Career Services resources and enhance the information available to students about potential employers. see http://cuacareersfair.prospects.ac.uk/fairs/2014/splash.html
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make joint submissions to the National Forum for Teaching and Learning 	To work collaboratively and to enhance the likelihood of success in areas such as the development of a MOOC to improve the transition from 2nd to 3rd level education
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make a joint submission for a Postgraduate Programme in Professional Practice to HEA 	Using blended learning to train employees in business skills such as: working effectively in modern organisations; sustainability in business; products and services; and driving innovation

Table 1: CUA Collaborative projects

This document is the formal submission of an Expression of Interest from the Connacht-Ulster Alliance in compliance with Stage1 of the requirements for Technological University re-designation, as stated in *Process and Criteria for Designation as a Technological University* published by the HEA. This submission document was endorsed by the staff of the three institutions through consultation with Governing Body, Academic Council and Executive Board of each of the institutions.

Section 3 provides an overview profile of the region. Section 4 makes the case for the creation of a technological university in the Connacht-Ulster region that will have a mission to support regional enterprise and community development and to enhance the student experience through collaborative initiatives with regional employers at a scale

and depth that is not possible through individual institutional efforts.

The scale of the institutions and the potential to create an exciting new entity harnessing the combined expertise and strengths of the three institutions can be seen from the *Connacht-Ulster Alliance at a Glance*, in Figure 1. This is discussed in detail in Section 5.

The current status of the three IoTs in the West/North-West region is evaluated against the TU Criteria in Section 6. The more substantive and detailed plan to achieve re-designation as a Technological University will be the subject of a Stage 2 submission.

Within this document, mention of the Technological University (TU) in the West/North-West means a TU for the Connacht-Ulster Region.

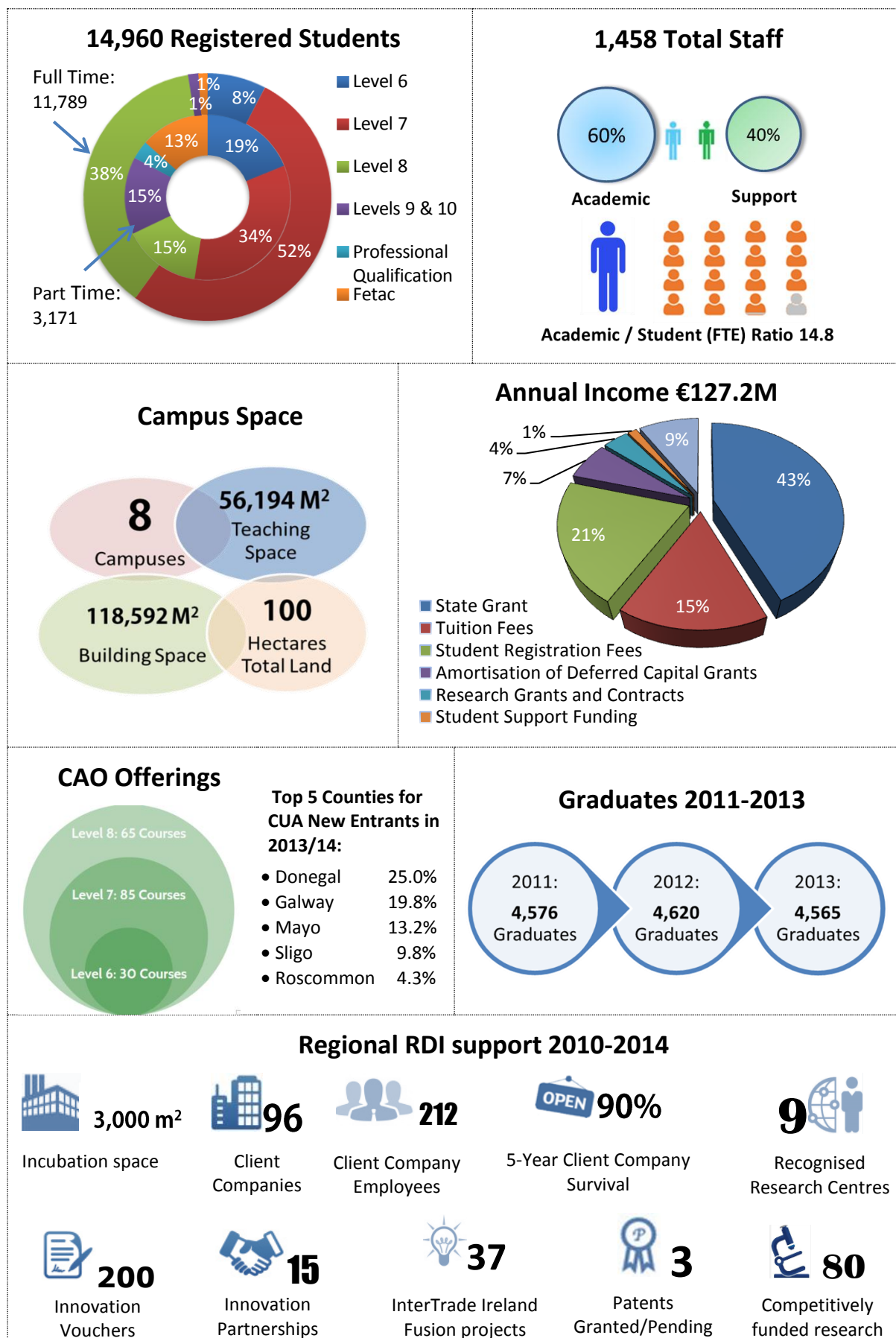


Figure 1: The Connacht-Ulster Alliance at a Glance

3. The Connacht-Ulster Region

3.1 Profile of the Region

The counties of the Connacht-Ulster (CU) region are: Donegal, Monaghan, Cavan, Sligo, Leitrim, Mayo, Roscommon and Galway. It aligns with the Northern and Western Regional Assembly^c. The region has 37% of the land-mass, 21% of the population, and 20% of the workforce of country and 31%, 15% and 14% respectively for the whole island, Figure 2. It is a rural area with a low population density (25-30/km²); Galway city is the largest urban area.

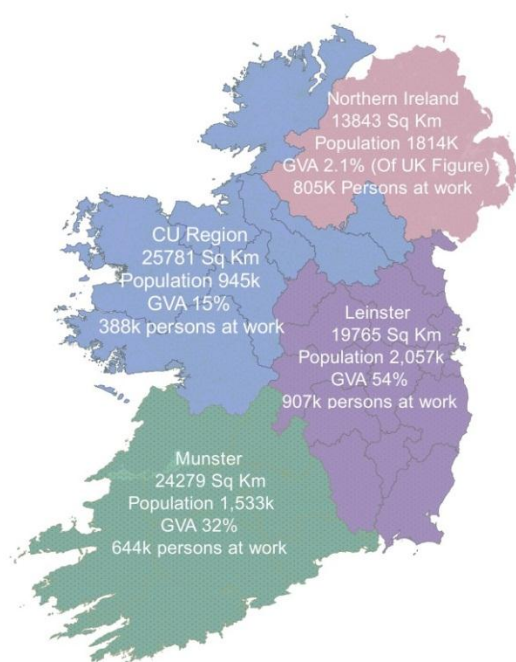


Figure 2: Demographics and economic profile of the regions of Ireland^d. Source: CSO 2011: <http://www.cso.ie/en/statistics/>

Compared with other regions, The CU region has a lower Deprivation Index Score^e, with fewer people in employment or holding higher education qualifications, (Figure 3). A higher proportion of its labour force is engaged in sectors such as Manufacturing, Tourism and Agriculture and a lower proportion in high value business services, ICT and other knowledge intensive services compared to other regions^[15].

The public sector employs some 25%, and knowledge intensive services (KIS)

approximately 10% of the regional population. All CU counties have a relatively high percentage working in agriculture and 90% of enterprises employ fewer than 10 people. While the region provides 28% of HE students, only 13% of graduates from the West, and only 4.1% of graduates of all Irish HEIs are employed in the region^[16]. As a peripheral region with fewer businesses, the transport, energy and telecommunications infrastructure do not compare favourably with more populated regions, providing a weak accessibility proposition for new business start-ups; there is a general outward migration of young people.

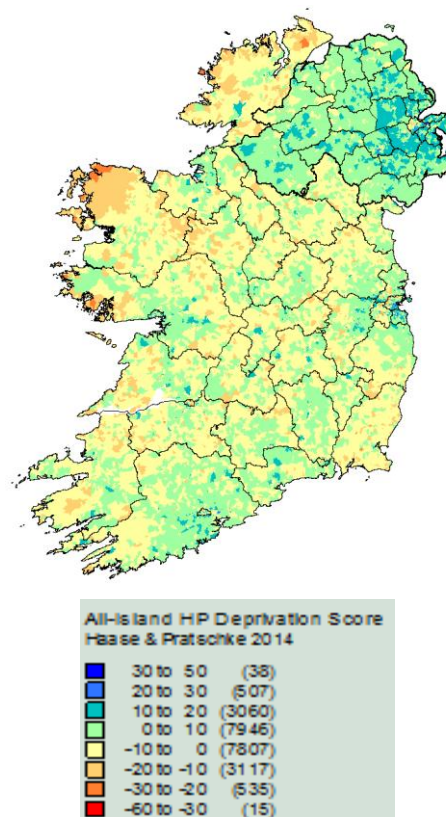


Figure 3: All Ireland Deprivation Index Score^{[17], [18]}

There are 31,668 active businesses in the region of which wholesale, retail, construction, accommodation, food service and professional, scientific and technical sectors account for 67% (Figure 4)^[19, 20, 21, 22]. Most of the data on the region reported nationally is provided for the BMW region, which includes 5 counties in the province of Leinster. However, the findings for the BMW region are indicative of the performance for the CU region. For example, only 15.3% of all

national companies involved in knowledge intensive services are in the BMW region. There are particular strengths in the following sectors Medical Devices, Processed Chemical and Materials, Computer and Communication Hardware, BioPharmaceuticals, Software and Communication services and Diversified Manufacturing and Processing^[15, 22].

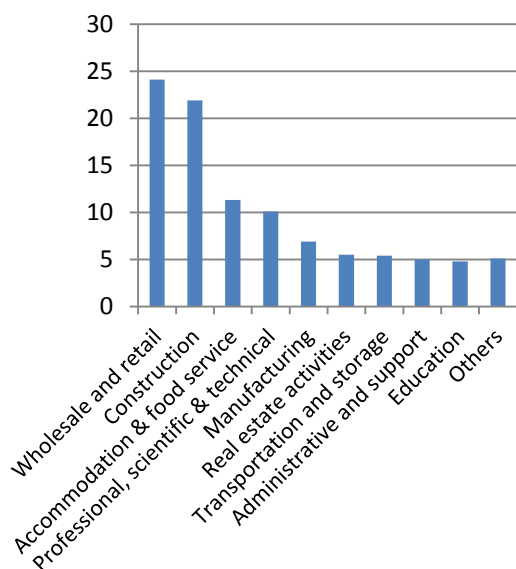


Figure 4: Regional enterprises as a % of the total number in the CU region, Source: CSO, 2011^[21].

The region is characterised by a high level of cultural, artistic and outdoor activities offering excellent quality of life for its inhabitants. Natural resources include, a long coastline, mountains, forests, rivers and an abundance of renewable natural energy resources - including wind, wave, biomass - and natural gas. Three of the country's seven Gaeltachtaí are located within the region. The importance of tourism in the region is evident by the high share of national income (at 22%) from the accommodation and food sector^[19, 23, 24]. Hotels and restaurants account for 7% of total regional employment^[23, 24]. Some 36% of all holiday makers to Ireland in 2013 were visitors to the region, bringing in revenue of over €550M^[23]. The recent development of the *Wild Atlantic Way* and the *Greenway* is making a positive impact on the volume and duration of the annual tourism trade in the region. There is yet considerable potential to grow the region's outdoor recreational business^[25].

The report 'Harnessing Our Ocean Wealth' highlights RDI as being a key enabler in implementing the National Integrated Marine Plan^[26]. With the proper supports, there are opportunities for SME's in the region to grow or start new businesses in areas of marine and environmental research^[27].

It is estimated that there are 4,779 creative businesses in the region directly employing 11,000 people and have an annual turnover of €534M. These businesses contribute a GVA of €270M in the region. Based on the NACE Index, the creative industries in the West of Ireland host a total of 889 creative organisations in the region^[28].

There is an identified need for regional SMEs to develop good business relationships and linkages with KIS supplier. The region demonstrates lower levels of R&D employment and the regional business expenditure on R&D lags behind Europe's top performing regions. The low level of business innovation is attributed to lack of finance, a perception of poor research quality and relevant expertise, and slow responses from HE institutions. Another perceived barrier is the lack of funding for knowledge transfer and innovation support activities, such as incubation centres, limiting their capacity to sustain delivery of KIS services to business^[15].

3.2 The Institutes of Technology in the West/North-West Region

Overview

Over the last 44 years, the three IoTs of the CUA have made, and continue to make a very substantial contribution to the growth of the regional economy and to improving regional education levels. A summary profile of the three combined IoTs is provided in Figure 1. These IoTs offer an effective, dynamic and applied learning environment; helping students to discover their strengths and potential, developing their lifelong learning skills and preparing them for varied career opportunities. Programmes are designed with a focus on employability of graduates. The ladder system of progression provides a framework for students to enter and leave

the formal learning environment as suits their individual career paths.

Student profile

The range of Leaving Certificate points of incoming students to the CUA is typically broader than that of the universities. In 2014, 53% of students entering CUA institutions did not come directly from a Leaving Certificate class. New entrants are, in many cases, over 23 years of age (23% in 2013/14), and have experience of the workplace prior to coming to higher education. To meet the needs of this student cohort profile there is an emphasis on small class sizes and a relatively high level of student supports provided by lecturers, IT Services and library facilities, and by learning support staff.

For new entrants to third level in 2013/14, the national average in receipt of a state grant was 44%. In 2013/14, the CUA averaged 62% of students in receipt of grants^f. Many graduates of IoTs are 1st generation third level qualification holders^g.

Regional Engagement and Contribution

The Institutes play a central role in attracting and retaining Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) and supporting new start-up businesses. The Innovation Centres located at the heart of four of the campuses support regional entrepreneurs, nurture new start-ups and fledgling enterprises and assist established businesses to develop and expand. The three IoTs participated collaboratively in many Enterprise Partnerships and on the EI Technology Transfer Strengthening Initiative 2 and the Ignite West Programme. The Graduate Enterprise Programme and the New Frontiers Programme (with IT Sligo and LYIT jointly) commenced in 2012 and has, so far, brought 28 companies to the market, employing more than 25 people in the region. The HEA funded Lónra initiative^h has led to increased collaborative research, innovation and enterprise development.

The three IoTs have developed bespoke training specifically at the request of industry. Examples include, flexibly-delivered training of new recruits at Abbott Diagnostics - enabling the company to double their

workforce and capacity, specialist training programmes delivered for Coca Cola, Pramerica, Allstate, Sita, Masonite and Baxter which educated employees across the global business network. The CUA's engagement with training industry extends beyond the region using online and blended teaching methods. Tailored programmes have been developed for clients throughout the country and internationally. Some of these are delivered in collaboration with the National Institute for Biopharmaceutical Research and Training (NIBRT). Online-delivered programmes have also been developed for the medical devices sector and for organisations such as First Polymer and the Irish Prison Service. The CUA partners provided training to 1,495 learners under the Labour Force Activation and Springboard schemes in the period 2011-14.

In 2014/15, the three IoTs have also been engaging with NUIG through the West/North-West regional cluster. A number of specific objectives have been agreed through the Compacts with the HEA, around improving access and progression pathways and in relation to academic planning. It is envisaged that the collaboration between the CUA and NUIG will grow into a more long-term strategic regional alliance of HEIs with the development of a technological university.

In looking at the impact of a HEI on the economy, researchers have analysed how the inputs into the sector impacts on the economy as a whole; this is reported in terms of a multiplier effect^[29]. The multiplier scores of the income generated by LYIT, GMIT and IT Sligo are 4.25, 4.09, 3.96, respectively^[30]. Using this analysis, the impact of the combined 2013 income of the CUA, some €127M, was €520M in the region.

4. Rationale for a TU

To sustain themselves economically, regions need to be capable of generating and nurturing innovative people, businesses and organisations on a continuous basis. Innovation and entrepreneurship are identified as the drivers of our national economic ambition^[31, 32]. These are to be supported by entrepreneurial hubs that provide access to an educational system and by entrepreneurship networks to foster independent thinking, creativity and innovation^[31, 32, 33, 34]. Universities typically have the resources to provide the stream of knowledge, know-how, and human capital that fuels innovation, entrepreneurship, and regional synergy^[35, 36].

There are many studies profiling different types of universities^[37, 36, 38, 39, 5]. A growing body of literature promotes universities as providers of regional innovation and enterprise supportsⁱ. The EU policy framework encourages HEIs to increase their responsibility for technology-oriented regional development - particularly in regions with low economic performance - , and to provide the education necessary to grow regional competitiveness and social cohesion^[40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46].

The National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030 offers an opportunity to HEIs to develop a regionally-based TU^([12] , p105) defined as '*a higher education institution that operates at the highest academic level in an environment that is specifically focussed on technology and its application*'^([12], p103). The TU Bill^[47] refers specifically to a mission to exploit intellectual property and technology transfer, to support entrepreneurship, enterprise development and innovation, and to develop a skilled workforce, staff and student mobility and service to the community.

Analyses of future trends point to the key role of science and technology to spur innovation, transform industries, create new business models and create entire new sectors^j. A regional, entrepreneurial TU applies its knowledge, facilities and resources to identify technologies which can be applied

within the region and to develop expertise in their application^[48].

Such a TU will be a catalyst for the transformation of the regional economy through its programme design, graduate development, collaborative RDI, technology licencing and spinouts^[32, 33].

4.1 The case for a TU in the West/North-West of Ireland

The current concentration of industry on the east coast is not consistent with a long term economic, social and cultural regional balance. There is an opportunity now to create a game-changing framework whereby the region can grow its economic output, its enterprise and its employment levels to become an *advantaged region*^[49].

The West-North/West regional enterprises need to become more knowledge-driven with a greater focus on technical innovation^[50, 15]. Achieving this objective could be underpinned by creating a technological university in the region; a truly regionally focussed, entrepreneurial university with dynamic engagement in partnership with enterprises^[51] and support agencies, providing leadership and coordination as a catalyst for regional RDI^[52].

A second university in the region, focussed on enterprise and innovation, will have a positive impact on the attractiveness of the region as a location for new companies to innovate and grow^[40, 41, 45, 29]. Companies requiring highly skilled innovative workers typically locate close to a university, particularly one which has active links with industry^{k [29, 33, 46]}. This trend is likely to become more pronounced in the future. Student access to higher education is a function of the proximity to a HEI, particularly for those in the lower socio-economic category^{[53]l}. A university which offers a comprehensive range of programmes, across a geographically dispersed region, with strong career opportunities through links with regional enterprises will lead to greater employment, and moreover will optimise retention of graduates in the region.

To realise this vision and become a pivotal instrument for transformation of the region, at the fundamental and cross-sectoral level outlined here, the IoTs of the CUA need to evolve into a technological university.

4.2 Scoping the vision and mission for a TU

The TU in the CU region will create new knowledge through research and innovation, will create human capital through teaching, will transfer existing know-how to businesses, government agencies, and other organisations. It will apply knowledge to the creation and commercialisation of new products and processes and improve existing ones, will invest in knowledge-based infrastructure, and will provide leadership in addressing critical social problems. The TU will provide services and supports that address basic and advanced training and education needs, including lifelong learning up-skilling, and business oriented research and innovation.

This TU will bring together the disciplines of humanities, social sciences, and STEM in order to meet the needs of industry, the service sectors, including public services and professional services. Each of these disciplines makes a distinctive contribution to society and the economy in addressing the grand challenges that confront both Ireland and international society^[35].

There will be a two-way dynamic relationship between what the TU does and what happens in the regional economy. The TU will play a leadership role in formulating regional economic developmental strategies. The mission and objectives of the TU will be co-dependent with these strategies. The effectiveness of the TU over time will be measured in terms of increased employment within established enterprises, and an increased incidence, and higher rate of survival, of technology-based start-up companies, increased sales, and cost-savings.

The TU will address, head-on, issues of the geographical dispersal of the population by providing comprehensive access routes and delivery across the region. It will address the relatively high regional unemployment and

low HE qualification levels by providing a ladder of progression through the NFQ. New entrants and progressing students will be well supported in their learning both inside and outside the classroom to maximise retention and graduate career success. Graduates of the TU will be ready for careers in complex and challenging environments and will have the entrepreneurial skills and the confidence to engage in new start-up enterprises. Academic entrepreneurship will be encouraged as an integral part of the internal working environment.

The TU in the CU region will draw on many of the successful achievements of the three IoTs, and as a TU will take the opportunity to reconfigure itself and to consolidate and expand its engagement to make an even greater contribution to regional growth than has been achieved so far.

The proposed TU (Figure 5) will achieve regional, national and international standing as an entrepreneurial university. During Stage 2 of the re-designation process, the CUA will engage with, and learn from those more experienced in creating regionally-based, economic development-focussed multi-campus universities. International exemplars are provided in Appendix 3.

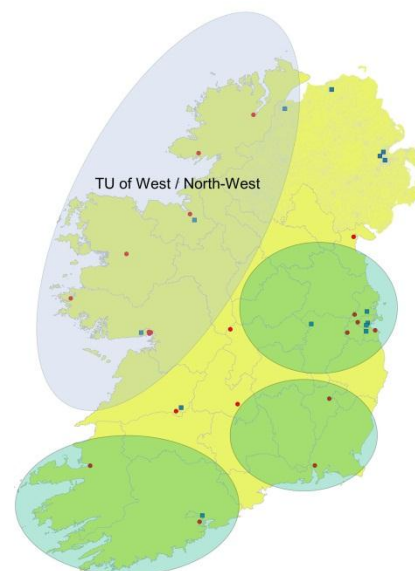


Figure 5: How the TU of the West/North-West fits into a possible future Irish Higher Education Landscape. ● = existing Institute of Technology campus; ■ = existing University campus.

5. Proposed Profile of the TU for the West/North-West of Ireland

5.1 TU Profile

The regionally-based, enterprise-building, multi-campus TU in the CU region will apply its expertise and knowledge in education, research and innovation to supporting enterprises in growing their businesses and in building the infrastructure, employment, qualifications profile and income generation potential of the region.

The TU will provide undergraduate level 6-8 progression routes as staged pathways for the continuous up-skilling of qualification levels. Apprenticeship and higher certificate qualifications will provide essential skills needed in the region and will enable access, transfer and progression for students to higher level awards. Level 8 programmes will be provided as *ab-initio* full-time and as flexibly delivered part time, facilitating progression routes for learners.

The TU will be a beacon for attracting talented students and entrepreneurs into the region. The additional functions of the TU will include an expansion of Levels 9-10 teaching, an improvement of capacity in both higher level occupational training and in applied research and innovation^m, increased networking with industry and community organisations, and an expanded portfolio of international activity.

The educational environment and the world of work will interact into and out of the teaching, learning, research and innovation processes. The TU will have a deep understanding of the RDI needs of the region, providing supports for industry, community and societal stakeholders to collaborate directly in designing and conducting RDI. The TU will apply technical and business outputs directly to create sustainable regional economic growth. The TU principle of engagement will be that of interdependence and dynamic interactivity with multiple stakeholders. The quality and depth of this engagement will be a defining characteristic of the TU.

In evolving from the existing IoT sector, the TU will lift capacity and performance and be more effective in regional development than the present IoTs. It will absorb and augment the successful strategies of the existing IoTs, building additional functions as needed and, in the process modernising its practices and structures to meet the needs of stakeholders.

The effectiveness of the services discussed in the following sections will ultimately be dependent on the depth and quality of the engagement by, and the relationships between the TU, employers and enterprises.

5.2 Teaching and Learning in the TU

The TU will provide leadership and support for innovative approaches to learning, teaching and assessment. An environment will be created across all campuses to effectively provide learning that is student-centred. Reflective learning practices will be engendered in students so that they become independent, critical and life-long learners. The educational learning outcomes will enable students to develop transferable skills and competencies through wider community and enterprise engagement. TU Programme outcomes will be professionally oriented, designed to prepare students for the workplace and to up-skill those already in employment or those seeking employment. Programmes will be developed in collaboration with employers and representative industry organisations.

TU graduates will be distinguished by their competence in the practical application of knowledge in the workplace, by continuous learning, and by their communication and enterprise development skills. Graduates will be educated as innovators and entrepreneurs, capable of working in complex roles. They will be versatile in meeting the changing professional and technological requirements of business and services in the region.

In collaboration with the West/North-West Cluster (see Section 5.4.1), the CUA is currently reviewing its portfolio of programme offerings to optimise regional provision. In fostering a 'community-of-

learners' model, graduates and regional employers will be consulted to provide a knowledge base for programme planning^[54]. Many CUA programmes are accredited by professional bodies. Input from these bodiesⁿ will be sought to develop programmes which meet both the business growth needs of the region and professional accreditation requirements.

The TU will engage with enterprises and the wider community in the region to develop bespoke and labour-market focussed modules and programmes. Short-cycle special purpose and minor programmes will meet specific knowledge needs of regional enterprises. The curricula of most TU programmes will include entrepreneurship^o. The TU will collaborate with 2nd level and further education (FE) schools to plan a holistic programme of entrepreneurial teaching and learning.

Mobility of staff and students (internship and placement) will be promoted to provide experiential learning and to promote knowledge transfer that unlocks the intellectual assets of the TU. Collaborative partnerships with regional and international employers will provide students with opportunities for work-based experiences as part of the learning process and for staff to maintain and develop their competence with current industrial practices.

Involving students in the wider life of the university and in out-of-class experiences is considered essential to achieving a comprehensive 3rd level learning experience. The TU will work with community groups in the region to provide opportunities for students to be active and engaged citizens by working on community projects. Building on the TEAM Network, Campus Engage and Gaisce programmes, the TU will foster the formal recognition of student volunteerism.

5.2.1 Access, Transfer and Progression

The TU will address the social gap in participation that still remains in Irish higher education^p. The TU will actively reach out to those who may not be considering HE due to perceived social or economic constraints. It

will provide basic and up-skilling programmes delivered in achievable learning modules^[55] to facilitate access by students/families new to higher education. Furthermore, in response to the financial challenges experienced by some students^[55], the TU will make available student financial support mechanisms.

In partnership with regional Educational Training Boards, FE providers and 2nd level schools, the TU will provide clear access and progression pathways in order to increase enrolments from the FE sector^q.

In the new TU, the lifelong learning portfolio will deliver continued up-skilling of the workforce in the context of regional employment demographics and business development needs^r.

The CUA is particularly well experienced in open and distance learning (ODL)/blended and online delivery facilitates, teaching and bespoke training when and where it is required^s^[56]. In many cases, learners could not up-skill without this level of flexible provision. The capability of the TU to deliver lifelong learning (LLL) across all levels will be particularly relevant. The TU will build on its experience to meet the needs of enterprises and communities in a region where the population is widely dispersed. This will be facilitated through access to the multiple campuses of the TU which will provide dispersed teaching facilities and learning supports.

The TU will strive to improve graduate retention within the region by providing a suite of graduate supports during the transition to the workplace.

5.2.2 Supports for up-skilling and widening participation

In recognition of the student profile in the region, the TU will provide appropriate supports for non-traditional entrants, such as mature learners and those with vocational rather than traditional academic qualifications, and for remote learners across the geographically dispersed region.

Evidence points to the value of identifying 'at risk' students early in the learning cycle^[55].

Pre-entry unpreparedness and inadequate learning supports on entry have been identified as reasons for students dropping out of HE. The TU will address the challenge of transition into 3rd level experienced by students. The TU will identify students struggling to meet the course requirements, and provide additional supports, particularly in the early years of courses.

LLL students vary in age, educational background, family circumstances and employment status. A wide range of supports are needed to facilitate their participation. The TU will have systems that facilitate access and exit at various levels, including recognition of prior learning. Flexible modes of delivery, part-time and distance education, along with flexible ways of combining work and study will be provided.

The TU will build on the existing range of supports for particular learning deficiencies, and provide resources to support students experiencing difficulties with, for example, mathematics and literacy. The TU will have a policy of ensuring access to HE by all those who meet its entry standards; access and disability services will ensure students are not restricted from entry due to disability and that they are supported during their learning as necessary.

TU learning spaces will be technology enabled and will include -state-of-the-art laboratories and equipment, and technical supports. Computer-based learning facilities will be provided with cross-campus and external access.

5.3 Research, Development and Innovation in the TU

Research and innovation within the TU will connect the three core strands of (a) teaching and learning, (b) collaborative research and (c) innovation and engagement^[57]. As noted in Sections 3 and 4, the research, development and innovation needs of the region are distinct from others, requiring innovative engagement models and enabling activities in a range of economic, social and cultural areas. Building on established discipline expertise, and focusing on

interdisciplinary regional challenges, the CUA colleges are already collaborating to engage with industry and society in a number of 'reach out' RDI initiatives, such as MetricIreland^t (Medical Devices), NIBRT^u (Bioprocessing), the North West Health Innovation Corridor (Health Care and Social Care), CREST^v (Environment) and WISAR (wireless sensor technology applied across various products and processes) - an EI funded Technology Gateway. Through these mechanisms, companies and societal groups are invited and encouraged to be directly involved in designing and conducting research, development and innovation at all levels. These initiatives have been proven to be highly successful in creating platforms and networks which add significant value to companies and societal groups, while also unlocking latent potential that could not otherwise be capitalised on because of the dispersed nature of the region's population and due to its economic profile. The TU will bring a high level of focus on the identification of economic and social RDI needs in the region, and will be a more effective driver of creativity and innovation into the future. The critical mass of expert and experienced staff, along with capital and equipment infrastructure will allow the TU to compete more effectively for global funding and to address EU and national objectives of Excellent Science, Industrial Leadership and meeting societal challenges.

In addition to the 'reach out' activities of the TU, the IoTs of the CUA have significant onsite campus incubation facilities and activities. In 2013 the combined colleges had some 100 such companies, with over 210 employees, 90% of whom are in operation five years after start-up. The role of the TU in acting as a key enabler at this critical juncture of economic and societal development will be enhanced significantly by extending the reach of the CUA institutions to the full region, and will foster a culture of enterprise and entrepreneurship throughout.

To enable the CUA to meet the TU criteria, and to establish the optimal TU for the region, the CUA institutions have, amongst other initiatives: initiated a programme of

staff development which focuses on research expertise and qualifications; established a number of Strategic Research Centres which will focus research activities in core areas; designed a joint Graduate Research Education programme; agreed to establish a joint RDI strategy; designed a Post-Graduate Programme in Professional Practice with regional industry partners; participated in a joint Technology Transfer Office. The TU will collaborate with other HEIs, employers and societal groups to maximise its contribution to regional economic, social and cultural development. The TU will identify domains for specialisation that will drive regional advancement^[40, 43]. The TU will act as a conduit for knowledge and technology transfer and for the adaptation of research and innovation activities for initiating and scaling up regional enterprises and for increasing competitiveness^[58]. TU central research supports will provide staff with the opportunity to improve and deepen the impact of their regional collaboration.

In HEIs, there is a tendency for teaching and research to prevail over industry linkages, and there are few incentives for staff to engage and limited processes to facilitate engagement^[15]. Research reward structures are typically based on scientific publications in refereed journals. In the new TU, there will be more evident recognition of research and innovation outputs such as inventions, patents, licenses, and for the provision of technical assistance and technology transfer.

5.4 Leadership in Regional Collaboration and Engagement

5.4.1 The West/North-West Cluster

Building on the good working relationships across the CU Alliance and with NUIG^[59], through participation in the West/North-West regional cluster, the proposed TU will be a valuable contributor in a network of regional HE providers. This regional leadership partnership of HEIs will encompass knowledge creation, technological innovation, know-how transfer, human capital creation and will lead to a convergence provision of a knowledge infrastructure platform that supports the

development and innovation capacity of enterprises and business.

As the existing university in the region, the considerable experience of NUIG in research and in international collaboration is acknowledged by the CUA. The enterprise and entrepreneurial focus of the new TU will complement that of the more traditional university. One of the strategic goals of NUIG is to work in partnership with other 3rd level institutions in the region to provide leadership^([60], p42) in developing an expanded regional innovation strategy. Together, through parallel and complementary collaboration, the new TU and NUIG can make a fundamental and lasting contribution towards the growth of the region and provide a comprehensive and effective range of teaching, research, innovation and enterprise development supports.

5.4.2 Enterprise and Innovation

The TU will be an innovation hotspot, providing a one-stop-shop suite of services. The research, development and innovation ecosystem provided by the TU will support entrepreneurial spin outs, start-ups and business development. It will include student and graduate-led projects and commercialisation of research and innovation^[33]. The TU will develop a regional network of volunteer mentors/coaches from the private sector and alumni of enterprise development programmes to provide support to new start-up companies^[31, 32]. The ultimate objective is that new and existing regional enterprises become sustainable and that they grow, employ graduates of the TU while attracting inward investment.

The TU will work closely with Enterprise Ireland to address the national imbalance in the provision of RDI supports to regional SMEs^[15]. There will be a particular focus on supporting SMEs to overcome difficulties in availing of RDI supports due to personnel and time constraints^{w [61, 58]}. The TU could potentially create a small business support unit, building on the work of the four existing innovation centres. This unit will provide a suite of interactive tools to support small businesses to access and absorb knowledge and to participate in RDI collaborations

where there is no in-house SME R&D. Academic staff and students of the TU will be involved in the design and development of these support tools.

The concept of the 'incubation laboratory' will be incorporated into a regional cluster of business parks/knowledge transfer centres^[40, 62], providing full scale prototyping and innovation supports in relevant technologies to start-ups and developing enterprises. The research and innovation centres of the TU will have a focus on specific technologies, in consultation with employer and regional agency stakeholder groups.

A region's knowledge-based infrastructure consists of the set of institutions and organisations and their synergies that support and increase the region's capacity for knowledge creation and dissemination, technological innovation, and entrepreneurship. The TU will work with regional agencies^x to establish a national Knowledge Transfer reference centre for entrepreneurs. The TU will participate in the EI review of the impact of the Campus Incubation Programme^[33]. The TU will engage with Údarás na Gaeltachta and will collaborate with NUIG to ensure participation in the proposed new Coastal Marine Innovation Hub^[26, 27]. The TU will work with regional agencies to enhance the skills and competencies of their staff working in the field of regional enterprise development.

5.4.3 Cross Border Engagement

The Connacht-Ulster region has an extensive border with Northern Ireland. Parts of Northern Ireland form a natural hinterland to the region. Experience gained in cross-border collaborations will be used to create stronger, economic, cross-border relationships^[63].

The TU will forge sustainable cross-border links through strengthening existing relationships and collaborations. It will expand the regional engagement of the CU region, comprising 8 counties of the Irish Republic, to include at least the 3 northern counties of Derry, Fermanagh and Tyrone.

LYIT has a strong track record of cross-border engagement. Most recently, the North West

Regional Science Park has been established as part of the North West Technology Business Zone partnership with UU (at Magee and Coleraine) and the North West Regional College in Derry and Strabane. This st£12M Interreg IV funded project will provide an additional 8,000 m² at 2 cross-border locations. The TU will look to developing this as the nucleus of a national science park.

The CU partners have substantial experience of joint cross-border programme provision, including an MSc in Innovation Management in the Public Service between LYIT and UU and the provision of training in the Carpentry and Joinery and Plumbing trades to southern Irish apprentices in Fermanagh College (now North-West College) through IT Sligo. The TU will work closely with the two universities in Ulster and with the Northern Ireland Further Education Colleges to widen access and progression pathways and introduce new collaborative provision of HE programmes. The TU will also build on the working relationships established through the success of the CUA institutions in cross-border funding^y, with the objective of increasing collaborative RDI projects. In this regard, involvement with NUIG in the W/NW Cluster will enhance the expertise of the CUA and broaden possible funding opportunities.

The TU will continue to participate in cross-border organisations such as the North-West Health Innovation Corridor, North-West Partnership, North-West Workforce Development Forum, North-West Regional Science Park Steering Group, and Derry City Urban Regeneration Company. (ILEX).

5.4.4 Community Engagement

The success of the proposed TU will be measured by its capacity to meet local needs. The proposed TU will build on the relationships with regional communities, enterprises, industries and employers.

Across the CUA, community and industry representatives are routinely involved in the development, delivery and evaluation of programmes. The Institutes are engaged in the provision of training for 2nd level maths teachers through the Maths4Teachers

initiative (coordinated by UL). The annual Science Week at each of the Institutes attracts thousands of regional inhabitants to the campuses each year to participate in a wide array of events. The campus amenities of the institutions are frequently made available to local community activities and for promoting participation at 3rd level education (e.g. Engineering Dojo, Transition Year learning weeks, 2nd level regional Science exhibitions). These initiatives will be maintained by the TU and, by harnessing the critical mass of resources of the combined CU colleges, they will be developed and enhanced to better meet community needs.

The proposed TU will become a focal point for its surrounding communities and will contribute to the formulation of public policy. Staff and students of the TU will be encouraged to work with community groups and 2nd level schools to support the transition to 3rd level. Capitalising on our existing strengths, the academic curriculum will incorporate community-based projects which will enrich learning and strengthen local communities. The proposed TU will be a catalyst for economic renewal, sustainability and social development through its contribution to national policy development and its regional community-based research and innovation projects.

5.5 Staff Deployment and Development

Staff of the TU will be experienced and trained in the enterprise and entrepreneurial education related to their discipline. Academic entrepreneurship will be encouraged and staff will be expected to actively participate on regional boards and committees.

The TU will provide training programmes that ensure staff are fully supported to maintain their competencies both as facilitators of learning and as researchers of a regionally engaged university. There will be a process of transition from the vocationally-based teaching to professional teaching, incorporating formal training of academic and support staff in best practice pedagogy, including blended learning where necessary. The training plan will lift capacity in

developmental areas for the TU, such as Level 9-10 teaching and research activities and will lead to increased entrepreneurial engagement with regional enterprises. Training will build engagement on cross-campus projects and initiatives. This orientation and training will be equally applicable for academic, management, administrative and services staff and will lead to the application of modern management practices and systems.

Each IoT of the CUA has a staff training plan to meet the TU staff qualifications criteria. Level 10 research is being increased to meet the TU criteria. This requires innovative approaches to facilitate staff to undertake their studies, and to allow them to engage in research funding applications, student supervision and dissemination of Levels 9 and 10 research. Collaborations with other HEIs, research organisations, regional employers and community groups are being pursued to attract inward research investment.

TU structures and policies will be aligned to ensure staff can contribute across teaching & research, administration and community engagement. Allocation models for academic and non-academic staff will be agreed with employee representatives to ensure a balance of workloads and service provision across the many campuses.

TU staff will be encouraged and supported to continue their professional practice and association with professional bodies. This will include the promotion of international sabbatical leave as a means of engaging with world research and teaching centres, and secondments to the private sector to ensure professional and work-based knowledge and competencies are maintained and updated.

5.6 International Students and Collaboration

The national share of international undergraduate entrants was around 8% in 2010/11. This is projected to rise to 14% by 2030^[55]. TU strategy will be to grow international student numbers by creating long-term international collaborative relationships. International joint awarding arrangements will be entered into (including

curriculum development and delivery). The practical orientation of TU programmes across all levels will be particularly attractive to international students. An international dimension will be embedded in all (partner) programmes. International student work experience opportunities will be developed.

The TU will have a portfolio of international collaborating HEIs which will include bilateral Erasmus+ exchanges and research and institutional developmental initiatives. Existing partnerships with non-EU countries will be developed to increase intakes of fee-paying international students. In addition to the valuable cultural diversity, providing an international dimension for all students, this will bring in a stream of non-exchequer funding to support the internal and regional development work of the TU.

Linkages with international research centres will be facilitated and supported. Staff exchanges will be fostered through international mobility partnerships so as to build a body of learning on international best-practice pedagogy, research and innovation.

The TU will provide a professional international service which is compliant with the Code of Practice for International Students and which attains the International Educational Mark. Strategies and supports will be put in place to ensure that all TU campuses are meeting the educational and diverse cultural needs of international students. The three existing international offices of the CUA will be brought under a single coordinated international plan.

The TU will continue to collaborate with regionally engaged, enterprise development-focussed multi-campus universities across the EU and further afield to learn from their experiences, as it develops the best model for the West/North-West of Ireland.

5.7 Planning & Governance

TU governance will follow national and international best practice^[64]. Stakeholder representation on the Governing Body will be chosen for their involvement and commitment to regional development and

will include state agencies, student and employer representatives. The Academic Council, by agreement with the Governing Body, will have the authority, processes and competence to oversee academic planning and to ensure the quality of programmes of study and the quality and integrity of other academic matters. There will be a common TU academic quality assurance framework and common policies and procedures, building on the work of the Technological Universities Quality Framework (TUQF)^[57] (and, for example, the policy on RPL already developed by the CUA). Academic structures will provide coherence and consistency of practices across multiple campuses and discipline areas.

The key to the success of the TU will be the quality of its executive leadership. Management training will be provided to support the transition from IoTs to a TU and beyond. This will include topics on strategy making and planning, project coordination, financial efficiency, and entrepreneurship in relation to achieving the vision of the TU.

There will be a single organisational structure for academic and administrative decision-making, performance management and accountability across the TU. This will require common practices and policies for human resource management, financial, IT, estates and other support services. Training will be provided for senior management and administration which will encompass full delegation of responsibility and accountability across all campuses of the TU. Academic and management information systems will be aligned and enhanced to provide relevant management information and to ensure common academic and administrative systems are implemented.

Regular communications with staff and students along with meetings with senior staff will ensure a clear understanding of, and commitment to CUA objectives. This will develop and sustain momentum towards TU objectives during the challenging change process. Similarly, communication and consultation will also be essential with external stakeholders.

6 Towards a Technological University for the West/North-West

The CUA is following a work-plan to manage its trajectory towards achieving TU re-designation. In the first instance, this involved collaborating on a number of projects to develop trust and build relationships across the alliance. Work is currently underway to establish baseline data and to identify the gap between where the CUA is now and where it needs to get to – not only for the specific targets of the TU criteria and improving collaboration, but also in terms of wider consultation and communication with students, staff and external stakeholders.

6.1 Achievements against the TU Criteria

Data has been collated from across the 3 IoTs to establish baseline statistics. Where possible, the data is based on published information sources such as official returns made to HEA and other state agencies, and records in institutional databases.

An analysis of the combined CUA profile was carried out, incorporating the HEA profiles (for 2012/13), the institutional data as of 2014, and the projected profiles provided in the agreed Performance Compacts. Details are provided in Appendices 4 and 5.

A detailed review of the current achievement against the criteria, the current and projected profiles and planning for optimised closure of

strategic and operational gaps is underway and will form a major part of the Stage 2 submission. Table 2 provides a summary of some of the metrics. The following sections are a summary review of all the criteria and indicate the achievement to date. Refer to Appendix 6 for definitions of the criteria.

6.2 Institute and Student Profile

In relation to criterion 2.1 (Appendix 6), as the CUA progresses towards a TU there will be a plan to create a single geographically distributed and multi-campus TU, building on the experience of the CUA partners and on learning from international experiences.

In the period 2010/11 to 2014/15 the CUA experienced an average growth of 1.5% per annum in total undergraduate numbers and this trend is likely to continue over the coming years². The TU criteria 2.1 and 3.1 for programmes refers to the maintenance of provision across NFQ Levels 6 to 10. Figure 6 shows that in 2011/12 the CUA institutions were leading the sector in the provision of Level 6 and 7 programmes and the TU will maintain this trend to deliver its mission to educate and up-skill the regional workforce. Programmes are, and will continue to be, focussed on science and technology.

The first student-related metric in the TU criteria relates to Level 9 & 10 research numbers (criterion 3.2a). As of the March 2014 HEA returns, the CUA has proportionally

Reference	Criterion	2013/14 (HEA Returns)	TU Target
3.2a	Level 9 & 10 research (% FTE L8-10)	2.4%	4.0%
3.2b	Flexible Learners (LLL)	19.1%	30.0%
3.2b	Mature New Entrants	21.3%	
3.2b	Combined Flexible & Mature learners	30.3%	
4.2a	FT Staff delivering HE with at least L9 qualifications*	86.9%	90.0%
4.2b	FT Staff delivering HE with L10 or equivalence in professional experience (estimated)*	31.3%	45% (incl. 10% Prof)
4.2c	Staff supervising @ L10 with L10 qualifications	92%	80%

Table 2: Current and projected targets against the TU criteria, as defined in Appendix 6. *This is a realistic estimate based on available data. Clarification on professional qualifications and on staff delivering HE will be provided in future analysis following agreement with HEA on the definition of professional qualifications.

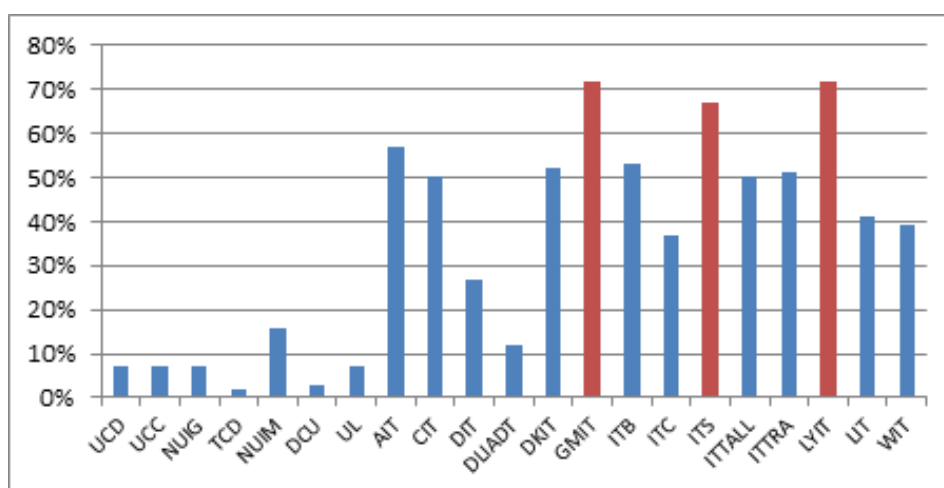


Figure 6: All Level 6 & 7 Enrolments in 2011/12. Source: HEA Institute Profiles 2011/12.

2.36% of FTEs at L8-10 engaged in Level 9 & 10 research. The CUA is working collaboratively to achieve the target, making joint submissions for competitive research funding and providing financial incentives for designated research centres and projects. Particular attention will be required in the planning phase in order to map the achievement of this criterion.

It is noteworthy that TU criteria metrics are based on traditional research models – such as number of postgraduate student enrolments, staff with PhDs etc. While there is some recognition for staff with professional qualifications, these metrics do not fully acknowledge the level of professional practice expertise required to deliver the applied research and innovation needed from a regionally-based, entrepreneurial TU.

The second student-related metric relates to ‘lifelong learning and/or mature students’ (criterion 3.2b). The target is set at 30%, although the definition is somewhat loosely defined in the criterion. For the purposes of this document, LLL will comprise only those designated in the HEA returns as (part time + distance learning + eLearning). Matures (over 23 years old on the date of first entry to HE) will also be recorded, but under a separate heading. As of March 2014, the CUA has 19.1% LLL and 21.3% Matures. An aggregate of these comes to 30.3%, which exceeds the TU target definition. A unique differentiator of the CUA is that the student profile includes a

high proportion of LLL students, many of whom are up-skilling. This provides evidence of strong engagement with regional companies as many of these LLL students are in employment. This is due to the particular strength in the provision of ODL and blended learning and due to the flexible approach taken to meet the needs of employees and employers in terms of timing and location of delivery. It also allows learning to take place across a geographically dispersed region. This will be further exploited by the proposed TU.

Regarding vocational education (criterion 3.3), the CUA is currently delivering apprentice training at Phase 4 & 6 in four trades, traineeships in professional cookery and a number of foundation programmes. As mentioned in Section 5, the TU will continue to provide such vocational programmes and annual discussions are held with the HEA regarding future provision requirements. The TU will lead and promote new apprenticeship models across the region, following from the recent call for new Apprentice programmes.

6.3 Staff Profile

There are well established staff appointment processes (criterion 4) that include evaluation of professional practice and engagement. In progressing towards TU status, policies such as these, and other corporate policies in finance, student services etc., will be amalgamated into a single set of overarching operating policies. As mentioned in Section

5.5, allocation models will be agreed and established to provide a balance between teaching, research and engagement activities for all staff (criteria 4.1b).

Ninety per cent of full time academic staff engaged in delivering HE programmes are required to hold a Level 9 qualification or higher for TU Status (criterion 4.2a). The CUA is in the process of verifying the data, but current indications are that this target is close to being achieved (87%, Table 2).

In the TU, at least 45% of full time HE academic staff are required to hold a Level 10 qualification or the equivalence in professional experience, combined with a terminal degree appropriate to their profession (criterion 4.2b). As of March 2014, this is estimated to be at 31.3% (Table 2), although the final figures on academic and professional qualifications have yet to be confirmed. The CUA notes the HEA intention to consider the definition of 'professional equivalence to PhD level' and await the requirements for applicant institutions. Meanwhile, CUA partners are each supporting staff pursuing PhD studies and are actively exploring opportunities for professional PhD staff training with NUIG. They are also reviewing recruitment policies in respect of base-line qualifications for academic staff which will deliver the TU mission and which provides a balance of staff who are research-active and enterprise engaged (criteria 4.1b).

The proportion of staff holding Level 10 qualifications where there is on-going doctoral level training and research is to be in excess of 80% in the new TU (criterion 4.2c). The interpretation of 'doctoral level training' is unclear as it may be referring to supervising students, and/or Principal Investigators and/or post-doctoral and contract researcher. On the basis that the definition is referring to supervisors of Levels 9 and 10 research only, the data shows that this metric is being exceeded by the CUA (Table 2) and is unlikely to reduce significantly.

Criteria 4.2c refers to the importance of staff with PhDs being activity engaged in sustained Level 10 research activity. To achieve this, the TU will provide adequate non-academic

technical and administrative staff resources to support the intended growth in research and innovation activity, underpinned by training of these staff in research methodologies.

6.4 Teaching and Learning & Curriculum Development

Currently, all programmes are validated by an external panel of academic, employer, professional, and occupational representatives. The latter are selected for their knowledge of the employee profile of the sector (criteria 5.1a). Programmes are validated against the NFQ learning outcome standards in each discipline area. Employability is addressed through market analysis as evaluated by external discipline experts, and learner citizenship through learning outcomes of the wider understanding of the graduate role in society (criteria 5.1b). All programmes are designed to be relevant to the workplace and learning is gained through case studies, problem based learning, work-based projects provided by employers and through work placements (criteria 5.1c). The relevance of work placement in achieving the learning outcomes is determined by the validation panel and Academic Council. Research methods are taught on most Level 8 programmes and, typically, there is a final year project to be completed (criteria 5.1d).

6.5 Research and Innovation

A review of current Level 9 and 10 student projects and contract research programmes indicates that the CUA is meeting criterion 6.1a; its research is focused on applied, problem-oriented research and social and technological development and innovation, with direct social and economic impacts and public and private benefits in the region. The CUA partners, individually and collectively, have a long and successful track record in designing and delivering RDI activities that are focused on regional needs and have made a significant contribution to building regional economic and social sustainability.

Support (criterion 6.1b) is provided to research staff and the CUA partners are collaborating to increase the level of provision. Recently, a number of Research

Centres have been established in each of the Institutes, with a support package provided. Staff are allocated time to conduct their research. Successes with national and EU level funding have stimulated CUA partner collaboration and leadership of several projects in recent and current rounds of H2020 applications. Obviously, winning such research funding is highly competitive and the CUA will continue developing a strong support platform to afford staff the best chance of success in winning such funding and to sustain and grow their research over time.

The three IoTs of the CUA have all participated in the validation of post graduate training modules to provide generic research skills and competencies for students. The jointly validated programme of Graduate Education in Research Skills provides a foundation for structured Masters and PhD programmes that will ensure the relevance of graduate skills in the workplace. Current partnership in international jointly awarded MSc (EMBC+) and PhD programmes (Erasmus Mundus MARES joint doctorate) has involved the CUA in the transferable, specialist and entrepreneurial skills training programmes that characterise practice-led, professional, and industrial doctorate structures (criterion 6.1c). CUA partners are continuing in this direction through their coordination and partnership in international consortium applications to the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions, Innovative Training Network programmes (e.g. co-ordination of a 2015 European Joint Doctoral programme application, and partnership in a 2015 European Training Network programme application). Across the CUA, competitive

funding has been won by researchers from, among others, FP7, European Commission tenders, INTERREG, United Nations FAO, MSCA-ITN European Training Network, SFI, BIM, EPA, HEA, Enterprise Ireland, IOTI, Tesla Project, Marine Institute, Irish Research Council, FIRM, HSE (Healthcare).

In the period 2010-2014, the CUA partners have collaborated with industry on over 200 Innovation Vouchers, 15 Innovation Partnerships, 4 Commercialisation projects and 37 InterTrade Ireland Fusion projects. The current activity in these areas will be maintained as it delivers the intended enterprise-focussed mission of the new TU.

Currently, there are nine recognised centres/research groups being supported by the CUA (see Table 3). These Centres will be reviewed in order to consolidate the alliances' research strengths, differentiation and specialisation, and to identify a limited set of strategic research fields that are driven by, and congruent with the needs of enterprise and communities (criterion 6.2a). The partners have participated in the design of regional networks that use available expertise to meet those needs, including Metric Ireland and the North West Regional Health Innovation Corridor. The TU will strengthen these networks and provide a solid foundation for others, as future needs are identified.

At Stage 2 of the TU re-designation process, the demand for research in various technical disciplines will be identified, with a view to uniting centres operating in complementary disciplines to ensure sufficient capacity for sustained activity in competitive research environments (criterion 6.2b).

Centre	IoT	ISCED2 field ¹
Marine and Freshwater Research Centre (MFRC)	GMIT	85
Medical Device Technology (GMedTech)	GMIT	72
Centre for the Integration of Sustainable Energy (CiSET)	GMIT	52
Centre for Applied Marine Biotechnology (CIMBio)	LYIT	85
Wireless Sensor Research group (WiSAR)	LYIT	52
Renewable Energy Research Centre	LYIT	52
Centre for Environmental Research Innovation and Sustainability (CERIS)	IT Sligo	85
Precision Engineering and Manufacturing Centre (PEM)	IT Sligo	54
Centre for Research in the Social Professions (CRISP)	IT Sligo	31

Table 3: Current recognised research centres across the CUA. Note 1: For 2-digit ISCED2, narrow field, code^{aa}

6.6 International Profile

There are no specific metrics for the international profile of a TU (criteria 7). Certainly, as outlined in Section 5 above, international engagement of the TU in the West/North-West region will specifically reflect a regional and entrepreneurial focus. In the five year period from 2010/11 to 2014/15, CUA international students (based on HEA returns) have grown from 204 to 776 – which represent an average annual growth of 56%. During Stage 2 of the TU re-designation process, the CUA will establish new MoU agreements for the enhancement of internationalisation, as outlined in Section 5.6, including examples related to teaching and learning, research and staff development and collaborations such as joint projects, student and staff exchanges and the collaborative provision of HE programmes.

6.7 Leadership, Management & Governance

Leadership

The profile of the three Institutes provided in Section 2 presents a CUA with an external orientation and programmes with a focus on enterprise engagement (criterion 8a).

The members of the CUA Steering Committee bring together strong academic credentials and experience in enterprise and the professions relevant in the region (criterion 8c). In driving the current workplan, the steering committee is providing a high level of committed leadership and good management underpinned by sound governance^[64]. Members of the team have already demonstrated their capability of delivering coherence to multiple units and cross-institutional consolidation (criterion 8b).

Governance

The CUA partners each have a Governing Body and Academic Council, properly constituted under the IoT Act, 2006. Academic Quality Assurance procedures are approved and reviewed by Academic Council. QQI conduct annual institutional dialogue meetings and an Institutional Review every 5-7 years which includes approval of QA procedures and of delegated authority. All three institutions are in good standing with QQI. It is expected that

legislation will be enacted to ensure that the TU has self-accrediting powers across all levels and the CUA will prepare itself to function as a self-awarding TU.

As outlined in section 5.7, the TU will develop a single governance model. Development work has already commenced to bring academic processes within one governance framework (criterion 8d).

43% of CUA funding comes from the state (Figure 1). Annual audited financial data is returned to the HEA and reviews are routinely conducted across all functions by internal audit teams, by the C&AG and external consultants. Each of the Institutes are in compliance with the nationally agreed Code of Governance and Internal Controls Framework and operate a Risk Register management process. There is regular dialogue with the HEA in relation to programmes and budgets, compact agreements and other matters that arise from time to time.

Management

The leadership and management structure for the TU will need to be developed. In contrast to the more urban-based universities with campuses in close proximity, the TU in the CU region may need to have a distributed management structure across its campuses. Cross-campus structures and processes will be necessary to facilitate engagement of staff on, for example, programme boards, Academic Council, non-academic functional meetings and other relevant functions. Consensus will be required to provide a single entity process, and for developing policies and procedures to achieve effective operation. At some stage, an overarching proto-TU governance and management team with, potentially, a full-time steering committee may be required.

The workplace practices and employment contracts will be reflective of a modern university (criterion 8e) and will facilitate delivery of the TU mission. This will include provision of flexibly delivered programmes, the availability of educational resources to meet the needs of regional enterprises, and increased engagement in research, innovation and entrepreneurial activities.

Next Stage

Based on the experience of others who have enacted institutional transformation, it is evident that the process takes time ^[65, 66, 67, 68].

A realistic timeline for meeting the TU criteria is estimated to take a minimum of 5 years.

There are many organisational and cultural issues to be addressed to appease the concerns of stakeholders. This will entail significant levels of consultation across all stakeholders which will begin at the point of submitting this expression of interest.

The establishment of the TU will be costly ^[65, 66, 67, 68], requiring careful budgetary planning as budget requirements are likely to increase as the proposed TU becomes closer to fruition. Current operational deficits will be addressed within the context of the existing autonomous status of each of the partners. There is no assumption that additional funding will be forthcoming from public finances to progress the ambition. The CUA will endeavour to source greater levels of non-exchequer funding (e.g. international fee paying students, fee paying programmes, alumni^{bb}) and use this to support the TU development.

Stage 2 of the TU re-designation project will set out the detailed process for the TU to meet its vision and mission. This will include:

- A clear articulation of the mission and vision for a TU for the CU region
- A project plan including project management, involvement of internal functional leaders and external experts, communication processes and risk analysis;
- A financial plan to deliver the objectives of the plan within existing resources, including the resolution of any budget deficit situations and the process of on-going maintenance of a balanced CUA budget.

7. Concluding Remarks

This Expression of Interest signals the ambition of the Connacht-Ulster Alliance (comprising GMIT, LYIT and IT Sligo) to become a Technological University in order to better serve the needs of the West/North-West region of Ireland.

The Technological University for the West/North-West region will have a focus of building a vibrant, attractive and sustainable economic, social and cultural environment which will generate, and retain graduate talent capable of growing the economic base in the region. The TU will be actively engaged with enterprises, employers and support agencies to map out a regional development strategy which will create an advantaged region, and it will work to make this strategy a reality.

The proposed regionally-based multi-campus TU will stimulate economic growth across the geographically dispersed West/North-West region by (i) providing flexible delivery of education and (ii) through collaborative research, development and innovation activities with the objective of growing local enterprises and communities. The proposed TU will foster business networks and developmental clusters, and will enhance the ability of the region to attract inward investment.

This document sets out the high level vision for the TU and maps the achievements of the three CUA Institutes against the TU criteria, to date. The motivation for achieving the criteria for re-designation as a Technological University is evident in the level of commitment and collaboration to date from the three IoTs.

Bibliography

- [1] "Regional Population Projections 2016-2031," Western Development Commission, 2014; <http://www.wdc.ie/wp-content/uploads/Reional-Pop-Projections-WDC-Report-Dec-2014.pdf>.
- [2] "The Role of the Institutes of Technology in Enterprise Development: Profiles and emerging findings," Forfas, 2007; http://www.heai.ie/sites/default/files/the_role_of_iots_in_enterprise_development.pdf.
- [3] R. Thorn, "Institutes of Technology in Ireland: Strategic Position, Workforce Education and Societal Need, Administration," vol. 59, no. 1, pp. 69-86, 2011; <http://www.ipa.ie/index.php?lang=en&p=product&id=237&prodid=257>.
- [4] "Delivering impact for industry," IoTI, 2014; <http://www.ioti.ie/rdi/delivering-impact-for-industry/>.
- [5] S. Marginson, "Criteria for Technological University Designation, HEA, Dublin," HEA, Dublin, 2011; <http://9thlevel.ie/wp-content/uploads/ProfessorMarginsonFullReport.pdf>.
- [6] R. Munck and G. McConnell, "University Strategic Planning and the Foresight/Futures Approach: An Irish Case Study, Planning for Higher Education," vol. 38, no. 1, pp. 31-40, 2009; <http://www.dcu.ie/community/Planning.pdf>.
- [7] "Strategy for the Internationalisation of Higher Education Institutions in Finland 2009–2015," Ministry of Education, Finland, 2009; <http://www.minedu.fi/OPM/Julkaisut/2009/liitteet/opm23.pdf>.
- [8] "Quality in Diversity, Strategic Agenda for Higher Education, Research and Science," Dutch Ministry of Education Culture and Science, 2011; http://planipolis.iiep.unesco.org/upload/Netherlands/Netherlands_Quality_in_diversity_Strategy.pdf.
- [9] "Modernisation of Higher Education, Report to the European Commission on Improving the quality of teaching and learning in Europe's higher education institutions," EU Commission, June 2013; http://ec.europa.eu/education/library/reports/modernisation_en.pdf.
- [10] A. Gornitzka, M. Kogan and A. Amaral., "Reform and change in higher education: Analysing Policy Implementation," Higher Education Dynamics, Volume 8, Springer, 2005; ISBN: 978-1-4020-3411-4.
- [11] "Data maps of higher education provision - 'HE cold spots'," HEFCE, UK, 2015; <http://www.hefce.ac.uk/whatwedo/crosscutting/coldspots/>.
- [12] "National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030, Report of the Strategy Group, Department of Education and Skills," Department of Education and Skills, Dublin, 2011; <http://hea.ie/content/national-strategy-higher-education-2030>.
- [13] "Report to the Minister for Education and Skills on system reconfiguration, inter-institutional collaboration and system governance in Irish Higher education," HEA, 2013; http://www.heai.ie/sites/default/files/report_to_minister_-_system_configuration_2_0.pdf.
- [14] "Towards a Future Higher Education Landscape," HEA, February 2012; <http://9thlevel.ie/wp-content/uploads/TowardsaFutureHigherEducationLandscape.pdf>.
- [15] "Audit of the Innovation System in the Border, Midland and Western Region An Evaluation of

- a Regional Knowledge Economy,” BMW Regional Assembly, 2011;
<http://www.nuigalway.ie/cisc/documents/auditreportfinal.pdf>.
- [16] “Graduate Salary and Graduate Recruitment Trends Survey,” Grad Ireland, Dublin, 2014.
- [17] T. Haase and J. Pratschke, “All-Island HP Deprivation Index: Conceptual Underpinnings, ICLRD Conference University College Maynooth,” Pobal, 2014; <http://trutzhaase.eu/deprivation-index/the-2011-all-island-hp-deprivation-index/>.
- [18] I. Milićević, “Regional Labour Markets Bulletin,” SOLAS, Dublin, 2014;
<http://www.solas.ie/docs/RegionalLabourMarketsBulletin2014.pdf>.
- [19] “Profile 3, At Work,” CSO, 2012;
http://www.cso.ie/en/media/csoie/census/documents/census2011profile3/Profile3_at_work_entire_doc.pdf.
- [20] “Insights report on Business Demography in the western region (counties Donegal, Sligo, Leitrim, Mayo, Roscommon, Galway and Clare),” Western Development Commission, 2014;
<http://www.wdc.ie/wp-content/uploads/WDC-Insights-Business-Demography.PDF>.
- [21] “Business Demography, Business Register Section, Structural Business Statistics,” CSO, 2011;
<http://www.cso.ie/en/surveysandmethodology/multisectoral/businessdemography/>.
- [22] “IBEC regional focus: The North West Region, Ireland (Draft),” IBEC, January 2015.
- [23] “Regional Tourism Performance in 2013,” Failte Ireland, 2014;
http://www.failteireland.ie/FailteIreland/media/WebsiteStructure/Documents/3_Research_Insights/2_Regional_SurveysReports/Regional-tourism-performance-in-2013.pdf?ext=.pdf.
- [24] “Creative West: The Creative Sector in the Western Region,” Western Development Commission, 2009; http://www.wdc.ie/wp-content/uploads/reports_CreativeWest.pdf.
- [25] “Study of Outdoor Recreation in the West Border, Midland & Western Regional Assembly,” BMW Regional Assembly, 2014; www.bmwassembly.ie.
- [26] “Harnessing Our Ocean Wealth, An Integrated Marine Plan for Ireland Roadmap, New Ways New Approaches New Thinking,” Department for Agriculture, Food and Marine, 2012;
<http://www.ouroceanwealth.ie/SiteCollectionDocuments/Harnessing%20Our%20Ocean%20Wealth%20Report.pdf>.
- [27] K. Morrissey and C. O’Donoghue, “The Marine Economy and Regional Development,” Working Paper 11-WP-SEMRU-03, The Socio-Economic Marine Research Unit, Galway, 2011;
http://www.nuigalway.ie/semru/documents/m_od_semru_wp3.p.
- [28] “Creative Edge, EU funded project,” Northern Periphery Programme, 2013;
<http://mapping.creative-edge.eu/>.
- [29] H. Goldstein and J. Drucker, “The Economic Development Impacts of Universities on Regions: Do Size and Distance Matter?,” *Economic Development Quarterly*, vol. 20, no. 1, pp. 22-43, February 2006.
- [30] B. Lucey, “The Economic Impact of Irish Higher Education Institutions,” TCD, 2014;
<https://brianmlucey.wordpress.com/2014/10/15/the-economic-impact-of-irish-higher-education-institutions-preliminary-results/>.
- [31] “National Policy Statement on Entrepreneurship in Ireland,” Department of Jobs, Enterprise, and Innovation, Dublin, 2014;

- <http://www.enterprise.gov.ie/en/Publications/National%20Policy%20Statement%20on%20Entrepreneurship%20in%20Ireland.pdf>.
- [32] “Report of the Innovation Taskforce,” Department of the Taoiseach, Dublin, 2010; http://www.forfas.ie/media/Report_of_the_Innovation_Taskforce.pdf.
- [33] “Entrepreneurship Education in Ireland – Research Mapping Analysis,” Tom Martin & Associates, South-East Regional Authority, 2011; http://www.ceen.ie/DatabaseDocs/lib_8590490__entrepreneurshipeducationinireland-researchmappinganalysismay2011.pdf.
- [34] “Entrepreneurship Education at School in Europe: National Strategies, Curricula and Learning Outcomes,” Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency, 2012; http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/education/eurydice/documents/thematic_reports/135en.pdf.
- [35] “The Role, Value and Scale of Higher Education in Ireland, Consultation Paper 1,” Expert Group on Future Funding for Higher Education, Department of Education and Skills, January 2015; <http://www.education.ie/en/The-Education-System/Higher-Education/Higher-Education-Expert-Group-on-Future-Funding-for-Higher-Education-Discussion-Paper-for-Stakeholder-Consultation-.pdf>.
- [36] H. Hazelkorn, “Re-imaging Irish Higher Education: Taking a broader view of diversity,” HEA Policy Research Unit, DIT, 2011; http://www.slideshare.net/IAU_Past_Conferences/taking-a-broader-view-of-diversity.
- [37] F. van Vught, F. Kaiser, J. File, C. Gaethgens, R. Peter and D. Westerheijden, “The European Classification of Higher Education,” U-Map, 2010; http://www.opengov.gr/ypepth/wp-content/uploads/downloads/2010/11/U-MAP_report.pdf.
- [38] B. Lee, “Innovation & Entrepreneurship: Designing New Models for European Public Universities,” in *NUI Galway Conference*, Galway, November, 2011.
- [39] A. C. McCormick, “Classifying Higher Education Institutions: Lessons from the Carnegie Classification,” *Pensamiento Educativo. Revista de Investigación Educativa Latinoamericana*, vol. 50, no. 1, pp. 65-75, 2013; <http://pensamientoeducativo.uc.cl/files/journals/2/articles/566/public/566-1475-1-PB.pdf>.
- [40] “Connecting Universities to Regional Growth; A Practical Guide, EU Regional Policy,” Commissioner for Regional Policy, September 2011; http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docgener/presenta/universities2011/universities2011_en.pdf.
- [41] “Higher Education in Regions: Globally Competitive, Locally Engaged,” OECD, 2007; <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/51/27/39378517.pdf>.
- [42] J. Goddard, “Universities, innovation and urban and regional development: challenges, tensions and opportunities in Europe, in HEA Conference,” in *HEA Conference*, November, 2014; http://www.heai.ie/sites/default/files/john_goddard_26.11.14.pdf.
- [43] “Supporting Growth and Jobs: An agenda for modernisation of Europe’s higher education system,” European Commission COM, 2011; http://ec.europa.eu/education/library/policy/modernisation_en.pdf.
- [44] P. McCann and R. Ortega-Argilés, “Smart Specialisation, Regional Growth and Applications to EU Cohesion Policy,” Taylor and Francis, 2010; http://wbc-inco.net/attach/s3_mccann_ortega.pdf.

- [45] "The role of Universities and Research Organisations as drivers for Smart Specialisation at regional level," Directorate-General for Research and Innovation, European Commission, 2014; <http://ec.europa.eu/research/regions/documents/publications/>.
- [46] H. Goldstein, G. Maier and M. Luger, The University as an instrument for economic and business development: US and European comparisons, in *Emerging Patterns of Social Demand and University Reform: Through a Glass Darkly*, D. Dil and B. Sporn, Eds., IAU Press Pergamon, 1995, pp. pp 105-133.
- [47] "General Scheme: Technological Universities Bill," Department of Education and Skills, 2014; <https://www.education.ie/en/The-Education-System/Legislation/General-Scheme-Technological-Universities-Bill-2014.pdf>.
- [48] "The Innovative and Entrepreneurial University: Higher Education, Innovation & Entrepreneurship in Focus," Office of Innovation & Entrepreneurship, Economic Development Administration, US Department of Commerce, 2013; [http://www.eda.gov/pdf/The Innovative and Entrepreneurial University Report.pdf](http://www.eda.gov/pdf/The%20Innovative%20and%20Entrepreneurial%20University%20Report.pdf).
- [49] "Submission to the Consultation on the Rural Development Programme for Ireland 2014-2020," BMW Regional Assembly, Jan 2013; <http://cua.ie/gorm/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/RDPSubmission2014-2020.pdf>.
- [50] "Ireland's Competitive ScoreCard," National Competitive Council, Forfas, 2014; <http://www.competitiveness.ie/media/ICS%202014%20ONLINE%20FINAL.pdf>.
- [51] "Employer Engagement: Emerging Practice from QAA Reviews," Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education, UK, December 2014, <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/Publications/Documents/Employer-Engagement-Report.pdf>.
- [52] H. Goldstein and J. Drucker, "The Economic Development Impacts of Universities on Regions: Do Size and Distance Matter?," *Economic Development Quarterly*, vol. 20, no. 1, pp. 22-43, February 2006; http://www.uwcc.wisc.edu/pdf/Bulletins/bulletin_09_02.pdf.
- [53] J. Cullinan, D. Flannery, S. Walsh and S. McCoy, "Geographic inequalities in higher education: Accessibility and participation in Ireland," in *How Equal? Access to Higher Education in Ireland*, November 2013; http://www.hea.ie/sites/default/files/how_equal_0.pdf.
- [54] J. Allan and K. Clarke, "Nurturing Supportive Learning Environments in Higher Education Through the Teaching of Study Skills: To Embed or Not to Embed?," *International Journal of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education*, vol. 19, no. 1, 2007; <http://www.isetl.org/ijtlhe/>.
- [55] S. McGuinness, A. Bergin, E. Kelly, S. McCoy, E. Smyth and K. Timoney, "A Study of Future Demand for Higher Education in Ireland," ESRI, Dublin, 2012; <https://www.esri.ie/UserFiles/publications/RS30.pdf>.
- [56] L. Delaney and S. Fox, "The role of distance education in broadening access to Irish higher education," in *How Equal? Access to Higher Education in Ireland*, 2013; http://www.hea.ie/sites/default/files/how_equal_0.pdf.
- [57] "Quality Enhancement and Assurance of Research, Principles of Internal Quality Enhancement for Technological Universities," IoTl, 2014; <http://www.ioti.ie/news/latest-news/2921-technological-universities-quality-framework-publication-of-high-level-principles>.
- [58] "Fact Sheet, IP specificities in research for the benefit of SMEs," European IPR helpdesk, January 2012;

https://www.iprhelphdesk.eu/sites/default/files/newsdocuments/IP_specificities_in_research_for_the_benefit_of_SMEs.pdf.

- [59] "Interim Report to Údarás na hOllscoile on the Implementation of the Plan, NUI Galway Strategic Plan, 2009-2014," NUIG, Galway, 2012;
http://www.nuigalway.ie/president/documents/strategic_planinterimreportjune2012.pdf.
- [60] "NUIG Strategic Plan 2009-14," NUIG, Galway, 2009;
<http://content.yudu.com/A1gtih/strategic/resources/index.htm?referrerUrl=http://login.yudu.com/Yudu/manageBookStaging.htm?nodeId=2464361>.
- [61] S. Bradley, "Research for the Benefit of SMEs," in *Collaborate to Innovate - European Research & Innovation Funding for SMEs*, Titanic, Belfast, 7th June 2012;
<http://www.intertradeireland.com/fp72012/Steve%20Bradley%20FP7.pdf>.
- [62] "TU/e Science Park," Eindhoven University of Technology, 2015;
<https://www.tue.nl/en/university/about-the-university/tue-science-park/>.
- [63] "North West Gateway Strategic Alliance (NWGSA) Scoping Study," Indecon (for LYIT), 2009;
<http://www.lyit.ie/media/Indecon%20Final%20Report.pdf>.
- [64] "Issues of Higher Education Institutional Governance," Royal Irish Academy, Dublin, 2012;
<https://www.ria.ie/getmedia/1ebc2d20-1406-451d-93c5-10bf1285399e/Final-RIA-Governance-Report-%282%29.pdf>.
- [65] G. Stanfield, "Collaborations and Mergers in HE: Lessons Learned and Future prospects," Leadership Foundation for Higher Education, 2011;
<http://www.lfhe.ac.uk/en/components/publication.cfm/ST%20-%2002>.
- [66] D. James, "Collaborations, alliances and mergers in higher education: Lessons learned and guidance for institutions," HEFCE, Good Practice Guide, September 2012;
http://www.hefce.ac.uk/media/hefce/content/pubs/2012/201206/12_06.pdf.
- [67] O.-J. Skodvin, "Mergers in Higher Education – Success or Failure," *Tertiary Education and Management*, vol. 5, pp. 65-80, 1999;
http://www.umb.no/statisk/fusjonsprosessen/dokumenter/mergers_success_or_failure.pdf.
- [68] G. Stanfield, "Mergers in Higher Education: Knowledge Resource," Leadership Foundation for Higher Education, 2011; <http://www.lfhe.ac.uk/publications/resources/mergers.html/>.

Appendix 1: Memorandum of Understanding establishing the Connacht-Ulster Alliance

Connacht-Ulster Strategic Alliance Agreement

between

the Institutes of Technology at Galway-Mayo, Letterkenny and Sligo

AGREEMENT: Made on July 9th, 2012.

BETWEEN: Institutes of Technology at Galway-Mayo, Letterkenny and Sligo (the partners).

WHEREBY: The partners commit to an alliance to deliver on jointly agreed strategic objectives that meet the higher educational service needs of the business and wider communities of the Connacht-Ulster Region of Ireland. This alliance will be known as the Connacht-Ulster Alliance (or the CONNACHT-ULSTER Alliance).

Scope: This strategic alliance agreement is intended to provide a clear statement of the depth and breadth of the proposed collaboration between the three partners. Throughout the collaboration proposed in this agreement, the partners will retain their legal independence.

Statement of ambition of the CONNACHT-ULSTER Alliance

The three institutions are forming the CONNACHT-ULSTER Alliance with the stated ambition of achieving re-designation as a Technological University.

The mission of the alliance will reflect the specific socio-economic profile of students in the Connacht-Ulster region, the opportunities presented by the region's magnificent natural landscape, the proximity to the border and the growth in high technology industries. Specifically, the CONNACHT-ULSTER Alliance will provide academic leadership to exploit existing strengths and collaboratively develop new opportunities in areas of strategic importance, in the realms of Business, Engineering, Science and Humanities.^{cc}.

In particular, the CONNACHT-ULSTER Alliance will bring coherence to higher education in the region by:

- a) Within 12 months, formally agreeing a common mission and vision and developing common, shared strategic objectives, with a focus on collaboration.
- b) Agreeing a trajectory to achieve re-designation as a Technological University.
- c) Forming a cluster with other higher education and further education providers in the Connacht and Ulster regions.

Characteristics of the CONNACHT-ULSTER Alliance

- a) Leadership of the social and economic development of the Connacht-Ulster region, through enhanced access and the provision of industry-relevant and professionally focussed programmes of higher education;
- b) Vibrant working relationship with the business community, including employers in the Connacht-Ulster region, who will have a corporate role in providing direction and guidance on the education provision. The collective suite of programmes offered by the CONNACHT-ULSTER Alliance will be developed to meet the needs of employers, students and the wider community;

- c) Flexible teaching and learning platform that builds on its established reputation for cost effective and online delivery;
- d) Enhanced student access, transfer and progression pathways between and through the institutions in the alliance;
- e) Externally acknowledged as a high profile higher education alliance in the European higher education arena in its provision of learning and teaching that is informed by applied research;
- f) A higher education alliance delivering an internationally recognised and valued learning experience for students, leading to greater employment opportunities, as indicated by the demand for its programmes and graduates who are employable upon completion of their programmes of study;
- g) Through partnership, delivering its services more cost effectively and efficiently;
- h) More direct and effective access by the business and the wider community to the full range of knowledge transfer, business support and incubation services.

Rationale

This agreement arises from the impetus created by the recently published National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030 (DES, 2011) in Ireland that creates a context in which the partners will provide a significantly more focussed range of educational services that respond better to the needs of learners and of the businesses and employers in the region.

The CONNACHT-ULSTER Alliance identifies areas where significant added value to the student experience, student learning, the engagement with the business community, resource management and community collaboration may be achieved. The institutions concerned have a track record of cooperation, for example within Lónra. Other examples include Ignite West – A regional Technology Transfer Consortium (NUIG (Lead), GMIT, LYIT and IT Sligo) and the New Frontiers Programme (LYIT and IT Sligo).

Alliance Profile

The demographics of the Connacht-Ulster region is particularly characterised by a rural population, on the periphery of Europe, spread across eight counties in the Republic of Ireland in addition to Northern Ireland. The North West is a recognised constituency of the European Parliament. The Alliance between the three Institutions, representing two of four provinces in Ireland, brings cohesion in higher education provision across this region.

The CONNACHT-ULSTER Alliance will maintain the professional and vocational education ethos of the constituent IoTs and will develop its programme offerings in close collaboration with industry. There will be a student-centred approach, underpinned by a shared staff development plan that builds on the existing high calibre pedagogical delivery that supports the currency, relevance and sustainability of programmes.

The alliance will develop a common overarching academic quality assurance framework that will be approved through each of its Academic Councils. The CONNACHT-ULSTER Alliance QA Framework will be aligned to the national QA Framework and the development of the proposed TU Quality Assurance procedures. Policies in the area of collaborative, transnational, and joint awards, in consultation with HETAC/QQAI will also be developed. A specific set of operational procedures for

ensuring the quality assurance of the collaboration between the members of the Alliance will be developed.

The CONNACHT-ULSTER Alliance will form a cluster with universities and colleges of Further Education in the region. The cluster will provide tailored support for regional development, stakeholder engagement and engagement between higher education providers, including cross border. The Alliance partners will explore the validation and provision of joint awards for levels 9 and 10 research programmes with cluster universities.

As part of this agreement, it is proposed to develop common strategies, with a view to consolidating services for the following functions across the alliance:

- Programme Offerings
- Online Provision
- Access Support
- Research and Innovation Support
- Library Services
- International Offices
- Careers Services
- MIS
- Human Resources
- Financial Services

Student and Graduate Profile

The CONNACHT-ULSTER Alliance will be a leader in providing accessible pathways and alternative routes to higher education. Specifically the alliance will further develop access initiatives for students from socio-economic disadvantage, mature, first time education and further education backgrounds and will actively promote and implement admissions based on the recognition of prior learning (RPL).

The portfolio of programmes offered by the CONNACHT-ULSTER Alliance will attract and be relevant to the needs of the growing population of students from the region.

The alliance will be defined by the quality and employability of its graduates. The alliance, through its academic programmes and approach to learning and teaching, will ensure that all its graduates have a comprehensive understanding of relevant disciplines, professional knowledge and skills appropriate to their awards.

Staff Profile

The CONNACHT-ULSTER Alliance acknowledges the achievements and capabilities of its staff and will continue to recruit staff with significant professional work experience and competence in relevant employment roles. The alliance is cognisant of the metrics and profile specified for academic staff in the criteria for TU and will have a heightened awareness of the need for coordinated recruitment of staff with the potential to contribute to teaching and research objectives.

Targeted professional doctorate provision will be established across the alliance for academic staff with potential for up-skilling. Research opportunities will be supported through bursaries and research capacity building initiatives, work allocations and through support for the dissemination of research findings through academic and professional publications and conferences and seminars.

Staff will be trained appropriately and will collaborate with their counterparts across the alliance.

The CONNACHT-ULSTER Alliance will develop administrative and technical support structures that ensure optimal integration of services, where appropriate, and will provide the necessary training and development for administrative staff to achieve this integration. The alliance will review its work practices across the 3 institutions with a view to developing more effective workflow efficiencies and businesses processes.

Teaching, Learning and Curriculum Development

Student centred learning will be the focus of the Learning and Teaching Strategy for the CONNACHT-ULSTER Alliance. The alliance will respond to the unique dimensions of disadvantage in our region. There will be a particular drive to develop part-time, flexible and blended delivery methods appropriate to the learning styles of the student cohort. There will be a high priority given to the development of online delivered programmes with a particular focus on bespoke delivery to meet the needs of industry.

The CONNACHT-ULSTER Alliance will deliver higher education major programmes at levels 6 to 10 on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) and Minor, Supplemental, and Special Purpose Awards, based on the identified needs of students and employers.

As part of the common shared strategic objective, the alliance will collaborate to provide programmes in strategically important areas, in line with the Higher Education Strategy.

Research

The CONNACHT-ULSTER Alliance recognises that there is a significant effort required to achieve the metrics for research in the HEA Technological University criteria.

The alliance, together with regional businesses and the community, will agree a common Research, Development & Innovation Strategy that builds a vibrant and visible research and innovation community. This will be informed by the niche and differentiated research expertise of the three institutions, and the priorities of the geographical regions being served. The alliance will establish a small number of high quality research centres of excellence capable of competing for national and international funding. The alliance recognises that, while there is a high level of research expertise within the three Institutions, it will work towards growing new applied research areas.

The alliance proposes to develop a joint research strategy.

The partners in the CONNACHT-ULSTER Alliance will collaborate with each other in making joint applications for research funding.

International Profile

The partners will combine their resources to substantially grow the number of international students across the CONNACHT-ULSTER Alliance institutions. The alliance supports the objectives, targets and strategic actions outlined in Investing in Global Relationships^{dd} and will develop a common International strategy for the Connacht-Ulster region. The objectives of this strategy will be to identify niche markets for the recruitment of international students and establishment of structures to ensure the sustainability of the provision of a quality experience for international students. The strategy will also generate non-exchequer income through the recruitment of non-EU students and will optimise the utilisation of resources in the provision of education to these students.

The alliance will develop a strategy for teaching and research collaborations with international HE providers.

The alliance will also develop collaborations with international partners in the provision of student support services.

Leadership, Management and Governance

This agreement has the approval of the Governing Bodies of the three partner Institutions. A CONNACHT-ULSTER Alliance Working Committee will be constituted to consider the governance and management of the alliance. This committee will monitor and report on progress towards the objectives of the alliance, to recommend actions and to oversee the communication process. The importance of coordinated and managed communication is recognised and a common approach will be established.

Implementation Plan

An immediate task following the signing of this agreement is the development of an implementation plan. This will clearly set out objectives and timelines. An early element in the process will involve developing and communicating a risk assessment and business plan.

A draft implementation plan will be approved by December 2012.

Signed under seal, on behalf of **Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology**

_____ Governing Body Chair

Date: _____

_____ President

Date: _____

Signed under seal, on behalf of **Institute of Technology, Sligo**

_____ Governing Body Chair

Date: _____

_____ President

Date: _____

Signed under seal, on behalf of **Letterkenny Institute of Technology**

_____ Governing Body Chair

Date: _____

_____ President

Date: _____

Appendix 2: CUA Guiding Principles Towards Achievement of Technological University (TU) Re-Designation

1. The partners affirm their commitment to working towards the achievement of TU re-designation. The achievement of TU re-designation will result in the creation of a new entity and requires (a) reaching the TU criteria, and (b) demonstrating a record of strong collaboration between the partners.
2. The partners agree to work together to achieve greater collaboration and coherence between the three institutions in terms of systems and processes while respecting the autonomy of each institution in their dealings with the HEA, DES, QQI or other stakeholders.
3. The partners will agree a timeframe to complete each stage of the TU application process. Each stage submission will be evaluated by the partners, considered within each institution and approved by each Governing Body.

The partners will work to progress through the TU process together. In the event that all three partners cannot agree to progress a given stage of the TU process two of the partners may agree to proceed if they consider this necessary to avoid a damaging delay to the process. The third partner will have the option of re-engaging in the process at a later date, where this is feasible. The decision around Stage 4 involving a merger will be based on evidence of substantial achievement of the TU Criteria.

4. The partners may agree to the inclusion of additional partners in the process, where this is feasible.
5. The trajectory towards the achievement of the TU criteria will be evaluated annually by the partners.

The partners agree that re-designation as TU is a challenging but achievable medium-process which will require the full engagement of the partners from the outset in order to be successful.

The focus of the CUA is to achieve the criteria for TU re-designation and to foster collaboration and coherence between the partners.

6. The key drivers of the implementation will be the CUA Steering Committee and the Executive Board in each institution.
7. It is recognised that each institution in the CUA will engage in other collaborative arrangements with other HEIs as appropriate.
8. The partners will agree a communications strategy and joint communiqués so that internal and external stakeholders will be informed on an on-going basis of matters relating to the CUA and TU re-designation. It is a matter for each partner to ensure all internal stakeholders appropriately informed.

Appendix 3: Examples of International Regionally focussed, multi campus universities

For the purposes of this submission, four regionally-based, multi-campus universities have been selected as exemplars of the TU for the West/North-West region. These universities provide a picture of the embodiment the TU for the West/North-West region. These are: Charles Sturt University, New South Wales, Australia; Baden-Württemberg Cooperative State University, German Federal State, the University of the Highlands and Islands, Scotland and Øresund University, spanning the Swedish, Danish border region, see details below.

In all cases there is a strong focus on services to the community and practical learning experiences. There is an emphasis on partnerships with industry, government, and other educational organisations and on student internships and practical placements. Programmes are typically delivered across all campuses, developed in partnership with industrial and professional bodies in the region. Active partnering with companies and other employers is considered important to secure student work experience and for collaborative research projects. In one university, students routinely switch between academic studies and practical training with their workplace training company in a type of 'sandwich' apprenticeship training model. In that case, concurrent employment with one of the college's cooperative education partners is a requirement for student admission.

Regarding the multi-campus nature of these universities, some are centrally governed and others allow each campus to manage themselves at a local level. The extent of the distributive control model tends to be a function of the type of campuses – i.e. whether urban or rural, large or small, specialising in certain disciplines or providing a more broad-based portfolio of disciplines. Partnership with other education providers, including FE colleges in the region is deemed important as is, of course, partnership with regional employers and support agencies. In all cases, education is provided through a network of learning centres which include the various university campuses outreach centres and well distributed study facilities. Online learning facilities are typically used to extend the reach of delivery across the entire region.

One university is in fact a consortium of eleven universities and university colleges, with the specific objective of building a strong scientific platform. Ease of access to courses, libraries and other facilities to all students, teachers and researchers across the region is facilitated.

Some of the key learning from these exemplars include:

- uniting different HEIs across multiple campuses can lead to enhanced and effective services and programme provision for students across geographical distances;
- there are many different models of governance for HEIs who come together; good governance arrangements are crucial in the context of the coming together of a number of institutions across multiple campuses;
- allocation of funding will drive behaviour towards a unified (or separate) multi campus university,
- robust structures and mechanisms are needed to ensure constant and good quality communication to the appropriate people;
- agreement on terms and conditions of staff working across all campuses is important to ensure equity of workload, and consistency of services to regional partners and students;
- investment in ICT is essential to facilitate collaboration, and delivery of programmes and services over a wide geographical area and across multiple campuses.

Charles Sturt University^{ee}

Charles Sturt University (CSU) is a multi-campus public university located in New South Wales, Victoria, and the Australian Capital Territory. The University's origins date back to the establishment of Experimental Farms in Bathurst in 1895 and Wagga Wagga in 1896, and its history includes the

development of Teachers Colleges on those sites in Wagga Wagga in 1947 and Bathurst in 1951. CSU was established in 1989 and is Australia's largest regional university and the country's leading provider of distance education. There is a strong focus on services to the community and practical learning experiences for students that has led to the establishment of several clinics and enterprises. and a strong emphasis on partnerships with industry, government, and other educational organisations and on student internships and practical placements. The university has 40,000 students across 8 State-wide campuses and a campus in Ontario (Canada). It has specialist centres in North Parramatta, Manly (Sydney), and Broken Hill. Courses are also delivered in conjunction with Study Group Australia in Sydney and Melbourne. CSU also has various course delivery partnerships with several TAFE institutions across the country. All of these campuses' are located a considerable distance from each other – for example, the Broken Hill campus is located 1,100 km from the Manly campus.

The Baden-Württemberg Cooperative State University

The Baden-Württemberg Cooperative State University (German: *Duale Hochschule Baden-Württemberg*, DHBW^{ff}) is one of the largest HEIs in the German Federal State with some 34,000 students, over 9,000 partner companies and more than 125,000 graduates. It has 9 locations and 3 campuses throughout the state. It's by-line is 'Theory and practice – the key to success'. It offers dual-education (cooperative education) bachelor's-degree programs in cooperation with industry and non-profit institutions in the areas of business administration, engineering, and social services. The key feature of the so-called cooperative dual' education is that students regularly switch from their academic studies at the university to practical training by their workplace training provider (partner company). Concurrent employment with one of the college's cooperative education partners is a requirement for student admission. The recruitment is exclusively done by the cooperative education partners. The key benefits of this approach are: students are financially independent (students are employed), the learning is varied (to suit the needs of employers) and intensive (to suit the short 'sandwich' mode of formal learning periods) lecturers are kept up to date in current industrial knowledge and practices, and classes are typically small.

University of the Highlands and Islands^{gg}

UHI Millennium Institute owes its origin to a desire to provide university education to the people of the highlands and islands of Scotland. Scotland, with a population of about 5M has 13 universities plus colleges of further education. All of these are located in the east and south of the country. Edinburgh alone with a population of 400,000 has four universities. North and west of a line from Perth to Aberdeen there is no university.

The UHI project was established in 1992 and, with the support of millennium Commission funding, achieved higher education institute status in 2001. In 2008 it received taught degree awarding powers and is currently pursuing research degree awarding powers with a view to obtaining full university status within the next 3 to 5 years.

The UHI is a partnership of 13 independent colleges and research institutions, providing access to study at further and higher education level as well as research opportunities to some 7,500 students across two faculties (Arts, Humanities & Business and Science health & Engineering). Each partner serves local, regional, national and international needs, as well as making a distinctive contribution to the university partnership. There is also a partnership with local FE colleges which deliver further education to nearly 33,000 students in the region.

Each partner has its own character. Some are relatively large colleges in the urban centres of the region such as Perth, Elgin and Inverness. Others are smaller institutions, including some whose primary focus is on research. All, however, have a student-centred culture and an individual approach to student learning. In addition to the main campuses, the partnership also provides

educational opportunities through a network of more than 70 learning centres located throughout the Highlands and Islands, Moray and Perthshire, covering a large geographical territory.

A number of the institutions have gained significantly in terms of research funding and capital developments with the support of UHI. Some of the lessons learned during a visit by IoTI to UHI include:

1. Governance arrangements are crucial in determining where the balance of power lies;
2. Dual sources of funding drive behaviour (which may, in fact, be damaging to the mission of UHI);
3. The partner institutions invested heavily in ICT which made collaboration over a wide area possible (e.g. there are 1,200 video conference meetings a week);
4. Planning for constant and varied communication is essential;
5. Some form of centralised control over terms and conditions of the people who work for the partner institutions is necessary if issues such as research are to be adequately addressed.

Øresund University^{hh}

Øresund University is a consortium of eleven universities and university colleges on both sides of the Danish-Swedish region of Øresund. The consortium of universities is based on the geographical proximity and a long common history and culture. Aiming at becoming a significant science region, the consortium increases quality and efficiency among the participating institutions by opening up all courses, libraries and other facilities to all students, teachers and researchers.

All involved in Øresund University have easy access to "the other side" of the region. The education and research of both countries thus complement each other in making Øresund a scientific and educational stronghold.

Øresund University is directed by the 11 vice-chancellors of the participating institutions. A secretariat manages the day-to-day running of Øresund University and is responsible for coordinating all projects in which it participates. The various co-operation efforts within Øresund University take place mainly at faculty and departmental level, including collaborative projects, networks or formalised agreements about education and research. Co-operation also comprises many other university services such as study administration, contacts with the surrounding community, international issues and information.

Appendix 4: CUA Combined Profile 2012/13 (from HEA profile reports)

STUDENT NUMBERS										
Entrants					Graduates					

DISCIPLINARY MIX					
First Year Full-time Undergraduate New Entrants			Doctorate (All modes)		
	No.	%		No.	%
General Programmes	0	0%	General Programmes	0	0%
Education Science	0	0%	Education Science	0	0%
Humanities & Arts	264	7%	Humanities & Arts	0	0%
Social Science, Business & Law	774	21%	Social Science, Business & Law	9	24%
Science	768	21%	Science	15	39%
Engineering, Manufacturing & Construction	744	20%	Engineering, Manufacturing & Construction	6	16%
Agriculture & Veterinary	87	2%	Agriculture & Veterinary	0	0%
Health & Welfare	428	12%	Health & Welfare	8	21%
Services	625	17%	Services	0	0%
Combined	0	0%	Combined	0	0%
Total	3,690	100%	Total	38	100%
PARTICIPATION					
	No.	%		No.	%
<i>(% of Total Enrolments incl. Flexible Learning)</i>			<i>(% of New Entrants)</i>		
Flexible Learners (PT, Distance, E-Learning, In-Service)	3,221	28%	Mature Entrants (Full-time Undergraduate)	792	21%
Participants in Labour Market Activation (Springboard/LMA) (% of National Participation)	512	N/A	Estimate: Entrants with Disability (EAS)	97	3%
Regional Intake (% of Full-time Enrolments)			Estimate: Entrants from Non-Manual, Semi- and Unskilled Socio-economic Backgrounds (EAS)	940	25%
from the institution's county		N/A			
from the institution's county and bordering counties		N/A			
INTERNATIONALISATION					
	No.	%			
International Students (Full-time)	233	2%	Erasmus Students Outgoing (excl. work placements)	33	
(% of Full-time Enrolments)					
EU	73	1%			
Non-EU	160	1%			

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Non-Progression Rate from 1st to 2nd Year

	Level 6	Level 7	Level 8		Level 6	Level 7	Level 8
	%	%	%		%	%	%
Education	N/A	N/A	N/A	Engineering (excl. Civil)	N/A	32%	N/A
Healthcare	N/A	19%	2%	Construction & related	N/A	50%	N/A
Combined & Other Disciplines	N/A	N/A	N/A	Services	28%	20%	N/A
Soc. Sci., Business, Law, Arts, Humanities	33%	30%	19%	Computer Science	N/A	35%	22%
Science & Agriculture & Veterinary	N/A	22%	N/A	Total	28%	29%	10%

RESEARCH AND KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER

No. of Doctorate Graduates per 10 Academic Staff	0.2	Contract Research Income 2011/12 (€000)	5,417
(latest 5 year cumulative)		Private (€000)	0
No. of Web of Science Documents per Academic	N/A	State and Semi-State (€000)	2,906
Relative Citation Impact (World Average = 1)	N/A	EU (€000)	1,101
		Industry (€000)	143
		Other (€000)	901
		Contribution in respect of overheads (€000)	366
		Total Contract Research Income per Academic Staff	€ 6,848
		EU Contract Research Income per Academic Staff	€ 1,392
(2012/2013 cumulative)	No.	(2012/2013 cumulative)	No.
Priority Patent Applications	0.0	Licence agreements (institution - private industry)	1
Total Patents Granted	0.0	Spin-out companies created	0
Invention Disclosures	12.0	(FDR 2013)	%
		Level 8 Graduates in Permanent/Temporary Employment	N/A
		Level 8 Graduates in Further Study	N/A
		Level 9/10 Graduates in Permanent/Temporary Employment	N/A
		Level 9/10 Graduates in Further Study	N/A

1 Total expenditure per FTE student excluding research and depreciation with pension adjustments, based on unadjusted SRS numbers.

Appendix 5: Future CUA Profile – based on the indicative 2016/17 forecast from Compact Agreements

STUDENT NUMBERS											
Entrants					Graduates						
New Entrants (Full-time Undergraduate)					No.	Nos.			%		
					4,416	Undergraduate Graduates			91	%	
						Postgraduate Graduates			9	%	
									100%		
Enrolments											
					Full-time%	Part-time%	Total				
Other Enrolments (IoTs only)					200	232	432	Other Enrolments (IoTs only) %			
Foundation					153	28	181	Foundation %			
FETAC Cert					0	0	0	FETAC Cert %			
FETAC Advanced Cert					47	204	251	FETAC Advanced Cert %			
of which are apprenticeships					0	74		of which are apprentic %			
Undergraduate					12,300	3,001	15,302	Undergraduate %			
Higher certificate					858	543	1,401	Higher certificate %			
Ordinary Degree (L7)					6,912	1,410	8,322	Ordinary Degree (L7) %			
Honours Degree (L8)					4,530	822	5,353	Honours Degree (L8) %			
Occasional								Occasional %			
Postgraduate					380	550	930	Postgraduate %			
Postgrad Diploma/Cert					112	135	247	Postgrad Diploma/Cer %			
Masters Taught (L9)					90	398	488	Masters Taught (L9) %			
Masters Research (L9)					126	15	141	Masters Research (L9) %			
PhD (L10)					52	2	54	PhD (L10) %			
Occasional								Occasional %			
Total Enrolments					12,680	3,551	16,232	Total Enrolments %			
Research & Taught (L9/10)					476			Research & Taught (L9 % FTE L8 and All PG			8%
Research (L9/10)					187			Research (L9/10) % FTE L8 and All PG			3%
Research (L10)					53			Research (L10) % FTE L8 and All PG			1%

DISCIPLINARY MIX

Full-time Undergraduate New Entrants

		%
General Programmes	0	
Education Science	58	
Humanities & Arts	338	8%
Social Science, Business & Law	1,302	29%
Science	879	20%
Engineering, Manufacturing & Construction	1,095	25%
Agriculture & Veterinary	117	3%
Health & Welfare	182	4%
Services	445	10%
Combined	0	
Total	4,416	100%

Full and Part-time PhDs

		%
General Programmes	0	
Education Science	0	
Humanities & Arts	2	4%
Social Science, Business & Law	9	17%
Science	25	46%
Engineering, Manufacturing & Construction	18	33%
Agriculture & Veterinary	0	
Health & Welfare	0	0%
Services	0	
Combined	0	
Total	54	100%

STUDENT PROFILE

(% of Enrolments)

		%
Flexible Learners (Part-time, Distance, E-Learning)	3,998	24%
International Students (Full-time)	792	6%
EU	346	44%
Non-EU	446	56%

(% of New Entrants)

		%
Mature Entrants (Full-time Undergraduate)	1030	23%
Estimate: Entrants with Disability (EAS***)	380	9%

STAFF & FINANCIAL DATA

		%
Core Staff	1,325	100%
Academic Staff	776	59%
Support staff	548	41%
Contract Research & Specialist Staff	114	100%
Academic Staff	60	53%
Support staff	54	47%
Total Staff	1,439	100%
Total Academic	836	58%
Total Support	602	42%

		%
Total Income	129,230	100%
State Grants	53,288	41%
Fees	51,292	40%
Research Grants & Contracts	7,000	5%
Other Income	17,650	14%
Total Expenditure	129,230	100%
Core - Pay	90,305	70%
Core - Non-Pay	31,925	25%
Research Grants & Contracts - Pay	3,000	2%
Research Grants & Contracts - Non-Pay	4,000	3%

Staff Qualifications (as % of total FTE academic staff including research staff)

	%
Full-time Academic Staff with PhD qualification	34%
Full-time Academic Staff with PhD or Masters qu.	90%
All Academic Staff with PhD qualification	33%
All Academic Staff with PhD or Masters qualification	89%

Appendix 6: Definitions of the TU criteria

The criteria as provided in Appendix A (see below) of the Landscape document have been numbered for ease of reference.

The following is a list of the criteria that are specified as a metric. In each case, the target metric and the data source that will be used to quantify that metric is identified.

At the time of application for designation as a TU:

Student Profile

- 1) **Criteria:** Level 9 & 10 research enrolments in research programmes at Levels 9 and 10.

Reference in the TU Criteria: 3.2a

Target: 4% of FTE at L8-10; 7% within 10 years

Data Source: SRS/HEA returns as of March 1st each year

- 2) **Criteria:** Life Long Learning

Target: 30% of all students will be in the category part time and/or open and distance learning and/or elearning.(as specified in HEA returns codes). Apprentices are not included in this.

Reference in the TU Criteria: 3.2b

Data Source: SRS/HEA returns as of March 1st each year

(Note: the criteria – see Appendix A below - inadequately defined as including students ‘on professional focussed programmes and industry up-skilling, including part-time, work-related programmes and work-study programmes and/or mature learners’. For the purposes of the Expression of Interest, LLL will comprise only those designated in the SRS returns as Part time + distance learning + elearning. Matures (over 23 years old on the date of first entry to HE) will also be recorded, but under a separate heading.

Staff qualifications

- 3) **Criteria:** qualifications of full time, academic staff engaged in delivering higher education programmes

Target: 90% will hold a Level 9 qualification or higher.

Reference in the TU Criteria: 4.2a

Data Source: Information supplied by each of the Institutes based on staffing returns to HEA /HR offices or other data holder

- 4) **Criteria:** full time, higher education, academic staff, to hold a Level 10 qualification or the equivalence in professional experience, combined with a terminal degree appropriate to their profession.

Target: 45%, growing to 65% within 10 years of designation

Reference in the TU Criteria: 4.2b

Data Source: Information supplied by each of the institutes based on staffing returns to HEA / HR offices or other data holder

- 5) **Criteria:** in the fields of knowledge/study in which doctoral level training and research is on-going, the proportion of staff holding Level 10 qualifications

Target: 80%

Reference in the TU Criteria: 4.2c

Data Source: Information supplied by each of the institutes/research offices

‘Appendix A’: Criteria for a Technological University^[14]

1 Mission

1.1 A technological university will have a systematic focus on the preparation of graduates for complex professional roles in a changing technological world. It will advance knowledge through research and scholarship and disseminate this knowledge to meet the needs of society and enterprise. It will have particular regard to the needs of the region in which the university is located.

1.2 Having regard to the mission of a technological university, these criteria set out the requirements that are to be met by an applicant before designation can be made.

2 Institutional Profile

2.1 The university will –

- a) be characterised by the breadth of its programme provision across higher education Levels 6 to 10 of the National Framework of Qualifications.
- b) have programmes of study that are vocationally/professionally oriented, with a strong focus on science and technology.
- c) have programmes of study that incorporate structured work placement.
- d) have programmes that address the social and economic needs of the region in which the university is located.
- e) have sufficient resources and critical mass to ensure appropriate pedagogical and research quality and depth of faculty expertise to meet the mission of the institution.
- f) have sufficient critical mass to support effective and efficient governance and administration and to provide an appropriate level of student services.
- g) maintain an active research policy primarily focused on applied, problem oriented research and discovery, with effective knowledge transfer alongside the provision of consulting/problem solving services that are particularly relevant to the region.
- h) support intensive and broad-based links with regional business, enterprise, professions and related stakeholders that inform curriculum, teaching and learning, assessment and research.

3 Student Profile

3.1 The student profile of the university will match its stated mission. Specifically, the university will provide programmes at higher education Levels 6 to 10 to meet local, regional and national demand and to meet the university’s responsibilities in respect of educational opportunities at these levels.

3.2 At the time of application for designation as a technological university –

- a) enrolment in the applicant institution in research programmes at Levels 9-10 will not be less than **4%** of FTE enrolments at levels 8 to 10. In addition, the application must evidence a developmental trajectory, showing that the institution will raise these enrolments to 7% within a period of ten years from the date of designation. Level 10 provision will be concentrated in a small number of fields/departments which have the capacity and credibility to offer this level of study and training to the level set by the national PhD standard;
- b) a combined minimum of **30%** of all students in the applicant institution will be lifelong learning students enrolled on professional focused programmes and industry up-skilling, including part-time, work-related programmes and work-study programmes and/or mature learners.

3.3 Where the institutions that consolidate to comprise a technological university have been providing, prior to consolidation, non-higher education programmes (as defined by the National Framework of Qualifications) the university will, if necessary to meet local, regional and national demand, ensure this activity continues, either directly or indirectly, through appropriate administrative and academic arrangements that allow for the sharing of academic facilities and the progression of students.

4 Staff Profile

4.1 A technological university will in the appointment, management and progression/promotion of academic staff to and within the university have in place contractual and appointment procedures that, *inter alia*, -

- a) give weight to professional practice and institutional engagement activities
- and
- b) provide existing staff members with a balance between teaching, research, engagement activities and academic administration that is appropriate to their subject area and their academic experience.

4.2 At the time of application for designation –

- a) **90%** of full time, academic staff engaged in delivering higher education programmes in the applicant institution will hold a Level 9 qualification or higher.
- b) at least **45%** per cent of full time, higher education, academic staff, will hold a Level 10 qualification or the equivalence in professional experience, combined with a terminal degree appropriate to their profession. The proportion of such staff that hold an equivalence in professional experience shall not exceed 10% of full time, higher education, academic staff. There will be demonstrable evidence of a developmental trajectory that shows the capacity, including staff with equivalence in professional experience as referred to, to increase and reach levels consistent with other Irish universities but not less than 65% within ten years of designation. These staff will not only hold Level 10 qualifications or equivalent in professional experience, but also be able to demonstrate sustained activity in relevant areas of research and development.
- c) in the fields of knowledge/study in which doctoral level training and research is on-going, the proportion of staff holding Level 10 qualifications will be in excess of **80%**. As a general principle, only those with Level 10 qualifications will be engaged in the delivery and supervision of Level 9 programmes. Only those with Level 10 qualifications and with a sustained record of research publications and mission-appropriate research outputs will be engaged in the delivery and supervision of Level 10 programmes.

5 Teaching, Learning and Curriculum Development

5.1 A technological university will have the curriculum and the teaching, learning and assessment processes to support its core mission to develop graduates who have a focus on the world of work. The full opportunities provided by the National Framework of Qualifications for enhanced teaching, learning and curriculum development will be incorporated, with a particular focus on-

- a) Curriculum development focused on knowledge, skills and competencies developed in conjunction with business, professional organisations and, workforce, student and occupational organisations;
- b) Curricula that embed the full range of generic attributes linked to employability and citizenship;
- c) Curricula that embed engagement in the workplace as part of its programmes;
- d) Research-informed and practice-led teaching, learning and assessment that uses problem-oriented, practice-based and is community engaged.

6 Research

6.1 The research dimension of a technological university will-

- a) Focus on applied, problem-oriented research and social and technological development and innovation, with direct social and economic impacts and public and private benefits in the region in which the university is located;

- b) Support and sustain research activity among its staff that can be compared to appropriate international benchmarks. Such benchmarks will include *inter alia* evidence of cooperative research groups of a viable scale, success in winning competitive research funding nationally and internationally and inter-institutional research collaboration;
- c) In linking research to teaching, demonstrate methodological approaches to the formation of level 10 knowledge, skills and competencies that are appropriate to the institution's research mission and meet national PhD level standards. This will be through the integration of practice-led, professional, and industrial doctorate structures alongside more traditional PI-led approaches, all within the context of national policy for structured PhD provision.

6.2 An applicant institution will, at the time of application, –

- a) have existing research capacity to support on-going programmes, projects and doctoral training in at least three fields of knowledge/study as defined by ISCED fields of study at the 2-digit level (ISCED2 – “Narrow fields”); SCED codes are outlined on the HEA website at <http://www.heai.ie/files/files/file/statistics/SRS%20User%20Files/EurostatISCED.pdf>

and

- b) demonstrate a developmental trajectory showing that the institution can extend research and doctoral activity to sufficient capacity to support two further fields, as defined by ISCED2 within five years of designation as a technological university.

7 International Profile

7.1 The international engagement of a technological university will specifically reflect its mission and orientation.

7.2 At the time of application, an applicant will demonstrate a developmental trajectory for the enhancement of internationalisation related to teaching and learning, research and staff development and a sustainable range of international collaborations such as joint projects, student and staff exchanges including the collaborative provision of academic and training programmes.

8 Leadership, Management and Governance

8.1 The leadership management and governance arrangements in place will be fully reflective of and in line with the stated mission of the institution. In practice this will mean –

- a) governance structures that reflect the external orientation of the institution and the engagement focus of its programmes of study;
- b) an integrated academic governance structure that gives coherence to multiple units, with consolidation of previously autonomous institutions where these existed, within the framework of the institution's mission.
- c) a leadership team that combines strong academic credentials and experience with experience in enterprise and professions relevant to the institution's mission.
- d) effective institutional-level academic governance with the authority, processes and competence to ensure the quality of programmes of study and the quality and integrity of other academic matters;
- e) workplace practices and employment contracts are reflective of a modern university including, *inter alia*, such matters as the flexible delivery of programmes for diverse learner groups, the length and structure of the academic year, the efficient utilisation of the institution's physical resources and other infrastructure.

End Notes

- a agreed with the HEA in Spring 2014
- b See - <http://cualliance.ie/whats-new.html>
- c See: <http://nwra.ie/>
- d Gross Value Added (GVA) at *basic prices* is a measure of the value of the final goods and services produced in a region (less materials and services used coming from outside the region) priced at the producers received value minus any taxes, plus any subsidies received. This is expressed as a % of the national total in Figure 2.
- e A measure of the demographic profile, social class composition and labour market profile (i.e. family size, parental status, unemployment and socio-economic classification)[14]
- f Source: Personal communication with Statistics Office, HEA (email 01.12.14). The data refers to undergraduate only and full-time only.
- g Of the national population, 69.4% do not hold a 3rd level qualification (CSO 2011).
- h “Building a Learning Region Together”, a collaboration of HEIs across the BMW
- i The series of reviews by the OECD on the role of *HE in Regional and City Development* is instructive - http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/education/higher-education-in-regional-and-city-development_22183140
- j e.g. ‘The shape of jobs to come’; <http://fastfuture.com/>
- k a perusal of FDI locations across the country will verify that fact
- l See also ‘Impact of distance on access to education’, Irish Times, 8th Dec, 2014; <http://www.irishtimes.com/opinion/letters/impact-of-distance-on-access-to-education-1.2027657>
- m In this context, the term ‘applied research’ is understood to include research, development and innovation (RDI) activities that solve societal challenges through, and alongside, developing new technologies, products, processes and services, i.e. aligned with Horizon 2020 and other EU research initiatives.
- n e.g. Engineers Ireland, Chartered Accountants Ireland, the Institution of Occupational Safety & Health, the Royal Institute of British Architects, RICS, RIAI, Irish Medicines Board and the Chartered Institute of Personnel & Development
- o The Accelerated Campus Entrepreneurship programme is a model for how entrepreneurship can be embedded in the curriculum.
- p There is lower participation by families of the less-skilled workforce and the unemployed. Young people who attend schools in disadvantaged areas achieve lower leaving certificate points than those from middle-class backgrounds and they tend to make subject choices (such as the LC Applied) that does not prepare them well for higher education [55].
- q In Ireland in 2010, only 5 per cent of HE new entrants held FETAC qualifications, despite this group accounting for 15 per cent of CAO applications.
- r Many Irish adults do not hold a Level 8 or higher award or, indeed, any 3rd qualifications. Yet, Ireland ranks below the European average participation in lifelong learning (LLL) and this has declined since 2007 despite the rise in unemployment([50], Fig 5.[46], [88]).
- s See: <http://odl.itsligo.ie/home/online-learning-news/> and <http://www.independent.ie/life/family/learning/study-online-at-it-sligo-no-matter-where-you-are-26740855.html>
- t <http://nwra.ie/metricireland/>
- u <http://www.nibrt.ie/>
- v <http://thecrestproject.com/>

-
- w e.g. the existing CREST project is an example of this; <http://thecrestproject.com/>
- x including, IDA, EI, Western Development Commission, Údarás na Gaeltachta, IBEC, Local Enterprise Offices, Leader companies, Chambers of Commerce, ISME, ETBs etc.
- y e.g.
- (a) 25 InterTradeIreland Fusion projects;
 - (b) st£2.8M Interreg IVA funding for the CREST (Centre for Renewable Energy and Sustainable Technologies), project between IT Sligo, South West College, Cavan Institute of Technology and Innovation, Dumfries and Galloway College, Scotland;
 - (c) €1.9M Interreg IIIA funding for the RIM21 robotics/CIM laboratory project between IT Sligo and North East Institute, Ballymena;
 - (d) €3.2million INTERREG IVA funding for the KITE (Knowledge and Innovation Transfer in Engineering) project between IT Sligo, Northern Regional College (NRC) and Ayr College.
- z Nationally, the number of potential undergraduate HE entrants is expected to grow fairly moderately from 41,000 in 2010/2011 to 47,000 in 2019/20 and to over 51,000 by 2026/2027 [70] (i.e. an average annual growth of 1.3%).
- aa see: www.uis.unesco.org/Library/Documents/isc97-en.pdf and <http://www.heai.ie/files/files/file/statistics/SRS%20User%20Files/EurostatISCED.pdf>
- bb This would be a new endeavour for the CUA institutions. There is considerable international experience of funding raising for education (particularly in the USA) and a growing level of activity in Ireland. Examples of these include:
- i) Voluntary Support of education, 2013, Council for Aid to Education, USA, http://www.cae.org/images/uploads/pdf/VSE_2013_Sample_Pages.pdf
 - ii) Irish Universities Look to Graduates for Funds as Atlantic Goes West, The Irish Times, 25 February 2014; <http://www.atlanticphilanthropies.org/news/irish-universities-look-graduates-funds-atlantic-goes-west>
 - iii) Philanthropy in Trinity; <https://www.tcd.ie/development/about/impact.php>
 - iv) Philanthropy Ireland; <http://www.philanthropy.ie/resources/>
 - v) The Role of Philanthropy in Funding Irish Universities, O'Connor, D., Millar, R., 2into3 management Consultants, October 2012; http://www.2into3.com/_fileupload/The%20Role%20of%20Philanthropy%20in%20Funding%20Irish%20Universities.pdf
 - vi) The Role, Value and Scale of Higher Education in Ireland, Expert Group on Future Funding for Higher Education, Consultation Paper 1, Department of Education and Skills, January 2012
- cc For example: life sciences, creative industries, ICT, marine, tourism, agri-food, and the energy sector.
- dd Investing in Global Relationships 2010-2015, Report of the High-Level Group on International Education to the Tánaiste and Minister for Education and Skills, September 2010.
- ee <http://www.csu.edu.au/>
- ff <http://www.dhbw.de/english.html>
- gg <http://www.uhi.ac.uk/en/>
- hh <http://www.eucen.eu/BeFlexPlus/CaseStudies/OresundUniversityDescription.pdf>

Connacht-Ulster Alliance

For further information contact:

Dr. Brendan McCormack,
CUA Project Manager,
c/o President's Office,
GMIT,
Dublin Road,
Galway,
Co. Galway

e: brendan.mccormack@cualliance.ie

m: +353 87 9152371

www.CUAlliance.ie

APPENDIX 3

IUA Symposium Agenda



COMPETITIVENESS REGULATION FUNDING

iua | IRISH
UNIVERSITIES
ASSOCIATION



SYMPOSIUM
PROGRAMME

21st CENTURY UNIVERSITIES

PERFORMANCE & SUSTAINABILITY

Monday 29th September 2014, 9am - 5pm
Royal College of Physicians,
No. 6 Kildare Street, Dublin 2

www.iua.ie

21st CENTURY UNIVERSITIES **PERFORMANCE** & **SUSTAINABILITY**

AGENDA

08:30 - 09:30 REGISTRATION

09.30 - 10.00 IUA WELCOME



Opening Remarks: The Role and Contribution of Universities

Dr Patrick Prendergast, Provost, Trinity College Dublin and Chair of the Irish Universities Association

10.00 - 11.00 **SESSION 1: HIGHER EDUCATION – LOOKING FORWARD**

Session 1 Chair: Prof. Philip Nolan, President, Maynooth University



Presentation 1: **The Educator's perspective**

Prof. Stephanie Fahey, Lead Partner Education Oceania, Ernst and Young Australia

Q&A



Presentation 2: **The Industry Perspective**

Mr Gerry Collins, Senior Executive, Pharmaceutical Industry

Q&A

11.00 - 12:15 **SESSION 2: THE REGULATORY CHALLENGE**

Session 2 Chair: Dr Michael Murphy, President, University College Cork



Presentation 3: **Systems Regulation and Governance – Ireland and the international context**

Mr Aims McGuinness, National Center for Higher Education Management Systems, Colorado

Q&A



Presentation 4: **The EUA Autonomy Scorecard - Ireland's Comparative Performance**

Mr Thomas Estermann, Director, Governance, Funding and Public Policy Development. European University Association (EUA)

Q&A

21st CENTURY UNIVERSITIES **PERFORMANCE** & **SUSTAINABILITY**

12.15 - 13.00 LUNCH

13.00 - 13.20 ADDRESS



Address from Minister for Education and Skills,
Jan O'Sullivan TD

13:25 - 15:25 **SESSION 3: TOWARDS A SUSTAINABLE FUNDING MODEL – ISSUES AND OPTIONS**

Session 3 Chair: Dr Maria Hinfelaar, President, Limerick Institute of Technology



Presentation 5:
**Funding trends in the
OECD**

Ms Patricia Mangeol, Policy
Analyst, OECD Directorate for
Education and Skills

Q&A



Presentation 6:
**Overview of university
funding models**

Mr Art Hauptman,
Independent Public Policy
Consultant on Education,
Washington DC

Q&A



Presentation 7:
**The Role and Potential of
Philanthropy**

Ms Liesl Elder, Director of
Development, The University
of Oxford and Chair of Ross
Group

Q&A

21st CENTURY UNIVERSITIES **PERFORMANCE** & SUSTAINABILITY

15.25 - 16:40 SESSION 4: FINDINGS AND MESSAGES

Session 4 Chair: John Bowman

Stakeholder Panel Discussion with Q&A



Seán Ó Foghlú

Secretary General, Dept of Education and Skills



Laura Harmon

President, Union of Students of Ireland



Danny McCoy

CEO, Ibec



Dr. Mary Canning

Former Lead Education Specialist, World Bank



Paul Hannigan

President of Letterkenny IT and Chair of IOTi



Prof. Andrew Deeks

President of University College Dublin

16.40 - 17.00 CLOSING REMARKS

Dr. Patrick Prendergast,
Provost, Trinity College Dublin and Chair of the Irish Universities Association



lyit

Institiúid Teicneolaíochta
Leitir Ceanáin
Letterkenny Institute
of Technology

Bóthar an Chalaigh, Leitir Ceanáin
Chontae Dhún na nGall, Éire

Port Road, Letterkenny
County Donegal, Ireland

Telephone +353 74 918 6000
Fax +353 74 918 6005