



NUI Galway
OÉ Gaillimh



Looking out to the World with Ambition

College of Arts, Social Sciences
and Celtic Studies Strategic Plan

2021 - 25

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“If the Arts give us one thing, it is the ability to see things differently”



Introduction from the Executive Dean

A chairde,

Our Strategy starts from a position of strength.

The College of Arts, Social Sciences & Celtic Studies enjoys a global research reputation across the spectrum of the Arts and Social Sciences. Current major EU-funded projects are opening up our wealth of archive holdings and digital capabilities in languages, literatures and politics for diverse audiences. Our UNESCO Chair in Children, Youth & Civic Engagement is just one example of the global recognition our work with communities right around the world has attracted: we are partners of choice for multiple international agencies in co-designing better educational and environmental outcomes for all. We have been pleased to play our part in guiding the Irish response to COVID-19 and we repeatedly bring our world-leading innovators in health behaviour together with change makers in a variety of professional contexts.

We do all this work with and for our students. We have a proud history of enabling access to education for people from all four provinces of Ireland whilst also facilitating exchange with all four corners of the world. Today, one fifth of our student body joins us from abroad and we enthusiastically support the University's ambition of enabling 100% student mobility.

Exchange – of cultural values, experiences, knowledge – is at the heart of what we do, and we are committed to finding new, sustainable ways to enable such mutually transformational encounters.

This Strategy is all about being transformational.

If the Arts give us one thing, it is the ability to see things differently; if the Social Sciences were to have just one value, it would be to make people care; and if we had to distil Celtic Studies down to a single word, for us it would be the most emotive of all: home. From wherever we call home, we look at the world around us and ask how it can be better, for more people, more of the time. We also look at all the things we already have and are mindful that the past too needs tending: there is transformational work to be done in finding the right ways to remember and keep our most important lessons, objects, and practices accessible for future generations.

What follows seeks to give voice to all this. We want to ensure that the story we collectively have to tell is heard as far around the world as possible, and this will help us in turn hear different voices and transform our own practices in response. It has been an absolute pleasure to work with my 365 committed and talented colleagues in designing the Strategy you have before you and I look forward greatly to the good work that lies ahead of us.

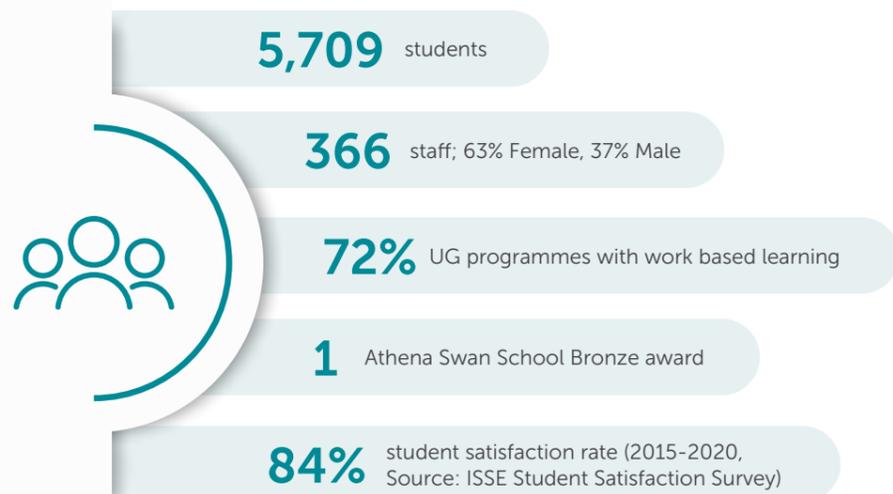
Is leis an straitéis seo a chruthóidh muid an todhchaí.

Professor Rebecca Braun



Who we Are: The College of Arts, Social Sciences & Celtic Studies in 2021

PEOPLE



GLOBAL



RESEARCH & INNOVATION



SUSTAINABILITY



REPUTATION



Creating the Strategy

I. Creating the Strategy

The following pages set out our high-level Vision for where we want to get to by 2030, as well as our Aims and Objectives for the period 2021-2025. In preparing this Strategy, we are acutely aware of the profound transformation to our working practices that we have witnessed right across the University since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. Many of these new working practices bring opportunity and we are committed to devising plans that will allow us to transition confidently and safely into a post-pandemic period.

We work from our existing strengths in teaching and research and provide an overview of our commitments across our eight major portfolios: Teaching & Learning; Research; International; Equality, Diversity and Inclusion; People; Student Recruitment; Partnerships & Engagement; Governance.

Our Eight Major Portfolios



TEACHING &
LEARNING



RESEARCH



INTERNATIONAL



STUDENT
RECRUITMENT



PARTNERSHIPS &
ENGAGEMENT



EQUALITY,
DIVERSITY &
INCLUSION



PEOPLE



GOVERNANCE



Where are
we going

Vision

By 2030, the College of Arts, Social Sciences & Celtic Studies will be known for the distinctive way we connect expertise across the arts, humanities, and social sciences, both to other bodies of knowledge and to applications in other sectors. Our overarching goal is to inspire transformational thought and action across society, while fulfilling our mission as a public university serving the public good, such that the knowledge held within our disciplines empowers people to lead fulfilling, socially and environmentally responsible lives right around the world.



Shared Ethos

Our work fosters pleasure, wonder, and practical solutions in equal measure. When we reference 'transformational' knowledge, thought, and action, we mean the extent to which we are motivated by this work to look critically at practices and assumptions right across society and propose new ways of doing things¹. We are also addressing the knowledge and skills that are required to make sense of our world, and of an ever changing study and work environment. This knowledge and these skills transform our own sense of self, as well as providing us with the tools to make a transformational difference to the lives of others. We believe strongly that such an experience should be available to everyone. We welcome students and colleagues from all backgrounds to help us translate the transformational value of the Arts and Social Sciences for different sectors and communities right around the world.

Aims

Our Strategy out to 2025 has five core overarching aims:

- To empower our students to create positive change in both their own lives and society at large by delivering at scale a tailored teaching experience focused on transformational knowledge
- To ensure the College of Arts, Social Sciences & Celtic Studies is internationally recognised by both prospective students and staff members for its distinct areas of connective expertise
- To sustain multiple major partnerships beyond academe at both regional and national levels that underscore our ability to do transformational work with a wide range of stakeholders
- To ensure NUI Galway is an identified academic partner of choice in the Arts and Social Sciences for fellow research and higher education institutions around the world
- To be nationally-leading in our commitment to facilitating a healthy work-life balance and professional fulfilment for colleagues on all contract types.

¹ Our ideas have been informed by some of the thinking set out in Paul Ashwin, *Transforming University Education: A Manifesto* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2020).

Objectives

- Establish the internationally distinctive College Graduate School, opening doors for our first intake of PGT and PGR students in 2022/23
- Grow a portfolio of new and freshly reconceived PG programmes within the Graduate School that will capitalise upon our interdisciplinary strengths and will individually aim to recruit 25+ students per annum by 2025
- Establish areas of University-wide collaboration in the PG and Research space to be actively pursued beyond 2025
- Increase registrations on our UG programmes from students joining from outside the Republic of Ireland, such that most programmes routinely admit a 25% international cohort
- Work with our students and teaching staff across all programmes to enable them to articulate the transformational value of the knowledge acquired within them
- Support the University's Irish Language Strategy by fostering examples of best practice in teaching and learning, research, and links with Gaeltacht communities, in line with our national and international reputation for Irish language education
- Highlight pathways through our programmes and develop further innovations in teaching and research that particularly support the Sustainable Development Goals
- Use evidence-based methods to identify and develop signature research areas at College level and raise their external profile through a suite of measures appropriate to the Arts and Social Sciences
- Expand opportunities for early-career researchers in our signature research areas through successful externally funded project development led by mid-career and senior staff
- Support emerging new 'blue skies' research, such that we can point to a pipeline of new ideas supporting our research reputation by 2025
- Expand collaborations with partners beyond academe, both with a view to enhancing employability prospects for our graduates and to developing new, practice-facing research and teaching opportunities
- Respect the equality and diversity of the College's student and staff population. Sustain efforts to address barriers to participation and progression, and ensure that women and people of protected characteristics are fully included in the work and life of the College and its affiliated Schools and Units
- Ensure that staff are mentored and supported in their decisions about career development and promotions.

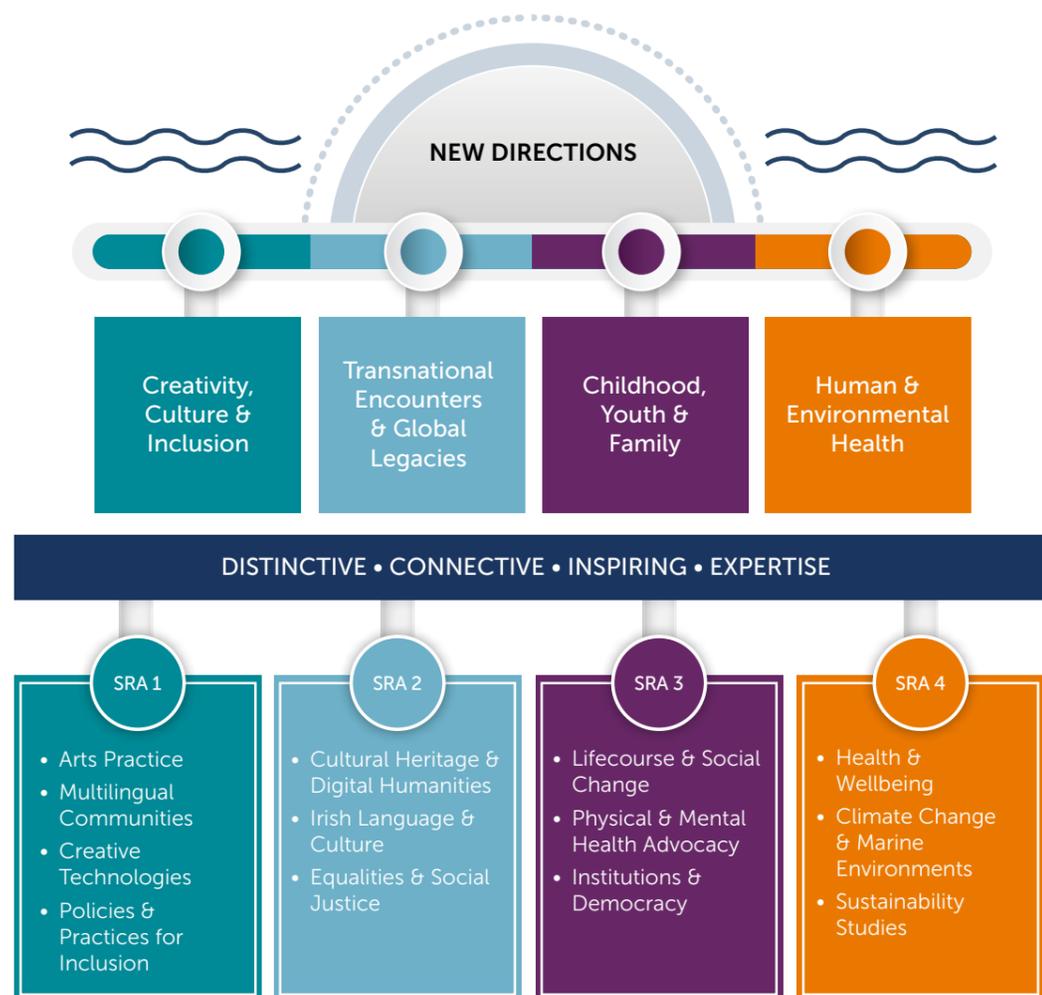
Signature Research Areas and their Impact

Our Strategy draws on four existing areas of significant research collaboration across the College: Signature Research Areas [SRAs].

Central to each of these areas is the notion of 'connective expertise'. By this, we mean distinctive expertise held at scale within the College that has transcended a single disciplinary location by virtue of the multiple collaborations it has inspired, both intellectually (inter/multi-disciplinary) and practically (partnerships and applications).

Extending the transformational international reach of these areas through further consolidation, amplification and ongoing innovation is key to all aspects of our Strategy. This entails also leaving space for new ideas and approaches with uncertain outcomes / applications / affiliations that may, over time, yield new signature areas.

Our Signature Research Areas include both 'engaged' and 'blue skies' research. 'Engaged' research is undertaken with community partners and directly committed to addressing issues of public concern; 'blue skies' research is less immediately goal-driven, but can ultimately be equally impactful. We value a wide range of impacts from our research. We support less directly measurable forms of enhancing the public good (e.g. through cultural and educational activities) alongside the more measurable markers of economic uplift and behavioural change.



We subscribe wholeheartedly to the seventeen Sustainable Development Goals [SDGs]. This integrated set of goals gives urgent societal meaning to all University-level research. In line with the seventeenth Goal, we embrace the shared purpose they offer: framing our work through this lens helps us connect the transformational potential of our research with the efforts of the many other like-minded partners and institutions around the world.

Our work already makes a demonstrable contribution to almost all areas outlined in the SDGs, notably:



This Strategy will allow us to continue to grow our research footprint in these areas, but in a manner that facilitates the discovery of new goals and challenges as much as attainment of the current individual SDGs.



Portfolio of Commitments

We will achieve our Strategy objectives by working holistically across the eight main portfolios below. In each case, we will ensure concrete action points are shaped by the University's core values of respect, openness, sustainability and excellence.



Teaching & Learning

We will place a clear articulation of how our programmes create transformational knowledge at the heart of everything we do

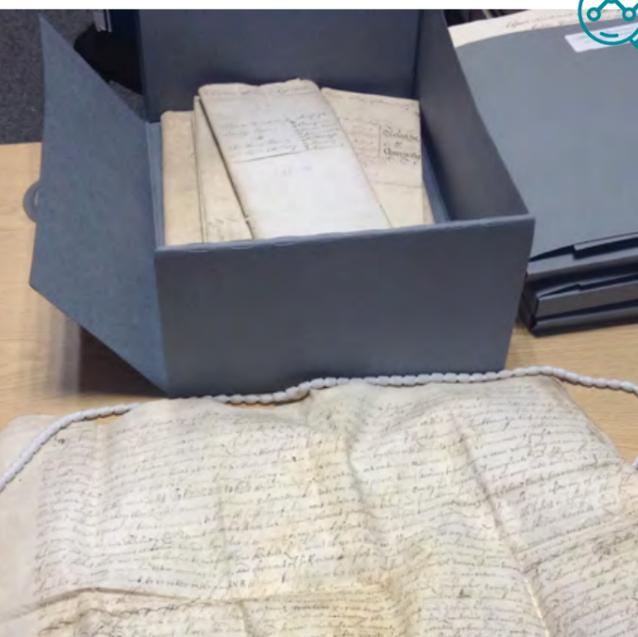
- We will offer a teaching experience that emphasises for students the transformational potential of higher education, both for themselves and for society at large.
- We will promote a positive culture of continuous professional development that supports quality teaching and learning standards and practices.
- We will offer a teaching experience that is built on the quality and uniqueness of knowledge and skills of academic, support, and technical staff in our College.
- We will continue to provide a teaching and learning experience that acknowledges the diversity of the student body.
- We will actively involve the student voice in course evaluation and curricular development.
- We will increase the profile of our postgraduate programmes and amplify our signature research areas through the establishment of a College Graduate School.



Research

We will promote both 'engaged research' and 'blue skies' thinking throughout the College and ensure opportunities to partake in research and to benefit from its findings are fully open to all

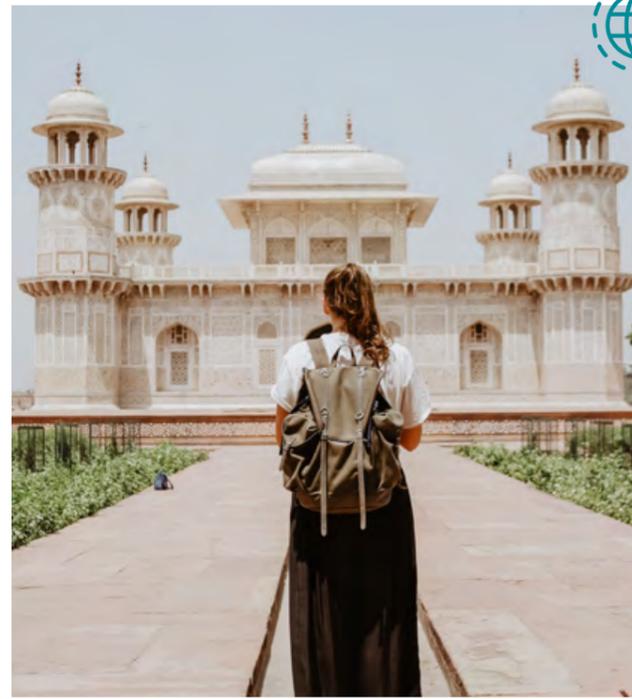
- We will support all Schools in developing staffing plans that ensure there is sufficient capacity to carry out and promote discipline-level research in each School.
- We will develop our College-level signature research areas that foreground inter/multi-disciplinary strengths and are supported by relevant research institutes and the new College Graduate School.
- We will invest College Office resources in better promoting our research achievements and identity, both to improve external communications and to secure new partners and stakeholders in our work.
- We will work with Schools, the Moore Institute, and ILAS to establish research mentorship structures to ensure all research staff are regularly engaged in supportive research conversations both within and beyond their discipline.



International

We will welcome the world in through our work with international students and partners and go out into the world to maximise our engagement and impact on a global scale

- We will develop an international student recruitment strategy that will deliver an increased and broader mix of students across UG, PG and study abroad cohorts and enrich the experience of both domestic and international students.
- We will promote internationalisation opportunities for staff and students via mobility and collaborative experiences.
- We will increase and promote our international research activity to amplify the reach and impact of our areas of research strength on a global scale.
- We will promote a positive, engaged and ethical culture of internationalisation within the College.
- We will embrace sustainability in our internationalisation practices.



Student Recruitment

We will develop new approaches to student recruitment, integrating our recruitment strategy with approaches to communication, engagement, and partnership

- We will devise and implement an ambitious and evidence-based recruitment strategy.
- We will articulate and promote a compelling narrative about our College that allows staff, students (current and prospective), and alumni to identify with and take pride in our ethos, our identity, and our community's achievements.
- We will present our UG & PG portfolios in line with our narrative, articulating to external stakeholders the value of an NUI Galway Arts / Social Science degree and the skills gained with our degrees.





Engagement and Partnerships

We will develop and share our expertise in teaching and research with partners at local, regional, national and international levels, working collaboratively to bring about positive change, and basing our activities on the conviction that our university is and must continue to be a force for the public good

- We will collaborate and cooperate with partners at local, regional and international level to identify areas of shared concern and priority.
- We will collaborate on projects with our current students with a view to enhancing the presence of community engagement in our teaching, learning, and research activities – while also making a measurable impact upon our world.
- We will actively engage with alumni around the globe, showcasing the successes of our graduates and in turn, alumni, who become ambassadors for the College.



Equality, Diversity, & Inclusion

We will promote a greater understanding of EDI principles across the College and increase the inclusion of minorities and disadvantaged groups in our work

- We will foster a culture that is inclusive and open, reflecting and respecting the diversity of our staff and student population.
- We will improve gender equality at all levels within the College.
- We will advance signature EDI initiatives at College level.



People

We will support our people to develop personally fulfilling and socially transformational careers, regardless of their entry point or onward trajectories.

- We will foster a work environment where the wellbeing of all staff – academic and professional support - is an important priority.
- We will aim to improve levels of wellbeing and professional fulfilment across the College.
- We will encourage the development of a respectful culture of work at all levels in the College



Governance

We will ensure clear lines of responsibility and accountability characterise governance structures at School and College level, such that all colleagues are fully supported in their roles and policies and processes are streamlined across the College.

- We will review the College's current financial position and undertake robust forward planning to allow the College to operate to its full potential.
- We will review the School structures to ensure all units are fully optimised in terms of intellectual coherence, programme delivery, and operational efficiency.
- We will review the composition and functioning of the College Executive to ensure it is optimised to serve as the College's principal operational decision-making forum.
- We will ensure all College members continue to have multiple opportunities to shape the academic life of the College.
- We will invest in developing electronic systems to simplify the input, sharing, storage and analysis of data underpinning College activity, as the wider University infrastructure and College resources allow.

II. Strategies for Transformation

The following pages set out our key actions and supporting activities to bring the commitments to transformational knowledge, thought, and action articulated in this Strategy to fruition.

We also indicate throughout how these commitments reflect the wider University values of respect, openness, sustainability, and excellence.

Strategies for Transformation



Our Portfolios In-depth:
Commitments, Actions, Activities



Teaching and Learning Strategy

We will place a clear articulation of how our programmes create transformational knowledge at the heart of everything we do.



We will offer a teaching experience that emphasises for students the transformational potential of higher education, both for themselves and for society at large.

- Highlight within our teaching programmes the University's and College's ethos of creativity, civic engagement and enterprise and the notion of the socially responsible graduate in line with the University's Graduate Attributes statement (CR03, CR05, CS04, CS06).
- Pursue opportunities in the core curriculum for students' civic and social engagement by exploring measures such as flexible timetabling for off-campus or field-based activities (CP05, CC02, CC03, AP07, AP10).
- Continue to facilitate the inclusion of civic society/industry/practitioner perspectives in on-campus teaching (CP05, CC02, CC03, AP07, AP10).
- Continue to facilitate student placements, study abroad opportunities, and/or internships as options within all undergraduate programmes and support a quality student experience (CP05, AP10, AP11).



We will promote a positive culture of continuous professional development that supports quality teaching and learning standards and practices.

- Support staff at all career stages to avail of opportunities for training and advancement in teaching, learning and assessment approaches and to enhance their promotional opportunities (AE03, AE04, AE05).
- Support the development and timely implementation of new, University-wide policies on postgraduate research students' teaching contributions (CR07).
- Continue our collaborations with CELT to advance and sustain training in teaching and learning (AE03, AE04).
- Ensure staff and students have access to appropriate teaching and learning spaces and a suitable digital learning environment, as part of our provision of quality teaching and research-led learning experiences (CE02, CE04).
- Work with the Library in their ongoing efforts to promote the creation and classroom use of high quality Open Educational Resources (AP04).



We will offer a teaching experience that is built on the quality and uniqueness of knowledge and skills of academic, support, and technical staff in our College.

- Identify existing successes and promote the unique aspects of our undergraduate and postgraduate programmes that reflect and celebrate our distinctive academic and research strengths (CE02).
- Review our existing undergraduate and postgraduate portfolios to better align these with areas of teaching and research strength and student demand (CS03, CE02, CE05).
- Reflect Sustainable Development Goals and environmental and social challenges through our curriculum and co-curricular offerings (CR05, CS04, CS06, CE06, AS03, AS09, AS10).
- Promote opportunities for students to engage in research practice as part of the teaching and learning experience (CE02).
- Engage all staff as part of professional development in a continuous process to consider the implications of research-led teaching/teaching-led research for the design and delivery of programmes (CE02, CE05, AE03).



We will continue to provide a teaching and learning experience that acknowledges the diversity of the student body.

- Support staff uptake of practices that reflect Universal Design for Teaching and Learning principles (CR01, AP02).
- Promote an ethos of pastoral care for students and encourage staff to undertake ongoing training in this regard (CR04).
- Promote measures that achieve the highest levels of student recruitment, engagement, retention, and progression while maintaining the high academic standards and integrity of our programmes (AS06, AE02).



We will actively involve the student voice in course evaluation and curricular development.

- Ensure that all Schools have established staff-student liaison committees and/or appointed a staff-student liaison officer at Discipline level (CR04, CC07).
- Continue active engagement with SU Education representatives at College and School levels (CR04, CC07).
- Liaise with the Quality Office to support and manage the process of student feedback strategically, particularly through the Irish Survey of Student Engagement at College and University level, while at the same time ensuring that disciplines and Schools have effective processes in place to collate formative feedback at the module and programme level (CR04, CC07).



We will increase the profile of our postgraduate programmes and amplify our signature research areas through the establishment of a College Graduate School.

- Use evidence-based methods to track our signature research areas, as well as areas of high student demand and potential areas for growth among existing PG offerings (CE02, CE12, CS03, AS06, AE11).
- Establish a governance structure for and determine the mission of the Graduate School (including defining its relationship to Disciplines/Schools, Research Institutes, and Graduate Studies) via a College-wide consultative process (AE10).
- Grow a portfolio of new and freshly reconceived PG programmes within the Graduate School that capitalise upon our interdisciplinary strengths and that will individually aim to recruit 25+ students per annum by 2025 (CE02, CE03, CE05, CE12).
- Explore the viability of a revised Doctoral Fellowship scheme with the aim of supporting high-achieving PGR students, especially those undertaking projects that align with local research strengths and strategies (CE03, CE12, AP05).



Research Strategy

We will promote 'engaged research' as well as 'blue skies' thinking throughout the College and ensure opportunities to partake in research and to benefit from its findings are fully open to all.



We will support all Schools in developing staffing and resourcing plans to ensure there is sufficient capacity to carry out and promote discipline-level research in each School.

- Work with Schools and Research Institutes to establish and co-ordinate research mentorship structures. These will ensure all research staff are regularly engaged in supportive research conversations both within and beyond their discipline (CR01, CS01, CE04, CE12).
- Ensure colleagues continue to have access to relevant College and University funds to carry out research and promote its findings (CE01, AP03).
- Utilise existing physical spaces and research infrastructures to host regular (semi-annual) 'open-space' events that will facilitate the development of ambitious programmes of cross-disciplinary research and allow Schools to nurture research collaborations (CP02).
- Create supporting mechanisms for colleagues applying to, and returning from, sabbatical leave to increase the international reputation of NUI Galway (AE11).
- Promote existing and develop new mentoring mechanisms for colleagues applying for large grant applications (CE01, CE03, CE04).
- Encourage the use of existing University links (e.g. ENLIGHT, RISE) to promote cross EU research at the school level (AP08, AP11).

Engaged research² describes a wide range of rigorous research approaches and methodologies that share a common interest in collaborative engagement with the community and aim to improve, understand or investigate an issue of public interest or concern, including societal challenges. Engaged research is advanced with community partners rather than for them.

Blue skies research³ has been described as pure science, exploratory, innovative, curiosity-driven and fundamental, in contrast with goal-driven research. It is creative research that might lead to outcomes unimagined at the outset.

² Campus Engage. 'Engaged Research: Society and Higher Education Addressing Grand Societal Challenges Together'. Irish Universities Associations: Dublin, 2020.

³ Linden B. Basic blue skies research in the UK: 'Are we losing out'. *Journal of Biomedical Discovery and Collaboration*, 2008, 3: 3: 1-14.



We will identify existing strengths and develop our College-level signature research areas that foreground inter/multi-disciplinary strengths, are supported by the relevant Research Institutes, and are amplified through the new College Graduate School.

- Use discipline sensitive, evidence-based methods to track existing and potential future signature areas of research within our College (CR01, CP01).
- Maximise the dedicated resources that exist within ILAS and the Moore Institute to consolidate research in the signature research areas (AE07, AE08, AE10).
- Establish mechanisms for supporting relevant research done by College members in other Research Institutes that sit beyond College resources (e.g. Ryan Institute, Whitaker Institute) (CS01).
- Co-ordinate IRC and ERC bids that will benefit from / add further critical mass to the focused research environment provided by the College Graduate School and the Research Institutes (CE12).



We will support the development of 'blue skies' research initiatives and ensure there is a strong pipeline of new ideas fostered across the College.

- Provide seed-corn funding every semester to initiatives that can demonstrate significant potential to yield new knowledge and which draw on a mixture of existing resources and identified gaps at School / College level (CE03, AE08).
- Actively recruit researchers whose work provides a new angle / direction that either shows significant potential in itself or complements an existing area in a compelling way (AE13).
- Explore opportunities for linking up 'blue skies' / emergent research ideas across the Colleges (AE08).
- Work with the Research Office and Research Institutes to provide mentoring and support for ERC funding at all levels (starter, consolidator, advanced) (CR01, CS01, CE04, CE12).
- Create research innovation incubators to support early career researchers seeking to grow novel research ideas that will later translate into research applications (CE03, AE08).



We will invest College Office resources in better promoting our research achievements and identity, both to improve external communications and to secure new partners and stakeholders in our work.

- Establish a support mechanism at College level for liaising between researchers and relevant internal and external stakeholders (CE07, CE08, CE09).
- Build awareness and a suitable support structure across the College around potential to influence policymaking at national and international levels (AE11, CE07).
- Work with the Research Office and Research Institutes to identify existing pathways to impact and impact case studies across the College, and develop new ones as needed.
- Identify different types of impact to further promote engaged research (AE07, AE13, CP01).
- Encourage College members to share impact case studies (AE13).



We will identify measures for success that are discipline-based and advocate for their use to measure the success of the College.

- Identify and agree the measures that are used in different disciplines (CR03, CR04).
- Map research achievement of College members according to the relevant measures of success (CE03).
- Support the University in recognising different measures of research success (CE01).

International Strategy

We will welcome the world in through our work with international students and partners and go out into the world to maximise our engagement and impact on a global scale.

2021-25



We will develop an international student recruitment strategy that will deliver an increased and broader mix of students across UG, PG and study abroad cohorts and enrich the experience of both domestic and international students.

- Increase undergraduate marketing and recruitment activity in key international markets (informed by data), communicating the distinctiveness and value of an Arts / Social Science degree from NUI Galway. (AP05, CE03).
- Market the Graduate School and suite of taught and research postgraduate programmes in order to increase our postgraduate recruitment in international markets (informed by data) (AP05).
- Grow and innovate our study abroad programmes and packages, including summer and faculty-led courses. (AP05, AP10).
- Review scholarship opportunities across all cohorts to enable a broader mix of students to be able to apply for our courses. (CR01, CP02).
- Utilise international alumni as ambassadors for our courses to further enhance recruitment efforts and equally build relationships with alumni (CP01, CC01).



We will promote internationalisation opportunities for staff and students via mobility and collaborative experiences.

- Increase the opportunities for student mobility across all programmes through new mobility partnerships and other supports necessary to allow students to access mobility opportunities (AP11).
- Promote and increase opportunities for staff mobility, academic, research, technical and professional, in order to expand skillsets and improve knowledge that can be brought back to the College (AP11, AE12).
- Utilise our expertise in languages and cultures to further equip students and staff with knowledge required for mobility opportunities (AP11).
- Equip staff with the skillset to establish mobility links (AP11, CE04).



We will increase and promote our international research activity to amplify the reach and impact of our areas of research strength on a global scale.

- Create a College-wide repository of existing international research partners across Schools and Research Centres (AE08).
- Highlight the opportunities that exist for research with existing international partnerships (e.g. The ENLIGHT network, University of Notre Dame etc.) (AE09, CC06).
- Develop new research partnerships aligned to our signature areas of research strength (AE12, CC06).
- Promote and enable staff to conduct international research e.g. support in preparing and managing multi-national research bids (AE08).
- Create a marketing strategy to amplify our research internationally (AE13).



We will promote a positive, engaged and ethical culture of internationalisation within the College.

- Highlight College events and conferences that have an international dimension that can expand the understanding of what it is to be international (AP06).
- Introduce a forum to engage with international staff and students in the College to better understand their experiences and perspectives e.g. through linkages with the International Staff Network (CR04, CR05, CR11, CP02).
- Ensure staff and students have the opportunity to undertake cultural awareness training (CR04, CR11, CP02).
- Establish a working group to explore opportunities to internationalise the curriculum and create a global curriculum to appeal to a broader base of students (AE05).
- Put in place a framework to offer English language and other academic supports to international students via the English Language Centre and other academic support units (AE03, AE04).



We will embrace sustainability in our internationalisation practices.

- Develop virtual mobility opportunities across undergraduate and postgraduate programmes that enables sustainable mobility that does not require the movement of people (AS03, CS02).
- Pursue a blended approach of virtual and in-person student recruitment activity when necessary in order to reduce our carbon footprint associated with travel for student recruitment (AS02, CS02).
- Promote the ways in which the College is contributing to the SDGs to existing and prospective international students and partners through our research, teaching and learning. (CS04, AS10, CS06, AE13).
- Encourage international research and collaboration that can address global sustainability issues (CS04, CS05, CE06, CE11).

Student Recruitment Strategy

We will develop new approaches to student recruitment, integrating our recruitment strategy with approaches to communication, engagement, and partnership.



1

We will devise and implement a recruitment strategy that will have the following aims:

- Increase entry points for GY101 so that they are in line with points for entry to comparable national institutions by 2024, and on track to exceed 375 points by 2025 (CP01, CE01, CE03).
- Support and sustain other entry routes into the College, including HEAR, DARE, Access, Mature Students entry (CR02, CP01, CE01, CE03).
- Increase entry by international applicants so that 25% of the students on our programmes will be from outside the Republic of Ireland (while continuing to support programmes that cater exclusively for domestic applicants) (CR02, CE01, CE03).
- Make use of relevant data and other forms of evidence to devise effective ongoing approaches to student recruitment (CP01).
- Make use of new approaches to student recruitment, including hybrid and online options, as appropriate (CP01, CE01).

2

We will articulate and promote a compelling narrative about our College that allows staff, students (current and prospective), and alumni to identify with and take pride in our ethos, our identity, and our community's achievements.

- Through a process of consultation with internal and external groups, develop a narrative that explains our mission, values, purpose and areas of research and teaching strength – and ensure that this narrative informs our communications with all internal and external groups (CR02, CP01, CP06, CE01, CE03).
- Create a content and communication strategy linked to this narrative. Content will need to showcase the outcomes and impact of our research and innovation, nationally and internationally (CP01, CE01, CE03).
- Develop and resource fit-for-purpose communications platforms (such as the College website, social media, and other resources), publishing content that expresses our values, expertise and ethos, and which brings to life our narrative (CP06, CP01, CE01).
- Undertake audience analysis to identify key internal and external stakeholder groups. (CP06, CP01).
- Develop strategies to encourage staff and students to take ownership of our narrative, to identify with it, and to express their relationship with the College through their own channels and networks (CP01, CE01, CE03).

3

We will present our UG & PG portfolios in line with our narrative, articulating to external stakeholders the value of an NUI Galway Arts / Social Science degree and the skills gained with our degrees.

- Ensure our recruitment strategy lays out an integrated approach to recruitment, engagement, and communications (CR02, CE01).
- Review existing portfolios to better align areas of teaching and research strength (CP06, CS01).
- Develop a convincing narrative around skills gained with an Arts / Social Science degree, both in Galway and more generally, enabling students to describe and make use of these skills with confidence (CP06, CE01).
- Reframe the value of an Arts / Social Science degree, using employer insight to demonstrate their perspectives on what our graduates bring to the changing world of work, thus allowing prospective students to visualise pathways from their studies to prosperous, meaningful careers (CR12, CP06, CS01).
- Identify, learn from, and partner with international universities that are successfully making the case for the value of Arts and Social Science degrees (CP01, CS05, CE01).



Partnership & Engagement Strategy

We will develop and share our expertise in teaching and research with partners at local, regional, and national levels, working collaboratively to bring about positive change.



We will collaborate and cooperate with partners at local, regional, national and international level to identify areas of shared concern and priority and basing our activities on the conviction that our university is and must continue to be a force for the public good.

- Identify and raise awareness of the many existing partnerships across the College, involving policy development, business ventures, international development, joint research and development, public advocacy and activism, creative arts practice, lifelong learning, and other activities (CR12, CP01, CP04).
- Identify new areas for potential partnership, uniting academic, governmental and non-governmental bodies, community, commercial, creative and cultural sectors (CP04, CP05, AP07, CC02-CC06).
- Establish policies and identify support structures for staff seeking to establish new, formalised partnerships with civic and/or industry partners (CC03, CP05, AP12).
- Increase international partnerships to create mobility and research opportunities for staff and students (CC06, AP06, AP11, AE12).
- Identify and promote opportunities for joint activities (e.g. IRC Enterprise PhDs, Horizon Europe bids, philanthropic support for socially transformational activities) (CE07, CC02, AP08, AE09).



We will collaborate on projects with our current students with a view to enhancing the presence of community engagement in our teaching, learning, and research activities – while also making a measurable and meaningful impact upon our world.

- Work with internal groups (such as The Community Knowledge Initiative), external agencies (such as the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning at Third Level), and all staff (including academic, administrative, and technical) to identify new opportunities for UG and PG students to engage with our communities as part of their academic and extra-curricular work (AP10, CC02).
- Link community engagement opportunities to areas of research strength. (CP01, CP04, CS04).
- Support staff- and student-led initiatives to develop projects related to community enhancement, social engagement and the creative arts, linked to evolving forms of pedagogy such as challenge-based learning, practice-based research, design for learning. (CP04, CE06, AR03, AP10).



We will actively engage with alumni around the globe, showcasing the successes of our graduates and in turn, alumni, who become ambassadors for the College.

- Create a database of College graduates, ensuring we have their contact details post graduation. (CP01, CC01, AP07).
- Play an active role in conferrals, reunions, and development activities, nationally and internationally. (CP01, CC01).
- Develop strategies to identify and celebrate alumni achievements, both formally (alumni awards) and informally (through College communications). (CP01, CC01).
- Develop opportunities for alumni to participate in College initiatives. (CP01, CC01).

EDI Strategy

We will promote a greater understanding of EDI principles across the College and ensure minorities are fully included in our work.



We will foster a culture that is inclusive and open, reflecting and respecting the diversity of our staff and student population.

- In collaboration with bodies such as the Students' Union and staff networks (International, LGBTQ+ and Women), engage with staff and students from diverse backgrounds to better understand their perspectives and expectations (CR01).
- Embed an EDI perspective across all roles, functions, and policies (CR01).
- Develop an evidence-based College Respect and Equality Charter (CR03, CR04).
- Encourage staff to embed EDI principles in teaching and learning, e.g. by reviewing programme content, learning outcomes and assessment to ensure that they better reflect the diverse nature of the student base and address local and global inequalities. EDI-related content could include nomadism, international protection on migration and research on gender, sexuality and identity (AR04, CR01-CR05).
- Encourage staff to explore EDI angles in research and develop specific EDI-related projects (CR02).



We will improve gender equality at all levels within the College.

- In line with the University's EDI Strategy, increase engagement with the Athena Swan process across the College by working with all Schools and Research Institutes in their applications for Bronze Awards (AR06, CR01, CR03).
- Ensure balanced representation on all College and School committees (CR01, CR03).



We will advance signature EDI initiatives at College level.

- Develop an anti-racism strategy in collaboration with internal and external bodies such as University of Sanctuary, Students' Union, local voluntary bodies (CP02).
- Investigate the potential of Active* Consent framework for advancing other EDI initiatives (CR01).
- Valorise the College's diverse linguistic competence and showcase multilingual Galway and the role of the Irish language on and off campus (AP09, CR01, CP06, CC04).
- Build an EDI focus into partnerships by working with local, regional and national groups representing minorities and disadvantaged groups (CP04, CC02).
- Work with College and University EDI-related structures, e.g. LGBTQ+ Staff Network, International Staff Network, to identify other initiatives that can be promoted locally (CR01).

People Strategy

*We will promote a greater understanding of EDI principles
We will support our people to develop personally fulfilling
and socially transformational careers, regardless of their
entry point or onward trajectories.*

1

We will foster a work environment where the wellbeing of all staff – academic and professional support – is an important priority.

- In association with Human Resources, ensure knowledge of and access to mentoring schemes for academic staff at all levels and grades (AE01, CE04).
- Create interdisciplinary peer support groups for early career academic staff (CE04).
- Develop culture of adherence to supportive workplace policies, for instance Work Positive, the Healthy Campus Charter and NUI Galway Sustainability Strategy (AP10, AP11, CR09, CS01, CS07).

2

We will aim to improve levels of wellbeing and professional fulfilment across the College.

- Assess needs of staff, both quantitatively and qualitatively, to ascertain relevant indicators of wellbeing (CR03, CR04, AR10, AR11).
- Pilot wellbeing initiatives and interventions that address key objectives (CR04, CR09).

3

We will encourage the development of a respectful culture of work at all levels in the College.

- Develop a Respect and Equality Charter for the College, drawing on the Respect Project underway in ILAS. This involves gathering evidence about priorities, developing a respectful practice guide and appraising its effectiveness (AR01, CR04, CR11).

Governance

We will ensure clear lines of responsibility and accountability characterise governance structures at School and College level, such that all colleagues are fully supported in their roles and policies and processes are streamlined across the College.

2021-25

1

We will review the College's current financial position and undertake robust forward planning to allow the College to operate to its full potential.

- Embed financially sustainable practices into the long-term forecast to run alongside this strategy (CS03).
- Undertake governance review of College Office and implement recommendations to ensure adequate staffing and resourcing is in place to support the Strategy (CM02).
- Align annual budget preparation at both College and School level with strategic operational priorities to ensure good forward planning (CS03).

2

We will review the School structures to ensure all units are fully optimised in terms of intellectual coherence, programme delivery, and operational efficiency.

- Undertake School-level governance review and implement recommendations
- Establish a guiding set of principles for workload allocation within the College and commit to regular and transparent evaluation of workloads at School level (CR07).
- Review the rationale for all future staff planning (considering all employment types) and ensure it aligns with College operational requirements.
- Celebrate and actively solicit examples of excellence and proactively share examples of best practice identified in both administrative and academic structures.

3

We will review the composition and functioning of the College Executive to ensure it is optimised to serve as the College's principal operational decision-making forum.

- Review current Terms of Reference for the College Executive.
- Establish an adequate schedule of meetings, giving due consideration to planning processes and the pursual of strategic initiatives throughout the year (CM03).
- Review all University policies and ensure they are correctly applied at College and School level.



We will ensure all College members continue to have multiple opportunities to shape the academic life of the College.

- Review how College Boards are held, giving due consideration to their inclusivity and accessibility.
- Establish working groups drawn from across the full spectrum of staff in the College to deliver on individual aspects of the Strategy or other strategically important projects .



We will invest in developing electronic systems to simplify the input, sharing, storage and analysis of data underpinning College activity, as the wider University infrastructure and College resources allow.

- Engage fully in the development of Student Digital Pathways (AE02).
- Explore other electronic systems as opportunities and resourcing allow.



Monitoring the Strategy

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IV. Monitoring the Strategy

This page details the timeline and review groups put in place to ensure the Strategy remains on track and is able to respond to any possible changes in either internal or external circumstances over the period of its implementation.

Timeline for delivery



NOVEMBER 2021

Official Launch of Strategy



ROLLING FROM NOVEMBER 2021

- College Strategy group, comprising Executive Dean, Deputy Dean, Vice Deans and College Office, meets monthly and reports in to College Executive
- Call for working groups from across College to address individual activities within the 8 portfolios. These are 'task & finish' groups, and meet regularly for a period of max one academic year under overall directorship of Vice Deans
- Strategy will be reviewed bi-annually by the College Strategy group and with input from Heads of School to assess the Strategy's ongoing enactment of the 4 University values across all 8 portfolios.



NOVEMBER 2023

Strategy review at the end of calendar year 2 with external input



NOVEMBER 2025

Strategy refresh at the end of calendar year 4 with a view to setting strategy 2026-2030

Delivering
on Shared
Vision, Shaped
by Values

III. Delivering on Shared Vision, Shaped by Values – Strategy 2020-2025

We will build on the core values of NUI Galway and contribute to achieving the commitments and Flagship Actions referenced throughout the document and listed here:

- **CR01** We will proactively remove barriers to equality and diversity in our University, recognising the individuality of our people's journeys.
- **CR02** Our research will inform attitudes and policy about diversity, with an emphasis on improving understanding and awareness of disadvantage and discrimination where it occurs.
- **CR03** By championing respect, we will have a transformational effect on our communities and set a positive example beyond our university.
- **CR04** We will embed a culture of empathy and respect in our university, including within our student experience.
- **CR05** We will support students in their studies, progression and wellbeing as part of a community where they are encouraged to define success holistically and inspired to achieve it
- **CR07** The University is committed to the practice of maintaining and promoting decent, high standards of employment and fairness at work
- **CR09** The University further commits to family-friendly work practices in a manner that is mindful and accommodating in the interests of a healthy work/life balance.
- **CR11** Employees are valued and will be treated with the highest standards of dignity and respect
- **CR12** Recognising the unique and influential role our university plays in our region's society and economy, we will work with businesses, organisations and networks across the west of Ireland to ensure that our university is positively serving our region
- **AR01** We will embed a culture of respect through the development and implementation of a Respect Charter, led at every level of the institution
- **AR02** We will design and implement a skills programme to help build empathy, compassion and understanding in our campus community
- **AR03** We will develop and implement a structured university-wide social responsibility programme to deliver measurable positive societal impact with our communities
- **AR04** We will advance ideas that underpin respect for the dignity of all people through our teaching and research activities
- **AR06** We will maintain our Athena SWAN Bronze Award and aim to achieve institutional Silver-level accreditation to further advance diversity and equality in the University
- **AR10** We will improve physical, social and mental wellbeing in our communities as a partner of Healthy Ireland and by implementing the Healthy Campus Framework
- **AR11** We will develop and implement a holistic strategy for staff health and wellbeing, building on the WorkPositive initiative, and achieve accreditation through the KeepWell Mark

RESPECT

- **CP01** We will actively engage with external stakeholders, alumni and the public to maximise and amplify our impact.
- **CP02** We will build an inclusive culture that proactively seeks to improve access to education, enable collaboration and support our people regardless of their background.
- **CP04** We will strive to make a positive impact on society through partnering with other universities, organisations and communities, locally and internationally, to enable the creation and sharing of knowledge, expertise and technologies.
- **CP05** We will enhance our entrepreneurial ecosystem in collaboration with industry, employers and other stakeholders in recognition of our unique role in creating the skills and scholarship that drive growth across our region and nationally.
- **CP06** We will work with our communities to enhance our bilingual campus and share our passion for the Irish language with the world.
- **AP02** We will adopt the Principles of Universal Design in our learning and working environment to increase accessibility, accommodate different approaches to learning and enable students to fulfil their potential
- **AP04** We will create an Open Scholarly Community in which the process, content and outcomes of research are ethically managed and openly accessible, and promote the use and production of Open Educational Resources
- **AP05** We will encourage and welcome a broad international mix of staff and students across our taught and research programmes at undergraduate and postgraduate levels
- **AP06** We will develop and implement a clear strategy for internationalisation and international collaboration that maximises the global impact and reach of the University in the context of the Government's Global Ireland programme
- **AP07** We will design and implement a structured programme of engagement for strategic external stakeholders, including alumni, industry, community and government, to benefit from advice, expertise, support and engagement
- **AP08** We will engage more deeply with European Union institutions and networks to maximise the University's impact
- **AP09** We will develop and implement an ambitious and future-focused strategy for the Irish language, in partnership with national stakeholders and Gaeltacht communities, based on our values of respect and sustainability
- **AP10** We will embed the distinctiveness of our region in our curriculum by providing our students with opportunities for work-based learning, fieldwork, and community-based and service learning
- **AP11** We will create greater opportunities for our students and staff to broaden their horizons and gain diverse international experience through study abroad programmes, work placements, mentoring, and teaching and research collaborations
- **AP12** We will establish partnerships with development agencies and stakeholders for our region to support the growth and scaling of indigenous and international businesses

OPENNESS

- **CS01** We will provide leadership to inform the transition to a sustainable future through our teaching, research, actions and impacts.
- **CS02** We will sustainably manage our campuses and all our external affairs and become a role model for positive impact on the environment.
- **CS03** We will future-proof our university by ensuring the environmental, social and financial sustainability of all our operations.
- **CS04** Through our teaching and research activities, using the UN Sustainable Development Goals as a framework, we will develop the next generation of students, researchers and innovators for tackling society's evolving sustainable development challenges.
- **CS05** Working together with local, regional, national, European and global partners, we will develop solutions for a more sustainable future
- **CS06** We will be world-renowned for our teaching and research activities that develop our graduates as future sustainability leaders in Ireland and globally
- **CS07** Building on the work of our Community and University Sustainability Partnership and its approach to 'learn, live and lead' sustainability across the university mission, we will embed sustainability in our culture, operational policies and governance structures, and empower our communities to be champions of sustainability
- **AS02** Together, we will develop a roadmap to move ambitiously towards carbon neutrality by 2030
- **AS03** We will embed sustainability across our learning, research and the student experience, so that our entire campus community can gain the necessary knowledge and skills to become sustainability role models and leaders
- **AS06** We will balance entrepreneurialism and prudence in our resource planning to ensure the financial stability necessary to achieve our ambitious goals
- **AS09** We will set ourselves ambitious targets in the area of sustainability embedded in the curriculum
- **AS10** We will set ourselves ambitious targets in the area of graduate programmes focused on sustainability

SUSTAINABILITY

- **CE01** We will support ambition and enable the excellence of our people, who are leaders, innovators and critical thinkers that share a passion for understanding, educating and improving the world.
- **CE02** We will deliver an excellent student-centred, research-led teaching and learning experience. This will be underpinned by increased investment in supports that develop critical thinking, leadership, professionalism and employability
- **CE03** We will be recognised for our culture of excellence in teaching, research and innovation, and as a destination of choice that nurtures, attracts and retains ambitious people.
- **CE04** We will provide programmes of development, including mentoring, coaching and training, and enhance our physical and virtual environment in order to empower our staff, students and partners to fulfil their potential.
- **CE05** Our students will benefit directly from newly developed curricula that are research-led, drawing on the interdisciplinary strengths of our university.

EXCELLENCE

- **CE06** We will sharpen the focus of our teaching, research and innovation using the UN Sustainable Development Goals as a blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future.
- **CE07** Engaging with our partners locally, nationally and worldwide, we will invite ambition in research that underpins the area of enhancing policy and society
- **CE08** Engaging with our partners locally, nationally and worldwide, we will invite ambition in research that underpins the area of enriching creativity and culture
- **CE09** Engaging with our partners locally, nationally and worldwide, we will invite ambition in research that underpins the area of improving health and wellbeing
- **CE11** Engaging with our partners locally, nationally and worldwide, we will invite ambition in research that underpins the area of sustaining our planet and people
- **CE12** We will also encourage our researchers who have the ambition to grow in both established and emerging research areas.
- **AE01** We will develop and implement a People Strategy to enable colleagues to reach their potential and support NUI Galway to achieve its ambitions, which includes a structured programme for staff training, development and mentoring
- **AE02** We will support and enhance student transition and progression by developing and implementing a Student Success Strategy, and by investing in new processes and systems, through the Student Digital Pathways programme, that meet student needs and future-proof our university
- **AE03** We will mainstream academic peer supports, academic skills supports and curricular innovations, recognising the centrality of excellence in teaching and learning to the mission of our university
- **AE04** We will invest in and extend the reach of development programmes for all who teach or support excellence in student learning across our university
- **AE05** We will identify and recognise commitment to teaching, curricular innovation, scholarship, the sharing of practice, and the management of programmes
- **AE07** We will invigorate our research institutes to ensure our continued impact and support high standards, using this strategy and values as our lens
- **AE08** We will invest to achieve a sustainable research ecosystem that supports our research institutes, centres, core research facilities and research support systems, with a particular focus on investment in talent and award support.
- **AE09** We will sharpen our focus on the European Union's research agenda to maximise funding opportunities, consistent with our mission to serve society
- **AE10** We will establish graduate schools in distinctive research priority areas and align our postgraduate programme development with the work of our interdisciplinary research institutes
- **AE11** We will actively contribute towards building Galway's reputation as an internationally recognised centre of excellence for medtech, data science, culture and creativity, climate and oceans, public policy, and innovation in the Government of Ireland Future Jobs Strategy
- **AE12** We will establish new strategic partnerships with prestigious national, European and international centres of research excellence with a focus on research collaborations and staff/student exchange
- **AE13** We will develop a compelling content programme to showcase the outcomes and impact of our research and innovation, nationally and internationally

EXCELLENCE

- **CC01** We will engage with our alumni and retired staff in order to shape and support our future
- **CC02** We will find new ways to deepen our partnerships with community groups and organisations in the Galway region in an open and inclusive way
- **CC03** We will enhance our network of business, industry and employers to ensure our graduates, courses, research, innovation and facilities are primed to benefit the economy of our region and country
- **CC04** We will partner with and support cultural and creative organisations, regionally and nationally, to celebrate our distinctive culture and make cultural expression available to all
- **CC05** We will actively engage with government, state bodies, development agencies, the Saolta hospitals group and other educational institutions to maximise our contribution to regional and national development
- **CC06** We will establish new strategic alliances with European and international partners and strengthen existing ones to maximise the reach and impact of our teaching, research and innovation

OUR COMMUNITIES

- **CM02** Each College, School, Research Institute and Unit will be asked to show through operational planning how they will support the achievement of our commitments and flagship actions
- **CM03** We will evolve our operational planning systems to align operational goals with our four core values.

IMPLEMENTING THE PLAN





NUI Galway
OÉ Gaillimh

The College of Arts, Social
Sciences & Celtic Studies

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Strategic Plan
2021 - 25