



# NATIONAL FORUM

FOR THE ENHANCEMENT OF TEACHING  
AND LEARNING IN HIGHER EDUCATION

## NATIONAL FORUM FOR THE ENHANCEMENT OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

### **Teaching and Learning Enhancement Fund (Driving Enhancement through Capacity Building in Irish Higher Education)**

#### **Call for Proposals—Phase 3—2016**

##### **1. Call for Proposals**

The objectives and priorities of the Teaching and Learning Enhancement Fund reflect and support the enhancement and transformation agenda that is being pursued at both a National and a European level. This fund continues to be used strategically to optimise the synergies and scope that can be enabled by strong sectoral collaboration, or through partnerships with other education providers or external stakeholders and through institutional enhancement, for maximum national impact. This is the 3<sup>rd</sup> phase of the Teaching and Learning Enhancement Fund the call maintains a focus on collaboration for national impact while also enabling capacity building at a local level. The fund builds on and develops the completed and ongoing work from phases 1 and 2.

Specifically this call for proposals aims to support recent national developments in the higher education sector. As with phase 1 and phase 2 this call supports the further advancement of the recommendations of the report *Teaching and Learning in Irish Higher Education: A Roadmap for enhancement in a digital world 2015-2017*<sup>1</sup> – which brings together the findings and priorities from the sectoral consultation, research and scoping process for building digital capacity undertaken by the National Forum. A fundamental recommendation arising from the digital roadmap was the need for strong, student focused, professional development for teachers and leaders not just in the realm of digital skills but also in the wider pedagogical processes, practices and provision that make for a highly competent cadre of staff across all disciplines and at all levels in higher education. Building on that recommendation this call also provides strategic support for sectoral alignment of existing professional development provision with the newly developed professional development framework for those who teach in higher education<sup>2</sup>. This framework is strongly evidence-based, reflects the contextual needs and drivers for professional development in the Irish setting and has also emerged as a result of wide and intense consultation and input throughout the entire higher education sector.

- 1.2 The aim of this phase of the fund is to continue to enhance teaching and learning by building on the outcomes of previous funded phases and by further driving enhancement capacity in higher education institutions. This call issues in relation to proposals type 01-03 below.

**Proposal Type 01** The creation and provision of professional development opportunities for middle/senior managers across collaborating institutions that align with the new national PD framework and support their development as leaders of teaching and learning enhancement and as digital champions.

**Proposal Type 02** The development and implementation of an integrated approach to meeting the specific professional development needs of all staff within an academic unit.

**Proposal Type 03** The alignment and enhancement of existing accredited teaching and learning programmes to the national professional development framework.

**Pre-specified National Project** A nationally coordinated Digital Skills Week that focuses on key actions in relation to developing digital skills across all levels of education and its community of stakeholders.

## 2. Context for the Teaching and Learning Enhancement Fund

- 2.1 The National Forum provides a key system-level infrastructure for the enhancement of teaching and learning in Irish higher education, and for the implementation of the recommendations of the *National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030* in this area. The National Forum aims to support institutions to enhance the learning experience of all students in Irish higher education.

Driving enhancement through capacity building is a core element of the National Forum's work and requires the integration of strategic elements, namely:

- Professional development;
- Building Digital Capacity;
- Identifying, endorsing and awarding excellent teaching;
- Scholarship in teaching and learning;
- Partnership and collaboration with key networks and other stakeholders.

## 2. Context for the Teaching and Learning Enhancement Fund

2.2 A series of cross-sectoral consultations has taken place to inform both the work of the National Forum and in particular the roadmap for building digital capacity in Irish higher education<sup>1</sup> and the emerging professional development framework for those who teach in Irish higher education<sup>2</sup>. In the extended roadmap report, a strong vision for building digital capacity is articulated, which includes the four key recommendations. Some of the recommendations and associated priorities are already being progressed by project teams funded through the Teaching and Learning Enhancement Fund phase 1 (2014) and phase 2 (2015).

Areas already being progressed include for example a review of infrastructure across the sector, the development of national digital skills requirements within a national professional development framework. Full details of all proposals funded under the 2014 and 2015 fund can be viewed at <http://www.teachingandlearning.ie/digital-enhancement-funding/>. New proposals under phase 3 need to be cognisant of the projects and activities underway that have been funded in earlier phases to ensure coherence and avoid duplication of effort.

A major focus of this phase of enhancement recognises that outstanding, impactful teaching across all disciplines depends on the professional competence and development of teachers. This call is situated within the wider teaching and learning enhancement context. In particular addressing the need to build capacity of our teachers through professional development. In addition the call for Phase 3 of the Teaching and Learning Enhancement Fund 2016 continues to be guided by the digital roadmap. In this instance the focus is on a number of the identified priorities in both Recommendation 1 and Recommendation 3 and forming a major strategic foundation for this next phase of investment.

**Recommendation 1:** Prioritise the strategic development of digital capacity in institutional and national policy and quality frameworks in a way that supports innovation for impact

**Recommendation 3:** Develop a consistent, seamless and coherent digital experience for students in Irish higher education and actively engage with students and teachers to develop their digital skills and knowledge.

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<sup>1</sup> *Teaching and Learning in Higher Education; A roadmap for enhancement in a digital world 2015-2017.*

<sup>2</sup> *Please Note: The National Professional Development Framework for those who teach in Higher Education (Autumn 2016) is currently being finalized and will be available in early September 2016.*

After extensive consultation with the higher education sector. A new national framework for professional development of those who teach in higher education has been drafted. This approach brings coherence through synthesis to the range of accredited and non-accredited provision already in the sector. It attempts to describe the breadth of teaching, learning and scholarship activities in a modern higher education environment. Based on the consultation, it sets out the values, domains and learning phases that are considered to represent the essence of these activities overtime. The consultation also highlighted the need for a supported implementation phase of the professional development framework to enable institutions to align the new framework within their own context.

This call provides opportunities for institutions and their academic units to align and embed the new framework within their institutions. In addition, it specifically focuses building the capacity of middle and/or senior managers as leaders of teaching and learning enhancement and as digital champions.

In order to meet the diverse needs of the higher education sector, the 2016 call incorporates a variety of proposal types to address national, regional or local issues. Additionality for impact remains an important component in the evaluation of all proposals submitted in response to this call.

### **Important Please Note:**

- **Each institution can only lead one submission under each project type.**
- **Institutions can lead on two project types and can partner on an additional 2 project proposals.**
- **The maximum number of projects an institution can be a partner in if they are not taking the lead in any project is 3 project proposals.**
- **Masters or Doctoral research cannot be funded through this call.**
- **No duplication of existing resources will be funded. For example, many of the resources for *Building Professional and Personal Digital Capacity* (Domain 5) are currently being developed by the All Aboard project (funded in phase 1) and by other projects and these must be integrated as appropriate into new project implementation proposals.**
- **Any new resources developed must align with the National Digital Skills Framework for Education and must be made available via open access.**

### **Proposal Type 01**

**The creation and provision of professional development opportunities for middle/senior managers across collaborating institutions that align with the new national PD framework and support their development as leaders of teaching and learning enhancement and as digital champions.**

**Proposals must be collaborative with a minimum of 3 partners**

Proposals are invited from existing regional clusters or other inter institutional collaborations to stimulate regional collaboration and innovation in teaching in learning with a focus on building the capacity of middle and/or senior managers to become digital champions and leaders of teaching and learning enhancement. **Proposals should outline a fully developed, integrated strategy for the creation and provision of professional development opportunities that align with the national professional framework 2016.**

To avoid duplication and facilitate collaboration the National Forum has provided a collaborative space on its website to enable partners to be identified <http://www.teachingandlearning.ie/teaching-and-learning-enhancement-fund-collaborative-space/>

The criteria against which the proposals will be evaluated will include an assessment of

- The clarity and coherence of the strategy for the creation and provision of identified professional development opportunities
- The focus on targeting middle and senior managers whose potential roles in leading teaching and learning and as digital champions would benefit from development and strategic alignment.
- The clarity of the rationale and rigour of the evidence base for selecting the particular opportunities to be developed.
- The extent of alignment with the national professional development framework 2016 including recognising the potential for accreditation through the National Certification Badging initiative, where appropriate.
- Evidence of integration of existing professional provision, where appropriate.
- The clarity of implementation plans indicating, broad capacity for freeing up time, numbers targeted, identification of impact and added value in the leadership space.
- The clarity of the approach for measuring and evaluating impact.
- The extent to which sustainability after the project has been considered
- The strength of evidence of a coherent partnership approach across the regional cluster or collaboration along with good intra-institutional collaboration.

- The overall standard of the proposal as judged by the International review panel.
- The extent to which the proposal represents value for money.
- The involvement and active collaboration of at least three institutions in the proposal.
- The inclusion of an agreement that all resources/materials developed will be available through open access and designed with the potential for future adaptation at a local level in mind.

## **Key Dates Proposal Type 01**

<b>Proposal Submission Date</b>	<b>October 25th 2016</b>
<b>Initial Feedback and guidance from International Panel</b>	<b>November 8th 2016</b>
<b>Open Forum Presentation</b>	<b>Nov. 30th and Dec. 1st 2016</b>
<b>Project Completion (including eval.)</b>	<b>December 2018</b>
<b>Budget Limit Guideline</b>	<b>100-150K</b>

The funding allocation process will take account of the size of each individual institution and the number of institutions in a particular collaboration, if appropriate. The minimum number of institutions in any collaboration will be three. The funding allocated will typically range between 100-150K

## Proposal Type 02

### **The development and implementation of an integrated approach to meet the specific professional development needs of all staff within an academic unit.**

**Proposals can be collaborative with a minimum of 3 partners or can be made by a single institution**

The consultative process associated with the development of the national professional development framework highlighted the need to look specifically at the professional development needs within different disciplines. The evidence gathered strongly suggests that professional development works best when it is coordinated at the level of the academic unit working in partnership with associated support departments. Proposals in this category must be led by Deans/Heads of Department/School/Faculty with a strong focus on discipline-specific pedagogies for enhancement and impact on student learning within fields of study. Only one proposal per disciplinary area will be funded and academic units who are currently completing projects funded through the Teaching and Learning enhancement fund 2015 are not eligible to apply for this project type. Proposals are welcome from a single institution or from a collaboration between similar discipline groups across institutions. In the case of a collaborative bid the minimum number of institutions in any collaboration will be three. To avoid duplication and facilitate collaboration the National Forum has provided a collaborative space on its website to enable partners to be identified (<http://www.teachingandlearning.ie/teaching-and-learning-enhancement-fund-collaborative-space/>)

**Proposals are sought from discipline groups/departments/schools/faculty (unit) across a regional cluster or other collaborative network or from a single institution outlining a coherent strategy for identifying and meeting the professional development of their academic and support staff.**

The criteria against which the proposals will be evaluated will include an assessment of:

- The clarity and coherence of the strategy for identifying the professional development needs of all staff within the discipline group/department/school/faculty (unit).
- The inclusion of student perspective on learning within a disciplinary context and the extent to which these perspectives are integrated into the professional development strategy.
- The extent of the alignment with the national professional development framework 2016 including recognising the potential for accreditation through the National Certification Badging initiative, where appropriate.
- The extent of the alignment of professional development capacity building with institutional and academic unit teaching and learning strategies.
- The strength of the evidence of integration of existing professional provision, if appropriate.

- The clarity of the implementation plan that demonstrates innovation indicating, broad capacity for freeing up time, numbers targeted, clear identification of impact and added value to the unit.
- The robustness of the approach for measuring and evaluating impact and is explicit about the type of impact the project is expected to have.
- The ongoing sustainability of the project activity beyond the time frame of the funded period.
- The extent to which the proposal complements institutional and regional efforts and increases overall impact with a better use of the limited resources available.
- The extent to which the proposal facilitates staff and student peer-to-peer learning and collegiality.
- The extent to which the learning of implementing and managing a professional development strategy within a discipline group/department/school/faculty across a cluster/collaboration for national impact will be shared.
- The clarity of the approach for measuring and evaluating impact.
- The strength of evidence of a coherent partnership approach across the regional cluster or collaboration along with good intra-institutional collaboration.
- The overall standard of the proposal as judged by the International review panel.
- The extent to which the proposal represents value for money.
- The involvement and active collaboration of at least three institutions in the proposal, where appropriate.
- The inclusion of an agreement that all resources/materials developed will be available through open access and designed with the potential for future adaptation at a local level in mind.

## Key Dates Proposal Type 02

<b>Proposal Submission Date</b>	<b>October 25th 2016</b>
<b>Initial Feedback and guidance from International Panel</b>	<b>November 8th 2016</b>
<b>Open Forum Presentation</b>	<b>Nov. 30th and Dec. 1st 2016</b>
<b>Project Completion (including eval.)</b>	<b>December 2018</b>
<b>Budget Limit Guideline</b>	<b>100-150K</b>

The funding allocation process will take account of the size of each individual institution and the number of institutions in a particular collaboration, if appropriate. The minimum number of institutions in any collaboration will be three. The funding allocated will typically range between 100-150K



### Proposal Type 03

#### **Alignment and enhancement of existing accredited teaching and learning programmes to the national professional development framework.**

**Proposals can be collaborative with a minimum of 3 partners or from a single institution**

Proposals are invited from existing regional clusters or other inter institutional collaborations or from individual institutions align their existing professional development provision with the national framework. **Proposals should outline a fully developed, integrated strategy for the alignment of existing professional development provision with the national professional framework 2016 that involves all potential stakeholders (support staff, discipline groups etc.).** Development and alignment activities will be supported. Delivery of provision is not supported under this project type. The development of any additional accredited programmes will not be supported.

It is envisaged that proposals of this type will be submitted by each regional cluster<sup>3</sup> or other collaboration or by a single institution. In redesign the innovations in accredited professional development programme provision and pedagogy including RPL would be welcome but note that the fund very clearly supports development and alignment but not the provision of such programmes. Care needs to be taken to ensure that any redesign or development including any increase in credit does not give rise to unsustainable provision that cannot be resourced by the institution into the future. It is envisaged that in some circumstances clear alignment and strong innovation may give rise to more sustainable and coherent processes.

The criteria against which the proposals will be evaluated will include an assessment of:

- The clarity and coherence of the strategy and implementation plan for the alignment and enhancement of existing professional development provision to reflect the national framework recognising the potential for accreditation through the National Certification Badging initiative, if appropriate.
- The robustness and breadth of the consultation with all potential stakeholders during the redesign process.
- The extent to which innovative pedagogy and provision including RPL has been considered as a key aspect of the alignment.
- The clarity of the approach for measuring and evaluating impact.
- The ongoing sustainability of the project activity beyond the time frame of the funded period.
- The strength of evidence of a coherent partnership approach across the regional cluster or collaboration along with good intra-institutional collaboration, where relevant.

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<sup>3</sup> (as outlined on pp.20–21 of the HEA report at [http://www.hea.ie/sites/default/files/report\\_to\\_minister\\_-\\_system\\_configuration\\_2\\_0.pdf](http://www.hea.ie/sites/default/files/report_to_minister_-_system_configuration_2_0.pdf))

- The overall standard of the proposal as judged by the International review panel.
- The extent to which the proposal represents value for money.
- In the case of collaborative proposals the involvement and active collaboration of at least three institutions.
- The inclusion of an agreement that all resources/materials developed will be available through open access and designed with the potential for future adaptation at a local level in mind.

## **Key Dates Proposal Type 03**

<b>Proposal Submission Date</b>	<b>October 25th 2016</b>
<b>Initial Feedback and guidance from International Panel</b>	<b>November 8th 2016</b>
<b>Open Forum Presentation</b>	<b>Nov. 30th and Dec. 1st 2016</b>
<b>Project Completion (including eval.)</b>	<b>June 2018</b>
<b>Budget Limit Guideline</b>	<b>50-75K</b>

The funding allocation process will take account of the size of each individual institution and the number of institutions in a particular collaboration, if appropriate. The minimum number of institutions in any collaboration will be three. The funding allocated will typically range between 50-75K

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## Management of Process Proposals Type 01- 03

This section sets out the process for evaluation of proposals, including the marking system, the composition of the Assessment Panel and other requirements as appropriate.

**All proposals will be completed using the National Forum online application facility. This facility will be available from late August 2016 and can be accessed through the National Forum website [www.teachingandlearning.ie](http://www.teachingandlearning.ie)**

The process for applying for funding for all **Proposal Types** has two stages:

### **Stage 1          Written online submission**

All proposals should provide a clear outline of the project using the online interface which will guide you through the proposal submission process and the key elements that should be incorporated. You must also provide an outline budget and written agreement from all partner institutions that they agree to the conditions of funding available through the online interface.

### **Stage 2          Open Forum Presentation**

Proposals must meet a sufficient quality requirement agreed by the international panel for progression to stage 2. Value for money is regarded as an implicit criterion in all proposals at all stages. Stage 2 will require the proposal development and implementation team to present their initiative to a plenary group led by an independent chair and panel and to which all other proposers will be invited. In the case of collaborative proposals representatives from all partner institutions should attend. This Open Forum will provide opportunities to share ideas and identify synergies across different clusters and collaborations.

Following the Open Forum presentation, the international panel may make recommendations that they consider will enhance the implementation of the proposal. Proposal teams may be required to adopt these recommendations as a condition of receiving funding. The final project plan incorporating any changes after stage 2 must be submitted to the National Forum before funding is allocated.

## Further Guidance for all Proposal types

### 3. Scope of the Teaching and Learning Enhancement Fund 2016 (Driving Enhancement through Capacity Building in Irish Higher Education)

- 3.1 A thoroughly consultative and collaborative approach has already been adopted in order to develop and articulate the emerging digital roadmap and national professional development framework. The resulting approach to funding allocation (outlined below) will aim to ensure that the proposal and allocation process is as collaborative, appropriate, transparent and inclusive as possible. The aim will be to ensure that funded projects optimise the synergies and scope that can be enabled by strong inter-and intra-institutional collaboration, for maximum national impact.
- 3.2 The Fund will not be allocated to the creation of physical capacity or to proposals that could reasonably be expected to be funded from other public funding sources, e.g. research funding agencies, core grant funding. It will fund new initiatives and also activities that clearly build on or develop existing initiatives. All proposals must clearly show how they enhance or transform learning experiences for students.
- 3.3 Institutions may only propose projects for completion within the timeframe and within the budget guideline indicated for each individual proposal type.
- 3.4 Proposals should have regard for their lasting impact beyond the time frame of the initiative. Proposals should aim to give rise to real, beneficial & long-term change.
- 3.5 While recognising the developing focus and different criteria of successive funding calls proposers are advised to read the comments from the international panel on the proposals submitted in response to other Teaching and Learning Enhancement calls e.g., <http://www.teachingandlearning.ie/?p=16508>
- 3.6 **Budget Guidelines and Upper Limits for proposals.**  
Proposals must adhere to the indicative budget guideline and upper limit for each proposal type.

### 4. Assessment Panel and Process

- 4.1 All Proposals must be of excellent quality and will be assessed by an independent panel of international experts. Institutions should have regard to this international dimension of the process, and should seek to use best international practice and theory to inform their proposals.
- 4.2 For all proposal types the panel will have the right to recommend amendments to all proposals submitted for greater national impact and value for money.

## 5.0 Timeframe & Calendar

### Key Dates All Proposals

<b>Proposal Submission Date</b>	<b>October 25th 2016</b>
<b>Initial Feedback and guidance from International Panel</b>	<b>November 8th 2016</b>
<b>Open Forum Presentation</b>	<b>Nov. 30th and Dec. 1st 2016</b>
<b>Project Completion (including eval.)</b>	
<b>Project Type 01</b>	<b>December 2018</b>
<b>Project Type 02</b>	<b>December 2018</b>
<b>Project Type 03</b>	<b>June 2018</b>
<b>Budget Limit Guideline</b>	
<b>Project Type 01</b>	<b>100-150K</b>
<b>Project Type 02</b>	<b>100-150K</b>
<b>Project Type 03</b>	<b>50-75K</b>

#### 5.1 Format of proposal

See online template (**available late August 2016**)

Teaching and Learning Enhancement Call—Online Application Process 2016

#### 5.2 Monitoring

The National Forum will monitor the allocation of the enhancement fund on an ongoing basis. Institutions receiving funding will report regularly to the National Forum on:

- a) Activities undertaken; and
- b) Objectives attained, as defined in each initiative's implementation plan.

For all proposals an interim financial report, must be submitted dates to be confirmed. The National Forum may also put in place independent reviews of the projects funded.

The release of funds will be dependent upon the submission of satisfactory financial reports. A portion of the allocation will be retained pending completion of the project and a satisfactory final report including an evaluation of the proposal in terms of the agreed targets and performance indicators.

- 5.3** Failure on the part of an institution to provide adequate and timely information and/or failure to achieve objectives will be taken into account in any future calls and will result in the exclusion of the institution(s) concerned. Significant departure from the objectives of the proposal may result in the funding awarded being suspended or revoked.

Any deviation from the agreed activities, objectives and time lines will impact upon the release of the funding to the institution.

**5.4 Queries and clarifications**

The National Forum will take queries from all institutions up to the date of the presentation. All queries and responses will be dealt with via a dedicated publicly accessible National Forum Teaching and Learning Enhancement Fund 2016 FAQ section on the National Forum website.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Queries should be addressed through [www.teachingandlearning.ie](http://www.teachingandlearning.ie)

## Appendix 1

### Pre-specified National Level Action

This project, led by the National Forum, will be scoped in partnership with the sector, the IUA, IOTI and HECA and other relevant stakeholders from other levels of education and community as appropriate.

- **National Project 1 Nationally Coordinated Digital Skills Week**

#### **National Project 1 Nationally Coordinated Digital Skills Week**

This pre-specified project will culminate in a nationally co-ordinated Digital Skills week (in the spirit of Maths Week or Science Week) to support digital readiness in and through higher education. The aim of the project will be to engage all those stakeholders who have a vested interest in the enhancement of teaching and learning including but not restricted to the following groups; higher education, FET, Second and primary level, communities and enterprise. The purpose will be to raise awareness, to foster collaboration not just within higher education but also across all levels of education, to build better bridges between those at different stages of learning and those entering higher education. The project builds on the strong evidence base relating to transitions and responds directly to recommendations arising from the digital roadmap. The project will help to maximise the impact and reach of projects funded in earlier phases and bring all levels of education together to share strengths and insights of the enhancement agenda

This pre-specified project builds on the regional TEL weeks funded through the Teaching and Learning Enhancement fund 2015 and the national digital skills framework for education developed through the All Aboard project funded under the Teaching and Learning Enhancement fund 2014. This project specifically addresses Recommendation 1 of the Digital Roadmap,

**Recommendation 1: Prioritise the strategic development of digital capacity in institutional and national policy and quality frameworks in a way that supports innovation for impact.**

In particular this project will support priority 4:

*A co-ordinated, multi-level approach to foster digital literacy, skills and confidence among students at all levels of education needs to be developed.*

## APPENDIX 2

### ELIGIBLE INSTITUTIONS

- Dublin City University
  - National University of Ireland Galway
  - Maynooth University
  - University College Cork
  - University College Dublin
  - University of Dublin, Trinity College
  - University of Limerick
- 
- Athlone Institute of Technology
  - Cork Institute of Technology
  - Dublin Institute of Technology
  - Dundalk Institute of Technology
  - Dún Laoghaire Institute of Art, Design & Technology
  - Galway–Mayo Institute of Technology
  - Institute of Technology, Blanchardstown
  - Institute of Technology, Carlow
  - Institute of Technology, Sligo
  - Institute of Technology, Tallaght
  - Institute of Technology, Tralee
  - Letterkenny Institute of Technology
  - Limerick Institute of Technology
  - Waterford Institute of Technology

### COLLEGES

- Mary Immaculate College, Limerick
- National College of Art and Design
- St. Patrick's College Drumcondra
- Mater Dei Institute of Education
- St Angela's College

SECTORAL REPRESENTATIVE BODIES (also eligible as partners for both project types)

- IOTI
- IUA

### PLEASE NOTE:

Other colleges including independent colleges are eligible to participate in consortia as lead partners but are not eligible to receive funding as a lead partner.