

STRATEGIC PLAN

2012 - 2016



knowledge at work



CIT Bishopstown



CIT Cork School of Music



CIT Crawford College of Art & Design



National Maritime College of Ireland

Our Institute

Cork Institute of Technology (CIT) is a leading higher education institution based in Cork City on the south coast of Ireland.

CIT and its antecedents have been associated with education in Cork and the broader region since the 1830s. The Institute offers a wide range of flexible full-time and part-time higher education courses (at all levels up to and including PhD) in art & design, business, engineering, humanities, music, maritime studies, and science & information technology.

The main CIT campus is located in Bishopstown, Cork. The CIT Crawford College of Art and Design and the CIT Cork School of Music are both located at campuses in Cork city centre. The National Maritime College of Ireland (NMCI) is located on the shores of Cork Harbour in Ringaskiddy.

Our student population of more than 15,000 enjoys excellent support, social and sporting facilities, including a purpose-built student centre, sports stadium, gymnasium, medical centre and learning support centre.

CIT has a number of vibrant and successful research, innovation, knowledge exchange and enterprise support centres which have had many notable achievements, and have been successful in attracting Irish, EU and international funding. Among these are the Rubicon business incubation centre, the Genesis enterprise support programme, the NIMBUS research centre and the CIT Extended Campus.

Many CIT graduates and alumni occupy senior management and executive positions across a range of indigenous and multinational enterprises while others are successful entrepreneurs founding enterprises and creating employment at home and abroad. Our staff, students and graduates make many notable contributions to public bodies, cultural and community organisations and in the world of sport locally, nationally and internationally. CIT was awarded the Sunday Times Institute of Technology of the Year in 2007, and again in 2010, and CIT students have won numerous national and international academic, citizenship and sports awards.

Our Mission

We are proud of our distinct mission and role in the provision of higher education for the region and beyond. Our mission is:

To provide student-centred, career-focused education and research for the personal, professional and intellectual development of the student and for the benefit of the broader society in the region and beyond.



Our Commitments

The Institute is committed to its role within the region and nationally. As we pursue our mission across our full range of activities we are focused on fulfilling the following commitments which encapsulate the Institute's priorities, ethos and values...

CIT is a student-centred institution:

- CIT develops and fosters the talents of its students in a supportive environment which challenges them to succeed and prepares them to make a positive contribution in their chosen careers and as members of society regionally, nationally and internationally.
- CIT is committed to respecting and protecting the dignity and rights of individuals through practices which promote fairness and equal treatment for all.

CIT delivers career-focused education and research:

- Through the delivery of career-focused education, training and professional development, CIT produces graduates who are professionals and practitioners, distinguished in their chosen career by their ability to effectively create and apply knowledge, engage in ongoing learning and act in entrepreneurial and innovative ways.
- Engagement with enterprise and the extension of the campus into the workplace (and the wider community) is a key defining characteristic of CIT.
- CIT engages in research in a manner that supports and enhances its core mission. Research is an essential core activity and it informs all the activities of the Institute including teaching and enterprise engagement.

CIT provides inclusive access to higher education:

- CIT provides education opportunities which empower all motivated individuals to pursue personal, intellectual and professional enhancement.

CIT plays a regional, national and international role:

- CIT provides education, research, innovation and other services which are aligned to regional, national and international needs and priorities.
- CIT makes a positive contribution to the academic, economic, industrial, social and cultural life of the region and beyond. Furthermore, its staff, students and graduates are aware of the importance of ethical behaviour and social responsibility across all economic, social and cultural domains.

Our Vision

As we look towards the future we have an ambitious and challenging vision for the strategic development of CIT which is that:

CIT will be an internationally recognised centre of excellence in the provision of career-focused education which produces effective, ethical professionals capable of entrepreneurship, innovation and creativity.

Achieving this vision requires the development of learners who are flexible thinkers capable of creativity and innovation with the goal that, by the time they leave CIT, our graduates will already possess the attributes and aptitude required to be effective professionals and practitioners in their chosen field. We seek to educate professionals throughout our broad range of undergraduate, postgraduate and research programmes across science, engineering, business, the humanities, craft studies, visual arts, maritime studies and music.

The CIT Graduate

It is our goal to ensure that every CIT graduate will be recognised as possessing and practising the following strengths and competencies:

A CIT graduate will have a broad range of relevant discipline-specific knowledge, skills and competencies.

A CIT graduate will exhibit personal and professional efficacy and integrity, enabled by the development of a broad range of competencies including interpersonal and communication skills, teamwork, ethics and social responsibility.

A CIT graduate will be motivated and empowered to be a lifelong learner with a passion for learning which is underpinned by the essential skills of inquiry and scholarship.

A CIT graduate will have the ability to create and apply knowledge in a variety of professional contexts, having participated in an educational programme which fosters problem solving, knowledge discovery, research and the use of knowledge in real-world situations.

CIT will become an international exemplar of good practice in professional education.

CIT will pursue this goal through the ongoing adoption of best practice in teaching, learning and research as follows:

- Active and collaborative student-centred learning which engages the students' desire to learn and challenges them to take ownership of their learning experience.
- A relevant and flexible career-focused curriculum, developed in close partnership with enterprise.
- Research education which delivers a range of skills including creativity, inquiry, problem solving and innovation, and develops professional researchers capable of pursuing research, innovation and development careers in both enterprise and academic settings.

CIT will continue to be a national and international leader in enterprise engagement and the practice of extending the education campus into the workplace and the wider community.

The CIT approach to campus extension and engagement will be characterised by:

- The development of engagement as an Institute-wide commitment, embracing education, research, innovation and enterprise support.
- The fostering of two-way engagement and knowledge exchange between CIT and external partners.
- The creation of agile and flexible learning pathways in partnership with enterprises and communities, incorporating the recognition of prior learning and work-based learning.
- Enhanced practice and policy frameworks that recognise and support the valuable contribution of enterprises and communities to the curriculum to ensure relevance and currency.

Responsiveness is at the core of our mission and therefore effective campus extension and engagement is an essential activity for CIT. We are seeking to develop a professional outward-facing interface through which external communities, organisations and enterprises can interact with CIT. Through these interactions and partnerships we will ensure that we continue to meet the needs of our stakeholders.

In summary, as we seek to make this strategic vision a reality, CIT will strive for excellence in student-centred teaching and learning; excellence in research, creation of knowledge and use of knowledge; and excellence in engagement with enterprise and the broader society.

Achieving our Goals

Our strategic goals are aligned with broader national goals including those outlined in the National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030.

In particular the National Strategy identified four broad areas for the strategic development of higher education in Ireland, namely, widening participation, enhancing teaching and learning and the student experience, developing research innovation and knowledge transfer, and improving engagement with enterprise and the wider society.

As we work towards achieving our strategic goals during the period 2012 to 2016, CIT has identified eight areas where we will strive to make significant strategic achievements. These areas encapsulate the domains of priority identified in the National Strategy as well as establishing areas for strategic development that are specific to CIT. This means that during the period 2012 to 2016 CIT will strive to make significant achievements in the areas of:

- 1 Developing and Improving the Student Experience**
- 2 Engaging and Empowering Staff**
- 3 Offering High Quality, Relevant and Flexible Programmes**
- 4 Strengthening and Extending Research, Innovation and Entrepreneurship Activities**
- 5 Advancing and Growing the Mission and Role of CIT**
- 6 Serving, Supporting and Partnering with Regional Enterprises, Public Bodies, Educational Institutions and Communities**
- 7 Prioritising Targeted Internationalisation Activities**
- 8 Enhancing and Sharing the Physical Environment of CIT**

In the remainder of this section we detail the **eight** strategic areas targeted and outline top-level objectives and targets to be achieved. These initial objectives and targets will be subject to ongoing review and may be modified or updated in response to changing priorities and circumstances.

1 Developing and Improving the Student Experience

The student experience is an essential element of a student-centred institution. During the period of this Strategic Plan CIT will strive for continued development of student services and continuous improvement of the overall student experience.

Objectives and targets

- Through the implementation of best practice in teaching & learning CIT will develop an enhanced student experience
- CIT will provide a supportive environment for our students through the provision of effective, student-centred supports and services
- CIT will improve student retention, achievement and completion rates to above international norms
- Arising out of a process of meaningful student consultation followed by appropriate action, CIT will achieve consistently high student satisfaction ratings

2 Engaging and Empowering Staff

The achievement of our ambitious vision will depend largely on the committed and talented people who work at CIT. It is essential that all staff members are engaged by our vision, see their role in achieving that vision and are empowered to deal with both the opportunities and challenges they will encounter along the way.

Objectives and targets

- Through effective engagement and communication, each CIT staff member will understand their individual and collective contributions to the CIT mission and will know that this contribution is recognised and appreciated
- To enhance staff knowledge and skills, CIT will develop systems to identify and provide training and development opportunities for all its staff
- CIT will enhance the qualifications profiles of academic and non-academic staff
- CIT will continue to enhance its staff engagement processes

3 Offering High Quality, Relevant and Flexible Programmes

Our programmes of study are the bedrock of our strategic goals and future success. We will continue to strive for the highest international standards in terms of the delivery and quality of these programmes. Furthermore, it is essential that our programmes are relevant to the learners' needs and are made accessible through flexible and open provision.

Objectives and targets

- CIT will enhance the quality and standards of its courses by surpassing international benchmarks in relation to recruitment and admission processes, quality of delivery and student achievement
- Through developing and implementing best practice in the area of curriculum design, CIT will continue to enhance the quality of its programmes of study
- The relevance of CIT programmes will be ensured through professional accreditation and ongoing feedback from employer and sectoral stakeholders
- CIT will continue to develop, encourage and enable the employability of its graduates through the incorporation of employability development activities, such as professional practice and enterprise-linked projects, in programmes of learning
- CIT will offer increased flexible learning opportunities by significantly expanding its existing open/distance learning capabilities and programmes across all disciplines and levels

4 Strengthening and Extending Research, Innovation and Entrepreneurship Activities

Research and innovation which is consistent with, and complementary to, our overall mission is an essential core activity. This research will inform and support all other activities including teaching and learning, as well as innovation, entrepreneurship and other enterprise support activities. Our research strategy will focus on developing expertise, critical mass and research excellence in specific disciplines.

Objectives and targets

- CIT will continue to enhance and promote technology transfer activity through contract research, licensing and other such initiatives
- Support mechanisms (e.g. Rubicon business incubation centre) for new enterprises will be consolidated and entrepreneurship training will be expanded
- CIT will develop a fourth strategic research cluster
- CIT will increase its researcher numbers, and research and innovation output by 20% during the lifetime of the Strategic Plan

5 Advancing and Growing the Mission and Role of CIT

We will work with government, policy makers and other stakeholders to develop our mission and role in order to deliver an effective national higher education system and the best possible return for the Irish economy and the broader society. We will strive to help achieve national priorities in areas such as widening participation, enhancing the quality of provision and developing the higher education system.

Objectives and targets

- CIT will continue to facilitate inclusive access to higher education for increasing numbers of individuals, particularly among under-represented groups in society
- By means of collaboration and cooperation with educational partners, enterprise and public bodies, CIT will become a major campus of a newly designated Technological University
- CIT will actively promote the development of a regional higher education cluster
- An overall increase of 15 - 20% (WTE) in student enrolments will be achieved by 2016
- National targets in relation to the participation of under-represented groups in higher education will be achieved or surpassed and CIT will increase its adult lifelong learner and CPD student enrolments by 50%

6 Serving, supporting and partnering with regional enterprises, public bodies, educational institutions and communities

We understand and embrace our role in the economic, civil, and social life of our region. We are committed to serving enterprises, public bodies and community organisations in whatever way we can and we are open to all initiatives and partnerships which will benefit the region.

Objectives and targets

- The CIT Extended Campus will be developed to support two-way engagement of individuals and organisations with the Institute for the purpose of knowledge exchange, learning, research and other activities
- CIT will continue to provide educational, economic, cultural, sporting and social resources to the region
- Provision of work-based and employee-focused education opportunities and services will be developed and enhanced
- CIT will continue to encourage and facilitate access to its educational and other services by a broad range of individuals and groups from across the community
- CIT will make a significant input to the development of the Cork Science and Innovation Park (CISP) in collaboration with Cork County Council and UCC

7 Prioritising Targeted Internationalisation Activities

CIT has long-established and productive international partnerships in Europe, India and beyond. We will continue to develop these and similar partnerships to provide an international context for the Institute's activities as well as international experience for our students and graduates.

Objectives and targets

- CIT will continue to establish significant strategic partnerships with selected overseas higher education institutions
- Through the promotion of two-way international exchange programmes and the provision of international and inter-cultural skills, competencies and experience in programmes of study, staff, students and graduates will be equipped to participate in the international professional environment and the global society
- International student intake will be increased by 100%
- CIT will play a leading role in the development of the European Graduate School
- The ongoing development of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) will be supported and facilitated by ensuring that all CIT programmes are compliant with the EHEA and ECTS guidelines

8 Enhancing and Sharing the Physical Environment of CIT

In recognition of its role as an essential enabler of future success we will continue to develop and enhance the physical and built environment of our campuses and facilities.

Objectives and targets

- The Strategic Campus and Estates Master Plan will be developed and implemented to ensure a consistent high standard of physical environment
- CIT will enhance public access to all CIT campuses and facilities
- The development of enhanced teaching and learning resources and facilities will be pursued as a matter of priority

The Strategic Management Framework

The Institute has adopted an agile and adaptive approach to strategic management and strategic planning.

This approach recognises the ever-changing landscape and the emergent nature of many of the challenges that we will face in the coming years. Therefore the Strategic Plan does not seek to detail and address every step that CIT will take over the coming five years. Rather it seeks to establish top-level priorities and goals which will serve as a signpost for the Institute, its staff and constituents as they pursue their various and distinct activities during the next five years.

Responsibility for managing, reviewing and reporting on the implementation of the Strategic Plan and the management framework will rest with the Strategic Planning Council (SPC). The SPC is made up of representatives of the various constituencies within CIT including staff, students and senior management. The SPC is established by the President and will remain in office for the full five year term of the Strategic Plan. Each year the SPC will conduct a formal review of the Institute's performance against the Strategic Plan and will produce a formal progress report for the CIT Governing Body.

The strategic management framework, which is illustrated in Figure 1, does not consist solely of the formulation or implementation of a corporate strategic plan. Instead it involves an ongoing cyclical process which consists of a planning phase, an action phase and a review phase.

The Planning Phase

The Strategic Plan, while important, is only one component of the overall strategic management framework. As mentioned previously the Strategic Plan identifies the strategic priorities and goals for the Institute but does not address the modalities for achieving these. This detail will emerge in the more

specific and detailed plans that will be developed by the faculties, colleges and other units that comprise CIT. The planning phase will consist of the following:

- Each unit will be required to produce a development plan which highlights the priorities and goals of that unit and how these will contribute to the achievement of the Institute's strategic goals.
- These plans will be operational in nature and will contain detailed actions as well as measurable targets and objectives.
- These plans will be formally integrated with the Institute's strategic management framework through their inclusion in the appropriate executive unit plan.
- CIT is made up of 8 executive units (i.e. the Faculty of Science and Engineering, the Faculty of Business and Humanities, the CIT Cork School of Music, the CIT Crawford College of Art and Design, the National Maritime College of Ireland, the Office of the Vice President for Development, the Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs and the Office of the Vice President for Finance and Administration). All other departments, schools, units and centres of the Institute are contained within one of these executive units. The Head of each executive unit will collate the actions, objectives and targets from the various departments, schools and units in his/her area of control into a single plan and will formally present this for adoption by Governing Body within six months of the adoption of the Institute's Strategic Plan.
- The various unit-plans will be dynamic documents and will be subject to updates and revisions on an annual basis following the review phase.

- As well as the overall Strategic Plan and the detailed plans from the various units, the Institute will also develop an annual resource allocation and operational plan which will also be integrated in to the strategic management framework.



Figure 1: CIT Strategic Management Framework

The Action Phase

The action phase will consist of the day-to-day operation of the Institute, the pursuit of specific initiatives contained in the various plans and the implementation of major Institute-wide strategic projects. The action phase will be delivered and managed in a distributed manner with ongoing oversight by the Institute Executive Board and the Strategic Planning Council (SPC).

The Review Phase

A key component of the strategic management framework is regular and ongoing review of the Institute's performance in general and specifically its performance in relation to strategic goals. The strategic management framework will integrate a number of management and governance processes (such as the process for performance measurement via KPIs, the risk management process, the internal audit process and the quality management process) to implement a comprehensive review process. This approach also provides structured systems for feeding the results of the review phase forward into the subsequent planning and action phases.

The review phase will culminate in the creation of a detailed progress report by the SPC. This report will be presented to and adopted by the CIT Governing Body.

At the end of the five year period of the plan the SPC will conduct the end of plan review and produce the Strategic Plan Close-out Report which will be presented for adoption by the CIT Governing Body.



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