RESEARCH STRATEGIC PLAN

HIGH LEVEL GOAL 1

We will create an environment in which research engagement and performance is valued as an integral part of professional academic life that provides for and underpins the intellectual development of our students to the highest standard and for the betterment of our wider society.

Priority Objective 1

Staff research engagement will be incorporated into an institutional Workload Allocation Model (WAM) and will be a recognised part of the academic workload profile with reference to discipline-specific norms.

Key Enabling Actions:

o *Build a sustainable workloads system for fostering increased research engagement by staff that provides flexibility mechanisms for off-setting potential constraints linked to in-semester teaching and administrative responsibilities;*

o *Systematically record, promote and disseminate staff research output across agreed key impact criteria that are clear, relevant and coherent and that are aligned with discipline-specific norms.*

Priority Objective 2

Provide leadership and practical support measures that will enable staff research engagement.

Key Enabling Actions:

o *Provide formal and informal opportunities for professional development in research planning and evaluation;*

o *All Academic Staff will be supported to engage in continuous reflective planning and evaluation of their research through Personal Research Plans and Departmental Research Plans;*

o *Embed annual planning for research at Faculty and Departmental levels building on Personal Research Plans and Departmental Research Plans;*

o *Provide induction on both internal and external research support schemes;*

o *Review resource availability towards enhanced support for research leave;*

o *Financial instruments for research support will continue to be enhanced and strategically targeted to support active researchers;*

- o *Provide professional development in targeted publication strategies, research citations and metrics and open access publication, including the Mary Immaculate Research Repository (MIRR);*
- o *A research ethics clearance facility will be provided through the Mary Immaculate Research Ethics Committee (MIREC) which will continue to be modified and streamlined in accordance with best international practice;*
- o *Provide professional development (accredited and unaccredited) in academic practice through the alignment of teaching, supervision and research through the Research & Graduate School and the Centre for Teaching & Learning;*
- o *Establish GROW (Grant-to-Research Openings: Information & Writing Support Unit)—a research bid-writing unit within the Research & Graduate School to help researchers identify and respond to external grant opportunities.*

Priority Objective 3

Extend the recognition, reach and impact of new knowledge formation by the MIC research community.

Key Enabling Actions:

- o *Increase the 2018 baseline of engagement with MIRR (Mary Immaculate College Research Repository) towards greater penetration of citation indices and generation of new research opportunities with external peers;*
- o *Stimulate research networking by providing seed funding to support the building of professional collaboration.*

Priority Objective 4

At institutional level, consolidate our seminal research footings with well-developed dissemination strategies as well as through adequately resourced and coordinated research institutions.

Key Enabling Actions:

- o *Develop a clearly defined and well-integrated Knowledge Transfer Strategy (KiTS) towards expansion of the College's contribution, through research, to academia, society, culture, public policy and the economy;*
- o *Foster increases in the number of staff involved in the support of institutional research and academic research leadership;*
- o *Develop and resource multi-annual action plans for MIC Research Institutes;*
- o *Target assistance towards applications that are made to international research funding bodies via MIC Research Institutes.*

HIGH LEVEL GOAL 2

We will develop a framework for doctoral education focused on research capacity-building in combination with research and transferrable skills to enhance students' opportunities for success in their future careers.

Priority Objective 1

Development of an innovative, high-quality Framework for Doctoral Education.
Key Enabling Actions:
- *Appoint a high-level working group to create a Framework for Doctoral Education;*
- *Develop a suite of signature doctoral pedagogies, assessment formats, and feedback practices;*
- *Champion innovation and excellence in doctoral education with a focus on enhancing the quality of the educational experience to produce graduates with attributes for future careers.*

Priority Objective 2

Development of doctoral programme capacity-building, including researcher development frameworks, shared programme development practices, and mediation and advocacy protocols.
Key Enabling Actions:
- *Develop new capacity-building projects and optimisation of learning outcomes in respect of (i) Masters dissertation projects and (ii) Doctoral thesis projects;*
- *Develop a faculty researcher development framework based on the European Charter for Researchers;*
- *Develop a tailored support and assistance programme for postgraduate researchers making applications to governmental, corporate and philanthropic organisations;*
- *Develop research thesis project management training and training in supervisor/supervisee relationships.*

HIGH LEVEL GOAL 3

We will develop coordinated strategic approaches for attracting, recruiting, and retaining postgraduate students with reference to social, cultural and economic needs, regionally, nationally and internationally.

Priority Objective 1

Development and promotion of MIC as a highly regarded locus and community-of-practice for doctoral research and study.

Key Enabling Actions:

- o *Complete the MIC Capital Development Plan for John Henry Newman Campus, including investment in meeting and seminar rooms, and equipment;*
- o *Raise the profile of postgraduate students' academic accomplishments through increased visibility in MIC communications, including website;*
- o *Establish student and Faculty-focused shared publication and dissemination protocols;*
- o *Develop a shared strategy for alumni-focused activities in relation to recruitment, research and themed events in collaboration with the International Office (IO) and Corporate Communications and Marketing (CCM) (in tandem with 2.3, above).*

Priority Objective 2

We will enhance and diversify our postgraduate student recruitment and retention strategies.

Key Enabling Actions:

- o *Develop an all-new, fully-coordinated cross-College postgraduate programme development and student recruitment strategy that is consistently and transparently resourced and monitored;*
- o *Develop recruitment and retention strategies that specifically target high-performing students capable of securing significant funding such as European Research Council (ERC) funding;*
- o *Optimise student recruitment in new and established subject areas by attracting prestigious fellowships and scholarships, including the Irish Research Council (IRC) and Marie Sklodowska- Curie;*
- o *Increase doctoral enrolment levels while improving completion times and rates;*
- o *Implement the new MIC Strategy for Postgraduate Supports following inclusive consultation and adoption.*

Priority Objective 3

Recruitment of international students through engagement with doctoral communities.

Key Enabling Actions:

- *Enhance our external and internal postgraduate research communication activity by emphasising dissemination, international audiences, and digital delivery;*
- *Develop roles and relationships for international students through scholarship funding for training and development opportunities in key research institutes and centres in collaboration with the International Office and Strategic Communications & Marketing Office (in tandem with 5.1.1 and 5.1.2, below);*
- *Develop a postgraduate international alumni ambassador scheme to highlight international alumni successes and develop peer-to-peer communications with potential MIC students in EU and non- EU countries;*
- *Expand summer-time and inter-semester MIC-hosted events, including the launch of interdisciplinary summer schools focused on themes and topics that draw from the particular strengths and expertise of the MIC research community (in tandem with 5.1.4, below).*

Priority Objective 4
Collaborate, with our regional partners, towards joint doctoral programme development.

Key Enabling Actions:
- *Address current national policy in the context of the National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030 with reference to the National Framework for Doctoral Education and the development of the Federated Limerick Graduate School (FLGS) by the Shannon Consortium;*
- *Develop shared academic opportunities for FLGS in the context of mutually agreed governance, management and operational procedures, particularly with reference to structured doctoral programmes and research and transferrable skills training;*
- *Develop joint Structured PhD programmes in partnership with the University of Limerick and Limerick Institute of Technology that is characterised by the highest quality of programme design and delivery and a unique student experience.*