

INDEPENDENT THINKING SHARED AMBITION



University College Cork, Ireland
Colaiste na hOllscoile Corcaigh

STRATEGIC PLAN 2017-2022



“ We are a university in the community, of the community
and for the community, committed to delivering value
in a trustworthy and transparent fashion. ”

PROFESSOR PATRICK G. O'SHEA
President, University College Cork







Strategic Plan 2017-2022



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“ Our creative spirit will enable our university family to be entrepreneurial in creating more value than we consume for the moral, cultural and economic health of our people. ”

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President, University College Cork

President's Foreword

UCC is an ambitious university of historic heritage with a modern focus. Drawing on the spirit of Finbarr's seventh-century site, we are dedicated to teaching and learning, enabled in our modern university by creative scholarship and understanding, to enhance the well-being of all.

We educate our students to observe and question, to discern and reflect, to analyse and act, as independent thinkers and creative explorers competent at navigating and bridging the rifts of faith, politics and perspective that divide our world today.

Like myself, many of us are first-generation university graduates and are passionate about ensuring access to higher education. We are committed to ensuring that UCC progresses as a location of choice for Irish and international students.

Our creative spirit will enable our university family to be entrepreneurial in creating more value than we consume for the moral, cultural and economic health of our people. We are a university in the community, of the community and for the community, committed to delivering value in a trustworthy and transparent fashion.

We reaffirm our commitment to upholding academic values and the principles of shared governance, transparency, integrity, equality and fairness. Diversity nurtures fertile fields in which great ideas grow. At UCC, we are dedicated to promoting diversity of thought, perspective, background, ethnicity and to building culturally-inclusive communities within and around the university.

If we were to ask what our people wanted from life in Finbarr's time it would simply have been to be healed and housed, fed and fuelled, while living in a just society, where they were safe and free. Today, these aspirations are both local and global, and it is our duty to enable the realisation of these aspirations for humanity, now and into the future.

To turn our ambitious dreams into reality we must provide the wherewithal. Therefore, we are committed to securing the resources to grow our human and physical capacity to achieve our ambitions, and to allow us to be agile in our response to emerging opportunities.

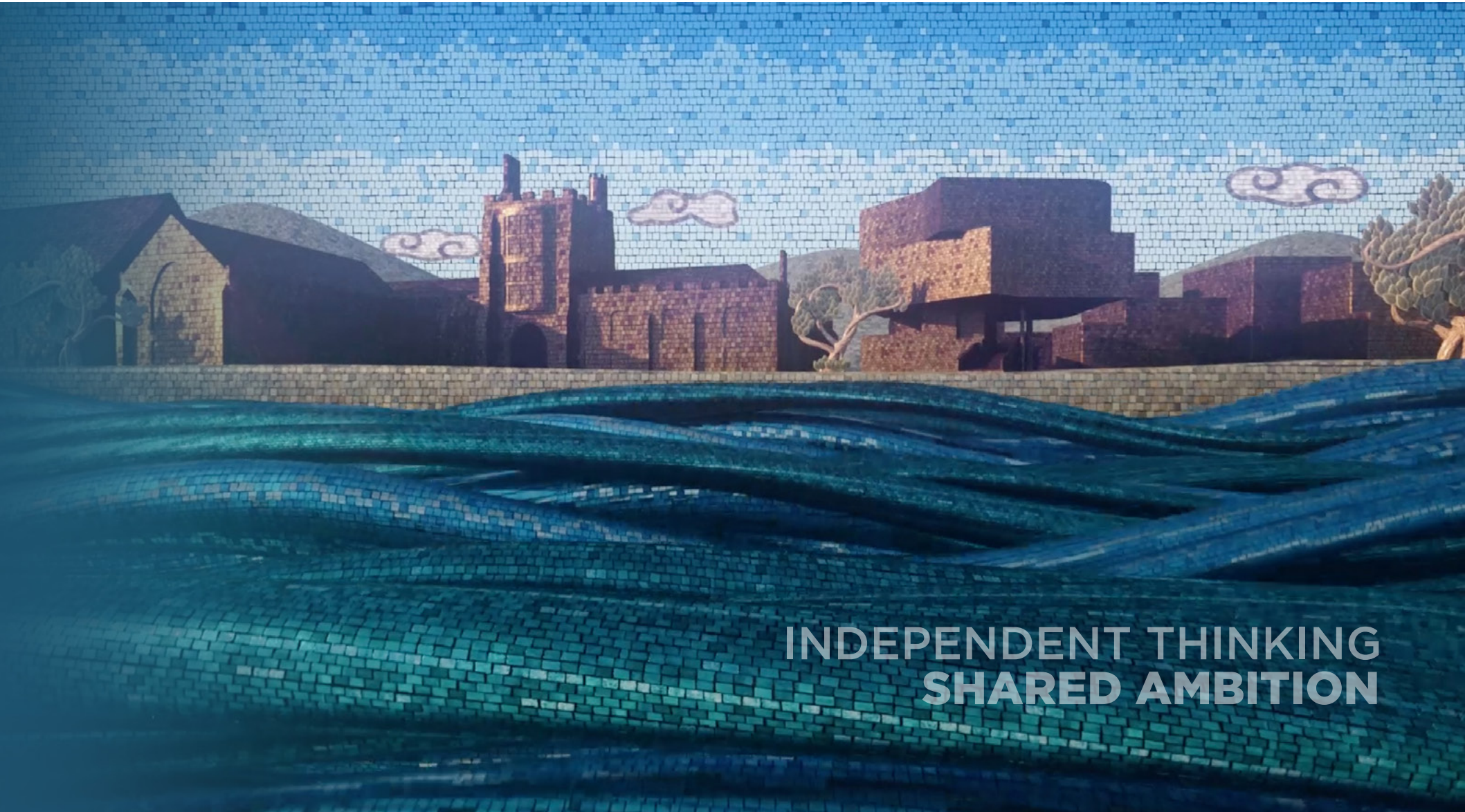
We have arrived at a time of renewed optimism for UCC and for Ireland, a time that allows us to build on the strong foundations laid in more difficult times by our staff and our recent presidents Michael Mortell, Gerry Wrixon and Michael Murphy.

The enthusiasm and ambition evident throughout UCC are infectious. We have demonstrated impressive persistence and commitment to excellence and service. It is through such dedication, such passion and such achievement that UCC will continue its ascendance among the great universities of the world.



PROFESSOR PATRICK G. O'SHEA
President, University College Cork





**INDEPENDENT THINKING
SHARED AMBITION**

Profile in 2017



2%

UCC is in the top 2% of universities worldwide.

€96m

In 2016, UCC secured research funding of over €96m.

31,000 1st

UCC graduated 31,000 students from 2012 to 2016.

1st Green campus in the world, awarded in 2010.

94%

In 2017, over 94% of our graduates were in employment or further study.

16%

The proportion of our students from outside Ireland is 16%.

21,000 1st

In 2016, UCC had 15,000 undergraduates, 4,400 postgraduates and 2,800 adults in continuing education across undergraduate and postgraduate programmes and short courses.

1st for research income from industry sources in Ireland according to KTI Survey 2016.

Profile in 2017

University College Cork (UCC) is in the top 2% of universities worldwide.

It is a research-intensive, student-centred, international top-tier university. Since 1845, UCC has been the comprehensive university of the south of Ireland. Today, UCC is a globally-oriented, research-led university. It provides a full range of disciplines, serving regional, national and international students. UCC attracts disproportionately high numbers of top school leavers compared to other universities. It offers programmes in the arts, humanities, social sciences, business, law, engineering, architecture, science, food science, medicine, dentistry, pharmacy, nursing and the clinical therapies. UCC is committed to development through interdisciplinary collaboration.

UCC has 21,000 students. These include 15,000 in undergraduate programmes, 4,400 in postgraduate study and research, and 2,800 adults in continuing education across undergraduate programmes, postgraduate programmes and short courses. Its student body includes 3,300 international students, representing more than 100 countries worldwide.

UCC has educational outreach programmes in over 40 locations nationwide. With a staff of 2,800, the university is one of the largest employers in the region.

UCC prioritises research in areas that are significant at the highest international levels. This creates a significant impact and uptake in the community beyond the university. In particular, UCC's research in food and health, photonics and perinatal medicine is recognised as world leading. Several of Ireland's top research centres are based in UCC. These include the Tyndall National Institute (microsystems, photonics, nanotechnology) and the APC Microbiome Institute (alimentary health, functional foods), both recognised as global leaders. The Environmental Research Institute conducts research on climate action, a sustainable society and the circular economy.

Since 1845, UCC has been the comprehensive university of the south of Ireland. Today UCC is a globally-oriented, research-led university.





Performance in the 2013–2017 Strategic Plan Period

UCC's latest strategic plan is informed by its performance during the five years of the *2013-2017 Strategic Plan*. During this period, UCC showed its commitment to its core academic goals of providing excellent opportunities for students and pursuing cutting-edge research. This was achieved in a period when public funding of higher education markedly declined. Significant progress was made in the 2013-2017 period.

TEACHING, LEARNING AND THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE

UCC enhanced its reputation as a leading Irish university for its student experience. Attention to first-year students has seen our first-year retention rate increase to 92%, a level well above international norms. We increased the number of students participating annually in work placements by 15%. More than 4,300 students across 90% of our undergraduate programmes participated in work-based, clinical and international placements in 2017. Over 94% of graduates were in employment or further study in 2017. This is a historically high level and above average for the sector.

UCC is the leading Irish higher education institution for social inclusion and 'equity

of access' according to Higher Education Authority (HEA) 2017 data. There are a greater number of students from under-represented groups studying at UCC than in any other higher education institution in Ireland. In 2016, 26% of UCC's student intake was through access routes. We continue to exceed national targets for the provision of part-time and flexible education, mostly through our Centre for Adult and Continuing Education (ACE). In 2016-2017, over 25% of new undergraduate entrants enrolled on part-time courses.

In 2014, we introduced the Quercus Talented Students' Programme. This is aimed at supporting and promoting excellence in academia, sport, the creative and performing arts, active citizenship, innovation and entrepreneurship among new undergraduate students and students already registered. In 2017, the Quercus Academic Scholarships were extended to postgraduate students.

In 2015, we set up the Centre for the Integration of Research, Teaching and Learning to enhance the quality of teaching at UCC. We are now a leader in this field: over 70% of academic staff have a National University of Ireland (NUI) qualification in Teaching and Learning.

UCC is the only institution in Ireland to offer online and flexible study options for continuing professional development (CPD) for higher education teaching staff. This builds on our strong e-Learning capacity. In 2017, UCC joined the first European Learning and Teaching Forum. This aims to lead policy development in changing learning landscapes.

In 2015, UCC established the Cork University Business School (CUBS) to strengthen business education and research. In 2016, the university ran its largest recruitment campaign in a single area, appointing ten professors to CUBS. Also in 2016, UCC acquired the iconic Cork Savings Bank building on Lapps Quay in the heart of Cork city. Its refurbishment will allow for the delivery of executive education. UCC also acquired the Irish Management Institute (IMI) in 2016 after a seven year strategic alliance. The IMI is the only Irish business institute ranked among international providers of customised executive education in the 2017 Financial Times executive education rankings. It is in 54th position globally and 25th in Europe in the programme ranking.

UCC has created new interdisciplinary learning opportunities for students through the BA in

Digital Humanities and Information Technology, the BA in Criminology and the BCL (Law and Business).

RESEARCH, INNOVATION AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

UCC competitively secured research funding of over €96 million in 2016. This was a 21% increase over a five-year period and a historical high for the university. We have diversified our research funding sources, receiving €30.1 million in non-state income in 2016, a 52% increase. UCC's strategy is to enable world-class research in major Centres of Excellence. In 2013, Science Foundation Ireland (SFI) announced the SFI Research Centres Programme, the largest joint state/industry research investment in Irish history. Of the twelve supported centres, UCC leads four, co-leads one and is a partner in six others. An SFI investment of almost €100 million was awarded to UCC.

€96m

UCC competitively secured research funding of over €96 million in 2016.

The UCC-led SFI research centres are the:

- **APC Microbiome Institute** (food and health)
- **Irish Centre for Fetal and Neonatal Translational Research** (INFANT – perinatal health)
- **Centre for Marine and Renewable Energy** (MaREI at the Environmental Research Institute – marine and renewable energy)
- **Irish Photonic Integration Centre** (IPIC at Tyndall National Institute – photonics)
- **Ireland's Big Data and Analytics Research Centre** (INSIGHT, big data and data analytics), co-led with NUIG, UCD and DCU

We continue to secure above-average EU Horizon 2020 funding. As of August 2017, UCC had received €47.9 million under this programme. UCC continues to secure Ireland's highest level of research funding per academic, according to the HEA.

In 2015, UCC completed its second university-wide review of the quality of its research output and performance to internationally recognised standards. This exercise was notable for its scale, involving the recruitment of senior international peer experts: 15 panel chairs, 69 disciplinary vice chairs and 245 remote reviewers.

97% of the reviewers were international, with 49% of reviewers drawn from Russell Group universities. The research peer review evaluation scores show that the percentage of high-scoring units producing research of international quality increased by 13% between 2009 and 2015. Graduate education is an area of strength, achieving the highest unit scores and showing that over two-thirds of the units reviewed were competitive globally on this parameter.

Innovation and entrepreneurship remain a focus of staff and students. Since 2013, 11 high-potential start-up (HPSU) companies have been established as a result of UCC's investment in research. This brings the total number of Gateway UCC companies to 40 and the total number of jobs to 240. Over 200 jobs have been created in graduate start-up companies through UCC's IGNITE Graduate Business Innovation Programme since 2012. IGNITE's innovative approach and outcomes were recognised by the European Commission at the European Enterprise Promotion Awards in 2016. In 2015, we established the Entrepreneur Ship, the world's first business incubator for marine and energy companies (MaREI Centre). In 2016, the Blackstone LaunchPad was established.

It provides students, staff and alumni with support for venture creation. Since 2016, an entrepreneurship module, 'New Venture Creation', is available to all students.

In 2013, UCC was conferred with the European Commission's 'HR Excellence in Research Award' accreditation. This reflects the progress made by the university in supporting researchers, including introducing structured PhD programmes and the University Employment and Career Management Structure for Researchers.

REGIONAL AND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

We have strengthened our collaboration with education partners in the region. The Bridge Network Consortium of UCC, Cork Institute of Technology (CIT), Institute of Technology Tralee and Teagasc allow for partnerships when commercialising research and technology transfer. In 2015, UCC partnered with CIT, IT Tralee, the Education and Training Boards and employer organisations to establish the South West Regional Skills Forum. This is aimed at meeting the skills needs of the region. In 2015, UCC signed a memorandum of understanding to advance the UNESCO Declaration on Building Learning Cities with Cork City Council,

CIT and Cork Education and Training Board. The Learning City initiative saw Cork host the UNESCO International Conference on Learning Cities in 2017.

In an alliance between UCC, CIT and the Irish Naval Service, we have worked to develop the potential of Cork Harbour as a world-leading location for marine and energy research. In 2015, UCC completed the development and staffing of the Beaufort Building, part of the ERI and home of the MaREI centre at the harbour. In 2016, the School of Law launched an LLM in Marine and Maritime Law with the Irish Naval Service and an LLM in Environmental and Natural Resources Law. It also established a Centre for Law and the Environment.

UCC is a partner in the Campus Engage National Network for promoting civic and community engagement as a core function of Irish higher education. Campus Engage helps staff and students across all disciplines to engage with the needs of the community. It involves the seven Irish universities and Dublin Institute of Technology. According to a 2016 survey, two-thirds of UCC staff work with over 200 organisations locally on community-based research, community-based

learning, volunteering and knowledge exchange activities. In 2016, UCC exceeded its target of completing 50 projects under the Community-Academic Research Links (CARL) initiative to help students undertake research projects that address 'real world' issues submitted by local civil society organisations. Our junior conferring initiative has opened UCC up to over 70,000 primary school children, including 50,000 in the last five years alone. It is a unique aspect of civic engagement.

ENTERPRISE ENGAGEMENT AND ECONOMIC IMPACT

31,000

UCC graduated 31,000 students between 2012 and 2016.

UCC's greatest contribution to enterprise and society is the number of graduates produced annually. The university has enabled national economic growth and recovery by graduating 31,000 students between 2012 and 2016, including 11,000 at postgraduate level and over 1,100 doctoral graduates.

By 2014, the employment rates for UCC's graduates had recovered to the peak experienced in 2006. With 6,500 graduates in 2016, UCC now produces over 1,500 more graduates annually than it did in 2012 while achieving an unprecedented rate of graduate employment.

The university's economic impact is worth around €800 million annually. UCC's 23,800 students and staff in Cork city support over 3,000 additional jobs in the local economy. A third of the university's 2,800 staff is from overseas. These, together with UCC's international students, add to Cork's diverse population. The city now has Ireland's most international population as a proportion of its total.

The university has aligned its courses with the national skills agenda through 39 government-funded, HEA Springboard programmes. These provide training and learning opportunities for jobseekers to up-skill or re-skill in areas where there are skills deficits.

Between 2013 and 2015, UCC piloted and delivered a Health Innovation Hub for job creation in medical technology and healthcare small and medium-sized enterprises in partnership with government agencies.

The hub drew on industry expertise in developing products and services to improve outcomes and lower costs in national healthcare delivery. This resulted in UCC being chosen as the national Health Innovation Hub Ireland location in 2015.

Since 2013, UCC has signed 365 industry research contracts and co-authored 364 publications with 100 corporations (source: SciVal). Significant industry partnerships include research partnerships with multinational and indigenous companies in financial services, information and communication technology (ICT), and the pharmaceutical, food, medical devices and healthcare sectors.

UCC participates in Cork Innovates, a partnership with local authorities, Cork Chamber, CIT and local enterprise offices to enable entrepreneurship and business start-ups in the Cork region. The hosting by Cork Innovates of the Global Start-up Nations Summit in November 2016, a first for Europe, was a significant achievement.

INTERNATIONALISATION

Internationalisation has brought significant benefits to student life.

We have internationalised the curriculum through programmes such as BA World Languages and BA International. We have continued to attract greater numbers of international students. The proportion of UCC students from outside Ireland has increased from 12% to 16%.

16%

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In 2017, UCC renewed its commitment to its Centre for Global Development to encourage collective engagement on international development and global sustainability issues. The centre provides a forum for global development initiatives and enables interdisciplinary cooperation.

ARTS, CULTURE AND HERITAGE

UCC has a tradition of engagement with cultural partners. Through Cork University Press, the Glucksman Gallery, the Jennings Gallery and the Granary Theatre, UCC has built on its contributions to cultural and artistic life by

strengthening research, practice and learning in the creative arts. Since 2010, the FUAIM music programme at UCC has been a leading cultural activity, enhancing the reputation of the creative arts in UCC and the wider community. With support from the Arts Council, UCC has expanded its artists-in-residence programme. There are now residencies in creative writing, film, traditional music and classical music.

In 2015, UCC celebrated the bicentenary of George Boole, the first professor of mathematics at UCC and the inventor of Boolean algebra and symbolic logic. In 2016, the centenary of the Honan Chapel as a repository of Ireland's 20th-century arts and crafts was celebrated internationally.

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

Progress has been made with gender equality. In 2016, UCC became the third Irish university to attain an Athena SWAN award. UCC's three-year Athena SWAN action plan is now being implemented. This builds on other equality initiatives at the university, including the Aurora Leadership Development Programme, the Genovate EUFP7 Project, and, particularly, Genovate's Gender Equality Action Plan.

UCC is breaking ground in developing a model approach for universities to implement the new public sector duty. This new statutory duty was created by the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act (2014). It requires public bodies – including universities – to include equality and human rights considerations in carrying out their functions.

UCC has approved the establishment of an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Unit that will work on policy development and implementation, coordinate the provision of equality related services, and promote equality, diversity and inclusion across the university. The EDI Unit will provide leadership in planning, coordinating and delivering UCC's equality initiatives. It will report to the Deputy President and Registrar.

INFRASTRUCTURE AND RESOURCES

52%

The income contribution from non-exchequer funding has increased from 32% in 2013 to 52% in 2017.

Capital building projects completed between 2013 and 2017 include the €42 million addition of the upper floors of the Western Gateway building, the €12 million Beaufort Building (marine and renewable energy research) and the €6 million ASSERT building (simulation-based medical education and research), adding 16,500 m² to our facilities. UCC completed its master plan for sports facilities and secured planning permission for the first building at Cork Science and Innovation Park. In 2016, an additional 12 acres was acquired in Sandyford, Dublin, with the purchase of the IMI, bringing the total area of the UCC campuses to 215 acres.

Funding sources for higher education in Ireland have changed. However, despite a 32% reduction in core grant funding since 2013 and a decrease in staff numbers by 10%, UCC has increased its number of students by 10%. We have diversified our income sources and increased our earned income by €26 million. The income contribution from non-exchequer funding has increased from 32% in 2013 to 52% in 2017.

RANKING AND REPUTATION

UCC continues to be ranked in the top 2% of universities worldwide. The university was awarded the Sunday Times University of the Year in Ireland for 2016 and 2017. It came 75th in Reuters' ranking of Europe's top 100 innovative universities. In the EU-sponsored U-Multirank Exercise (2017), which surveyed 1,500 higher education institutions in 99 countries, UCC performed strongly, scoring 13 As and 13 Bs across the 35 indicators. UCC is ranked in the top 200 universities in the world for nine subject areas (source: QS World University Rankings by Subject 2017). Nursing and Midwifery and Pharmacy and Pharmacology are ranked in the top 100. Archaeology, English Language and Literature and Law feature in the top 150. Biological Sciences, Electrical Engineering, Engineering and Technology and Life Sciences and Medicine also appear in the top 200. UCC was ranked the 12th greenest university in the world in the 2016 UI Green Metric University ranking.



External Environment

With an urban base and a global focus, UCC draws its identity from a range of community, industry, arts and heritage relationships throughout Munster, extending from the Irish Sea to the Atlantic.

UCC is located at the second largest natural harbour in the world and in the heartland of Ireland's energy, food, pharmaceutical and ICT industries: 25% of national energy needs are produced in Cork and eight out of ten of the world's top pharmaceutical companies are located in Munster. Munster is the most productive dairy producing region in the world and Ireland's top four food companies are located in the province.

4

Munster is the most productive dairy producing region in the world with 4 of Ireland's top food companies based in the province.

UCC's regional affinity can be seen particularly in its engagement with the diverse Irish-speaking districts in the region. The *Gaeltacht* regions of counties Waterford, Cork and Kerry are recognised as forming an essential component of the university's heritage, and an integral part of the identity that it develops through creative partnerships.

UCC is committed to the aims of the Official Languages Act (2003), to maintaining Irish as a matriculation requirement and to preserving the Irish language and the *Gaeltachts*, as set out in the *20-Year Strategy for the Irish Language 2010-2030*.

UCC operates in a challenging national and international environment that is shaped by economic, social, technological, cultural and demographic changes. The following are some of the factors shaping our university plan:

- Universities in Ireland are central to national strategic directions, as evidenced by the *National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030*.
- The importance of breadth of learning opportunities for all students is stated in the *National Skills Strategy 2025*, the *National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030* and the *Action Plan for Education 2016-2019*, to enable the development of transferable skills, enhance employability and nurture an interdisciplinary mindset.
- Addressing gender inequality in higher education is a priority. This is outlined in the *HEA National Review of Gender Equality in Irish Higher Education Institutions* (Report of the Expert Group, 2016).
- Renewed growth in the Irish economy is seeing a continued emphasis on innovation and entrepreneurship, technology transfer and commercialising research, as documented in the Government's *Innovation 2020, Ireland's Strategy for Research and Development, Science and Technology* and the *Action Plan for Jobs 2017*.
- The economic development of rural Ireland is a national priority under the Government's *Action Plan for Rural Development 2017, 'Realising our Rural Potential'*.

- Participation in the arts and in cultural activities is recognised as having implications for individual and societal wellbeing and achievement, as set out in the *Creative Ireland Programme 2017-2022 Éire Ildánach*.
- Government and the public need greater accountability, compliance, measurable achievement and ‘value for money’. Performance-based funding is being introduced progressively by the HEA.
- Funding from the national exchequer to support higher education is diminishing and collaboration between institutions is necessary to meet the demands of international competitiveness.
- Students are increasingly mobile. International competition to attract the best staff and students is intensifying. The growing global, transnational education market is crucial to Ireland’s international profile, as detailed in Ireland’s *International Education Strategy 2016-2020, ‘Irish Educated, Globally Connected’*.
- There is a shift to technology-facilitated distance and time-flexible learning and learner-centred approaches.
- Lifelong and life-wide learning and continuing professional development are demanded by employers and employees in supporting flexible career paths.
- According to the World Economic Forum, the global employment trends are for adaptability, resilience and flexibility to be necessary graduate attributes for careers, where multiple job changes are expected and where the influences of technology and automation dominate. According to the OECD (2016), 60% of students entering university today will take up employment in jobs that do not currently exist.
- The EU framework programme for Research and Innovation, Horizon 2020, aims to secure Europe’s global competitiveness by creating growth and jobs alongside effective measures to support the development of research talent and excellence in the exploration of new horizons.
- Increased global geopolitical instability, including the consequences of Brexit, has resulted in greater uncertainty in international markets.



Planning, Process and Implementation

This plan was developed through consultation with students, staff, alumni, external agencies and other key stakeholders. It is aligned with the Universities Act (1997). It is informed by international trends, national policy and the university's quality enhancement ethos and risk management processes.

The planning process was guided by UCC's Governing Body Committee on Strategy and Innovation.

The plan details:

- our vision and our mission
- our key goals
- strategies detailing how we will achieve our goals
- actions describing what we will deliver between 2017 and 2022
- targets reflecting key performance metrics for the university

The plan will be reviewed annually in response to changes in the external environment and progress on implementation will be reviewed every six weeks by the University Management Team. An annual plan will specify the implementation steps each year. We will conduct an annual review of our performance against key performance targets and we will improve our planning processes in line with best practice.

UCC acknowledges the importance of good governance for the delivery of its services to students, its role in society and its delivery of this strategic plan.

High standards of governance are expected of the university community. The values outlined on page 19 underpin the university's key decisions. The university will strive over the course of this plan to increase levels of responsibility, accountability and transparency.



Vision, Mission and Values

OUR VISION

To be a leading university of independent thinkers

OUR MISSION

Creating, understanding and sharing knowledge and applying it for the good of all

OUR VALUES

Our core values guide and underpin our actions and our processes

CREATIVITY
RESPECT
FREEDOM OF
EXPRESSION
TRANSPARENCY
RESPONSIVENESS

INTEGRITY

EQUALITY
DIVERSITY
SCHOLARSHIP



Our core values guide and underpin our actions and our processes:

- creativity
- responsiveness
- transparency
- scholarship
- freedom of expression
- integrity
- equality
- diversity
- respect

We will demonstrate these values by recognising and affirming the following qualities in our students and staff:

- leadership and accountability
- flexibility
- enquiry and experimentation
- empowerment of people
- promotion of health, safety, welfare and wellbeing
- collaboration and interdisciplinarity
- service to the community
- sustainability

Strategic Goals

Our key strategic aim is to deliver an innovative academic mission. The following goals will inform that mission:

GOAL ONE

Implement an academic strategy to deliver an outstanding, student-centred teaching and learning experience with a renewed, responsive and research-led curriculum at its core.

GOAL TWO

Be a leading university for research, discovery, innovation, entrepreneurship, commercialisation and societal impact.

GOAL THREE

Create value for our community through an international outlook and informed and creative engagement on local and global issues.

GOAL FOUR

Attract, develop, support and retain staff of the highest quality, thereby ensuring a diverse staff who are enabled to reach their full potential.

GOAL FIVE

Strengthen our infrastructure and resource base.



Through our innovative academic mission, we will:

- embrace open inquiry and exploratory risk across and between the disciplines of sciences, health, social sciences, law, business and the humanities;
- prioritise teaching and learning for students in an environment that provides space for thought for staff and students (who learn at their own pace and chart their own path);
- strengthen the local voice on global challenges;
- create an infrastructural and capital plan to deliver on the academic mission through providing space and staff that facilitate interdisciplinarity.

By embedding a strong quality-enhancement ethos, we will use our quality processes to ensure a culture and experience of best practice in the delivery of our academic mission, demonstrating our commitment to continuous evolution and improvement.

Priority Actions

- 01** Our students and their learning experience are our highest priorities. We will deliver an innovative, differentiated academic mission committed to scholarship and education at the frontiers and margins of inquiry. It will connect with the region's industry and community; partner with leading institutions worldwide and prioritise teaching and learning for students in an environment that provides space for thought for staff and students, who learn at their own pace and chart their own path. We will increase student numbers by 2,000, from 21,000 to 23,000.
- 02** The student experience will be strengthened through an ambitious programme to expand UCC's facilities. Space across our campuses will be increased by 20%. We will develop our Student Hub to support our innovative academic strategy while adding 600 student accommodation spaces and developing a world-class outdoor sports facility. Our campus expansion will increase integration and collaboration across disciplines. Developments include the Clinical Medical School, the Dental School, Cork University Business School, the Life Sciences and Engineering buildings and phase one of the Space and Infrastructural Plan for the humanities and social sciences, including the Creative Hub. We will begin construction of improved facilities for the School of Law and UCC Library. We plan to upgrade existing facilities to state-of-the-art standards, including the Kane Science Building. We will develop the Health Innovation Hub Ireland building at the Cork Science and Innovation Park.
- 03** We will enable our staff to pursue excellence in research, teaching and learning. We will deliver a renewed and responsive research-led curriculum and strengthen UCC's research excellence and impact. We will make strategic academic appointments and help create the next generation of research leaders. We are committed to achieving the aims of the Athena SWAN Charter and to advancing gender equality in academia. We will position UCC as the location of choice to attract and retain the most talented staff.
- 04** Regional and national engagement is central to our plan. We will engage with communities and strengthen Cork as a city of learning. We will continue to deepen our partnership with CIT and other education providers, including the further education sector. We will continue to work at a national level to increase the Irish higher education system's capacity to operate in a competitive, globalised environment.
- 05** International engagement and the internationalisation of the university will be strengthened through the global UCC alumni network, partnering with a number of leading international universities and creating a culture of mobility and globalism. We will recruit an additional 700 non-EU and 400 EU students to increase the number of international students by 1,100.
- 06** We will increase earned income from philanthropy by €100m over the period of the plan and generate new sources of income.





Strategies, Actions and Targets

GOAL ONE

Implement an academic strategy to deliver an outstanding, student-centred teaching and learning experience with a renewed, responsive and research-led curriculum at its core.



Goal One

STRATEGIES

Our strategies to achieve this goal are to:

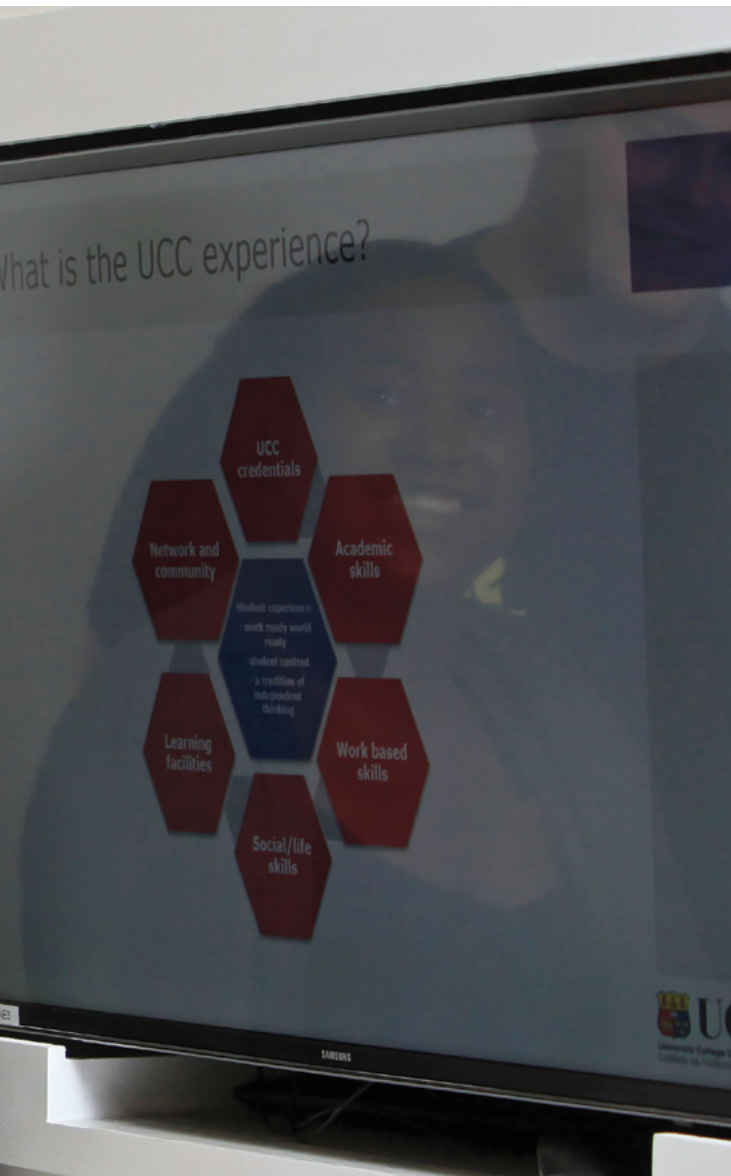
- deliver inspired teaching, learning and assessment excellence, informed by world-class research, delivered by staff who are supported to continually develop professional practice;
- promote and strengthen the university's research mission through the curriculum;
- position interdisciplinarity as a core academic mission of the university;
- create credit-bearing opportunities for all students to access a breadth of learning and develop graduate attributes, including opportunities for students to engage with the creative arts and with language learning and discovery;
- ensure flexibility in the delivery of our programmes, strengthen the provision of online programmes and enhance access to lifelong learning and greater CPD opportunities;
- collaborate with partner institutions in joint programmes and embed external engagement in programme development, delivery and student learning in support of the institutional engagement strategy;
- provide ambitious programmes to support and challenge outstanding students;
- create, extend and sustain external relationships such as with the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning and the Regional Skills Forum;
- further develop a strong culture of student engagement to continue to embed the student in institutional decision making;
- continue our commitment to widening participation and enhancing access for all students, fostering an inclusive environment that mainstreams diversity and equality;
- deliver strong student-focused support services which address the wellbeing and welfare of students;
- enhance sports and recreation facilities to give all students a greater opportunity to participate.



ACTIONS

- 01** Create the new physical and virtual Student Hubs to deliver on the principles of the university's innovative academic mission and create a seamless student-centred administrative, academic and extracurricular experience.
- 02** Deliver deeper active learning experiences by continuing to address the refinement of student-to-staff ratios, embedding meaningful student-involved research in all undergraduate programmes and integrating practical skills development through a combination of placements, university-wide modules and an improved laboratory experience for STEM students.
- 03** Strengthen world-ready graduate skills by engaging collaboratively with employers through the Regional Skills Forum and other forums, creating innovative interdisciplinary programmes across the Colleges of Arts, Celtic Studies and Social Science; Business and Law; Medicine and Health; Science, Engineering and Food Science and introducing degree structures that embed greater opportunities for extended work placements.
- 04** Improve the teaching and learning experience for all students by enhancing student assessment, feedback and survey processes with the introduction of an assessment policy, by expanding opportunities for online learning, lifelong and lifewide learning including more robust Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) and Validation of Non-Formal and Informal Learning (VNIL) and by providing all students with access to digital literacy development.
- 05** Embed internationalisation more deeply and sustainably into the university's identity by increasing the quantity, quality and diversity of international students, enabling the increased internationalisation of the curriculum and strengthening the culture of global mobility, inbound and outbound, for students and staff. Increase the number of students studying abroad in the EU Erasmus+ programme and in UCC's wide range of partner institutions worldwide. Support UCC's global development strategy through the Centre for Global Development.
- 06** Take all necessary measures to achieve and maintain high status international accreditation and international recognition including achievement of Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) accreditation for Cork University Business School. Support disciplines in improving world university ranking status and enable a greater number of disciplines to achieve top 200 ranking. Further develop CUBS and successfully maximise the integration of the IMI within UCC to significantly enhance and broaden executive education offered to graduates and industry.
- 07** Embed the Quercus Talented Student Programme to attract and retain high-quality students by fully extending the programme to postgraduate students.
- 08** Improve services to support students' health, welfare, wellbeing and safety by increasing the range of mental health services and interventions available and by introducing new initiatives to reduce the harms associated with substance use.
- 09** Build and develop world-class outdoor sports facilities to attract and inspire high performance athletes, and to support all students in physical recreation.



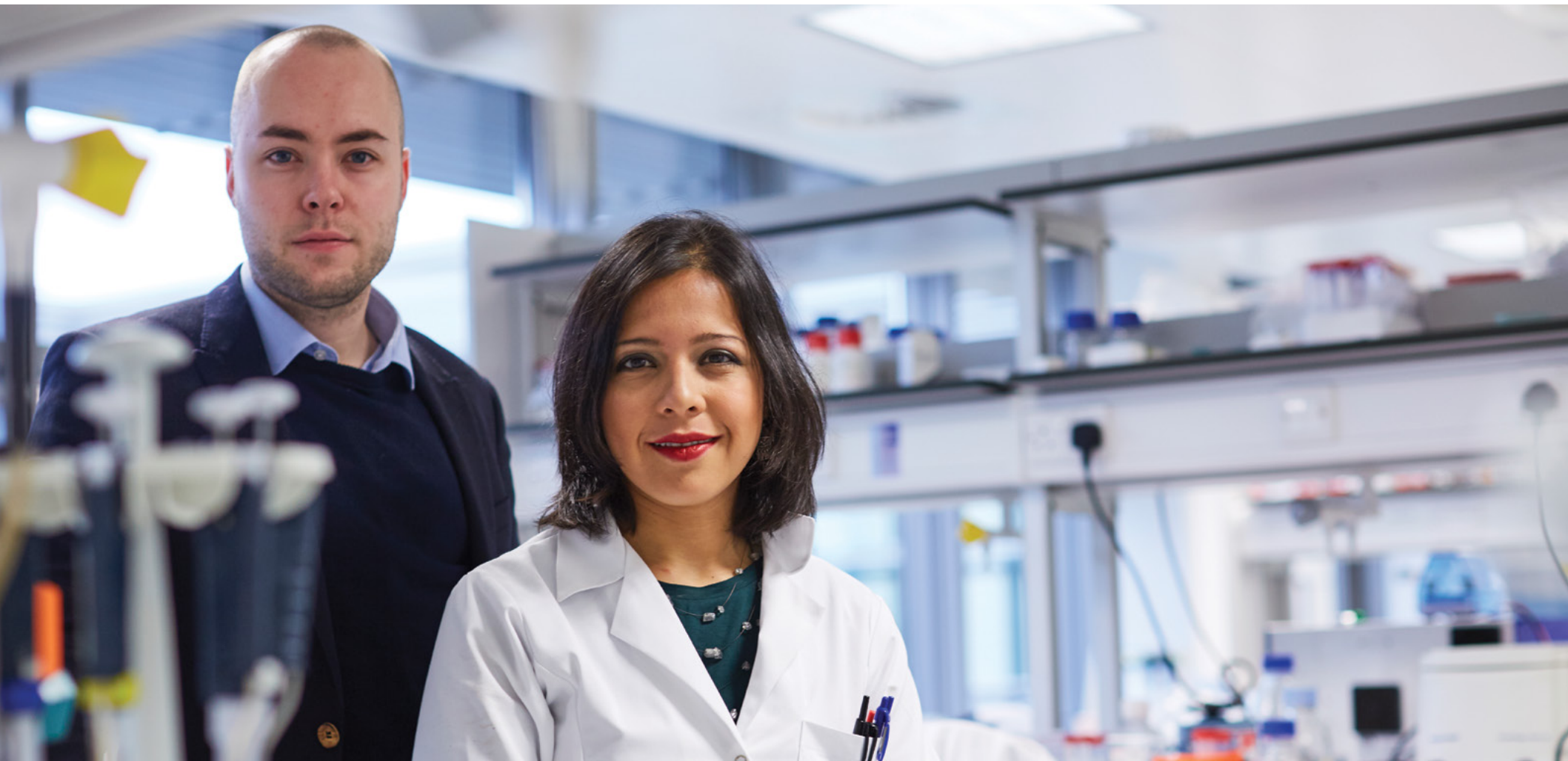


TARGETS

- Increase the number of international students by 33% from 3,300 to 4,400.
- Achieve 26% of student intake through access admissions routes.
- Achieve student retention rates of 92% after first year and 92% after second year.
- Achieve 95% of primary degree graduates in employment or further study.
- Increase CPD student registrations from 200 to 500.
- Increase the number of ACE students from 2,800 to 3,000.
- Achieve 22% of students studying part-time/through flexible learning.
- Increase UCC-owned student accommodation spaces from 1,400 to 2,000.

GOAL TWO

Be a leading university
for research, discovery,
innovation, entrepreneurship,
commercialisation
and societal impact.



Goal Two

STRATEGIES

Our strategies to achieve this goal are to:

- prioritise research resources in areas that are producing research at the highest international levels while investing in new and emerging areas where we have the potential to lead;
- consolidate cognate research activities through clustering to establish critical mass in organised research units while enabling the individual researcher;
- promote and support large scale interdisciplinary research projects and new emerging areas of research that are consistent with national and international priorities; support leading researchers working in groups or individually and researchers at all scales and stages of activity;
- develop innovative strategic and infrastructural supports for interdisciplinary research;
- nurture an infrastructural and policy environment that maximises the research potential of all UCC researchers and ensures the highest level of compliance with research ethics;
- consult on and agree a discipline appropriate framework or set of indicators for the capture and evaluation of societal impact;
- achieve national leadership in our key strategic research areas, as defined by measures of research impact, according to disciplinary norms and impact on policy at national and EU levels;
- leverage national investments in research through participation in, and leadership of, large research projects at European level;
- improve the international profile of UCC as a centre of excellence for research training and ensuring that UCC is a location of choice for internationally competitive junior and senior researchers;
- increase the proportion of research funding from non-exchequer sources, specifically targeting prestigious funding sources, EU funding and industry sources;
- further enhance the quality of doctoral education to ensure graduates are prepared for a wide range of successful careers;
- partner with Irish and international institutions to deliver excellence in research;
- foster relationships with institutions to drive the commercialisation of research and technology transfer, through mechanisms such as licensing, patents, creating spin-out companies and supporting external start-up companies;
- promote the engagement of all students and staff with entrepreneurial thinking;
- work closely with the IMI to maximise the benefits of the merger for CUBS, the university and executive and business education in Ireland;
- improve UCC's position as a provider of choice for research consultancy services in key areas.

ACTIONS

10 Enhance UCC's reputation for research excellence and impact by:

- > making strategic academic appointments, at all career levels, and with European Research Council (ERC) awardee potential, that are aligned with key research areas, existing and new;
- > resourcing research and infrastructural supports that empower UCC's researchers to achieve their ambitions and to nurture the next generation of research leaders;
- > ensuring the pathways from knowledge creation through research and innovation to impact and external engagement are optimised, and that all researchers are fully supported in articulating the impact of their research;
- > increasing the number of high-quality outputs including articles, books and non-traditional outputs;
- > promoting the value of open access to UCC's research to heighten visibility and the citational capacity of research;

- > supporting the conduct of research to the highest standards and providing training to researchers in the good conduct of research;
- > employing appropriate, well-defined and intelligent metrics to assess research excellence and impact, and that targets set against these metrics are explicit and ambitious;
- > developing an institutional research engagement strategy so that UCC is better positioned to shape relevant national and international policies.

11 Consolidate cognate research activities to support existing research strengths and facilitate the growth of new interdisciplinary themes, while also fully supporting and enabling the individual researcher. Align these areas with key internal, national and international priorities in which UCC has a significant competitive advantage and enjoys an international leadership position. Institutional focus on interdisciplinary thematic areas will be informed by UCC's 2015 Research Quality Review as well as external drivers including the United Nation Sustainable Development Goals.

High-level, interdisciplinary research areas of current interest include, but are not limited to: sustainability and climate action; future and emergent technologies; financial and business services; creative and engaged local/global citizenship; and chronic disease and food, health and social wellbeing.

12 Position UCC as the location of choice to attract and retain the most talented researchers at all career stages, from early career PhD students to world leading Principal Investigators by:

- > implementing career progression structures that attract and retain high performing researchers and by addressing gender inequalities in research careers and gender imbalances in research leadership;
- > improving the international profile of UCC as a centre of excellence for researcher training by the further enhancement of the quality of doctoral education, and by providing the best tailored, structured training, support and environment;
- > appropriate incentivisation, including embedding research excellence and innovation impact as a core component of academic promotion criteria.

Goal Two

- 13** Increase UCC's capacity to deliver impact in society, the economy and the community by:
- > engaging proactively with government, development agencies, professional organisations, business and industry and the wider community, to stimulate economic, social, and cultural development;
 - > engaging with and supporting indigenous SME's and enabling emerging Irish businesses and family businesses to be anchored in the community;
 - > leading a national consortium of strategic partners in the Bridge Network Consortium (together with CIT, IT Tralee and Teagasc) to deliver excellence in knowledge transfer;
 - > ongoing review of UCC's technology transfer processes to facilitate enhanced external access to university-generated intellectual property in line with international practice;
 - > ensuring coherence between all elements of innovation across UCC, including knowledge transfer and commercialisation, education, entrepreneurship and consultancy;
- > developing UCC's national and international network of industry licensing professionals, business mentors, entrepreneurs and advisors to add to the quality of support available to UCC entrepreneurs.
- 14** Increase UCC's capacity for entrepreneurship and job creation by:
- > creating incentives and sustaining supports to facilitate UCC staff engagement with commercialisation of research innovations;
 - > developing Cork Science and Innovation Park (CSAIP) and by opening the first CSAIP building (a facility for Health Innovation Hub Ireland);
 - > embedding entrepreneurship as an integral part of undergraduate and postgraduate education;
 - > identifying and eliminating barriers, where feasible, to entrepreneurial output from a student, staff, alumni and external industry perspective;
 - > developing additional incubator capacity and capability and follow-on space within UCC;
- > increasing the level of engagement between university and industry in order to foster a better understanding of capabilities and co-creation opportunities;
- > developing a more cohesive approach to the University's entrepreneurship activities in terms of strategy, branding, co-ordination and resourcing.
- 15** Building on the world class APC Microbiome Institute and the UCC-Teagasc strategic alliance, establish an external-facing Food Institute at UCC to represent all activities associated with sustainable food, nutrition, food systems and food business.

TARGETS

- Maintain research income at greater than €90m per annum and funding from non exchequer sources at greater than 30%.
- Continue to perform above the EU average in Horizon 2020 funding success rates.
- Increase measures of research output, including citation performance impact, monographs and non-traditional outputs in all areas of research activity. Performance in key strategic activities to be increased to a level greater than the average global impact for the relevant disciplinary areas.
- Increase the number of European Research Council awards secured to four Starter Grant Awards, three Consolidator Grant Awards and two Advanced Grant Awards.
- Confer 250 doctoral students annually.
- Establish 20 additional investment-ready high potential spin-out companies.
- Support the establishment of 100 graduate-led companies through the UCC Ignite Programme.
- Provide assistance to 125 commercial ventures through Blackstone Launchpad.



GOAL THREE

Create value for our community through an international outlook and informed and creative engagement on local and global issues.



Goal Three

STRATEGIES

Our strategies to achieve this goal are to:

- support communities in their engagement with local and global issues by making knowledge available and encouraging enquiry and debate;
- act as an independent voice in public debate while working with government in setting the agenda for higher education in Ireland and Europe;
- make our civic and community engagement activities more connected and visible;
- strengthen UCC's external recognition as an international base of advanced research, teaching, innovation and thought leadership, thereby providing community, social and economic advancement;
- develop new and stronger relationships with employers, professional bodies, industry and the community in framing responses to local and global issues through the academic portfolio, educational outreach and social, cultural and community projects;
- act as a catalyst for change and creativity, creating connections, partnerships and practices, and exchanging ideas and expertise;
- enhance cultural participation and interaction nationally and within the region and community to promote the visual, performing and creative arts and cultural heritage;
- promote linguistic diversity in the university and the city;
- promote and protect the Irish language;
- build on existing university and agency links within the European Higher Education Area to develop a deeper strategic engagement with the political, policy and funding landscape;
- collaborate with Irish universities and the regional higher education system in the context of relevant national initiatives;
- assist with the continued development of learning communities and support Cork in the light of its designation as a UNESCO Learning City;
- develop strategic alliances with other internationally-minded peer universities;
- enliven global alumni networks to stimulate relationships and a greater commitment to the university in volunteering, fundraising and provision of expertise to the university community;
- take advantage of the potential of digital technologies to engage with existing and new communities locally and internationally and promote the university's educational, social and cultural capital.

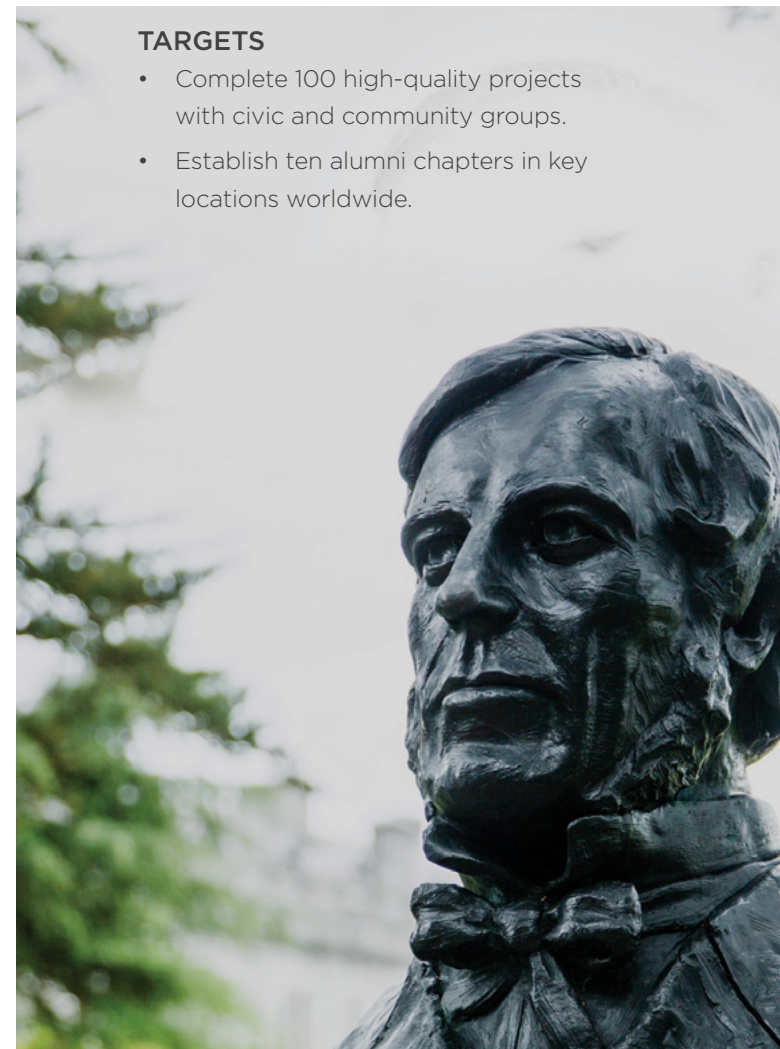
ACTIONS

- 16** Establish UCC as a leading university for civic and community, regional, national and international engagement by addressing the findings of the 2016 Staff Community Engagement survey and of the Carnegie evaluation in 2017 as follows:
- > creating a civic and community engagement support role;
 - > students and staff implementing improved models of engagement;
 - > continuing the development of outreach and community collaborations, including UCC's Irish language commitment.
- Develop incentives and support initiatives for the learning and research community to engage with government, professional organisations and community engagement initiatives, including CARL (Community and Academic Research Links) and Campus Engage, to create social, cultural and policy-relevant impact and to support and recognise student and staff volunteering.
- 17** Implement new models of engagement with alumni and friends and strengthen alumni engagement structures and processes.

- 18** Invest in increasing UCC's marketing and communications capabilities and support by:
- > implementing a strategic approach to marketing and communications;
 - > implementing recommendations for improvement arising from a benchmarking exercise with comparator universities and completing a review of the function in 2017 - 2018;
 - > completing a reputation audit and implementing findings.
- 19** Integrate UCC further with its healthcare partners across teaching, research and clinical services in an Academic Healthcare Centre to ensure future healthcare provision by bringing healthcare professionals and teachers together, by ensuring research remains anchored in clinical practice and by decision-making guided by international research and practice.
- 20** Continue our active engagement in the Decade of Centenaries, drawing on the Atlas of the Irish Revolution (Cork University Press, 2017) and on other major initiatives. Mark the founding of the university in 1845 by continuing to pursue historical projects nationally and internationally.

TARGETS

- Complete 100 high-quality projects with civic and community groups.
- Establish ten alumni chapters in key locations worldwide.



GOAL FOUR

Attract, develop, support and retain staff of the highest quality, thereby ensuring a diverse staff who are enabled to reach their full potential.



Goal Four

STRATEGIES

Our strategies to achieve this goal are to:

- develop the organisation to ensure that the university is governed with the highest possible levels of responsiveness, efficiency and flexibility;
- value and include all categories of staff as one collegial community working towards the best interests of the university;
- strengthen leadership and management capacity throughout the organisation;
- further improve consultation and engagement with staff through effective, transparent communications;
- improve service delivery and support to academic staff by re-organising administrative and support functions and by creating more efficient and effective administrative processes;
- continue to develop and retain the best staff by providing them with a positive and safe working environment;
- strengthen the recruitment process, supported by the latest technology, to identify and appoint the best staff available on the global market, prioritising staff with significant international experience;
- provide a dynamic and supportive research environment that will enhance our position as a leading research university;
- engage with Government to deliver a human resource toolkit that is fit for purpose to attract, develop and retain excellent staff;
- enhance support to all staff through improved induction, employee wellbeing programmes and by professional development;
- maximise the potential for a stable working contract across all of our staff;
- develop improved career structures, including research career paths, in line with national policy;
- continue commitment to facilitating positive engagement with staff and staff representative organisations thus contributing to a continuing positive climate of employment;
- renew commitment to principles of fairness, equality of opportunity and respect for all and implement the Athena SWAN Charter Principles in our policies, practices, planning and culture.

ACTIONS

- 21** Through UCC's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Unit, provide a robust infrastructure for equality initiatives, lead on policy development and implementation, coordinate the provision of equality-related services and functions and promote equality and the value of diversity across all of the university's functions. Implement UCC's Athena SWAN action plan and renew and maintain UCC's Athena SWAN accreditation.
- 22** Introduce specific support to staff in addressing cross-cutting themes on the basis of disciplinary expertise and professional relationships.
- 23** Through the implementation of the findings of the academic promotion review, strengthen UCC's capacity to attract and retain academic staff of the highest calibre and increase the prospect of international recognition of UCC staff through regular and more streamlined promotion processes.
- 24** Strengthen leadership development by maximising participation in a dedicated leadership programme across the university and by supporting individual leadership.
- 25** Review UCC's human resource policies and procedures and implement findings to maximise flexibility in a rapidly changing operating environment.



TARGETS

- Athena SWAN Bronze award for gender equality achieved by three departments per year.
- Ensure 90% of staff in leadership roles complete the leadership development programme.
- Increase the proportion of academic staff with doctorate qualifications from 77% to 85%.

GOAL FIVE

Strengthen the Infrastructure
and resource base.





STRATEGIES

Our strategies to achieve this goal are to:

- maximise efficiency and value for money by all initiatives possible;
- diversify and grow existing non-exchequer funding sources and identify new funding streams;
- build relationships with donors and alumni to increase philanthropic funding and support;
- engage with the government and other stakeholders to create a sustainable funding model for higher education;
- enhance UCC's sustainability reputation as Ireland's first 'green university';
- integrate ICT systems and develop improved information services across the university;
- provide effective, transparent and accountable governance;
- pursue campus development to a high standard to enhance the UCC experience and to contribute to Cork's cultural attractiveness.

ACTIONS

- 26** Create a five-year student enrolment and recruitment plan driven by the university's academic strategy that will underpin UCC's financial plan and support participation rates and national policy.
- 27** Work with stakeholders to achieve a new funding framework that supports a 'step-change in quality levels, comprehensive student financial support, and a more holistic treatment of all students across the spectrum of undergraduate, postgraduate and part-time provision'. This is in line with Investing in National Ambition: A Strategy for Funding Higher Education. Engage with government and relevant agencies to devise funding structures and supports for postgraduate education at National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) levels 9 and 10.
- 28** Increase UCC's earned income by increasing the capacity and effectiveness of philanthropic fundraising and by maximising the earning potential of campus assets. Devise, launch and deliver a university fundraising campaign to achieve UCC's strategic priorities.

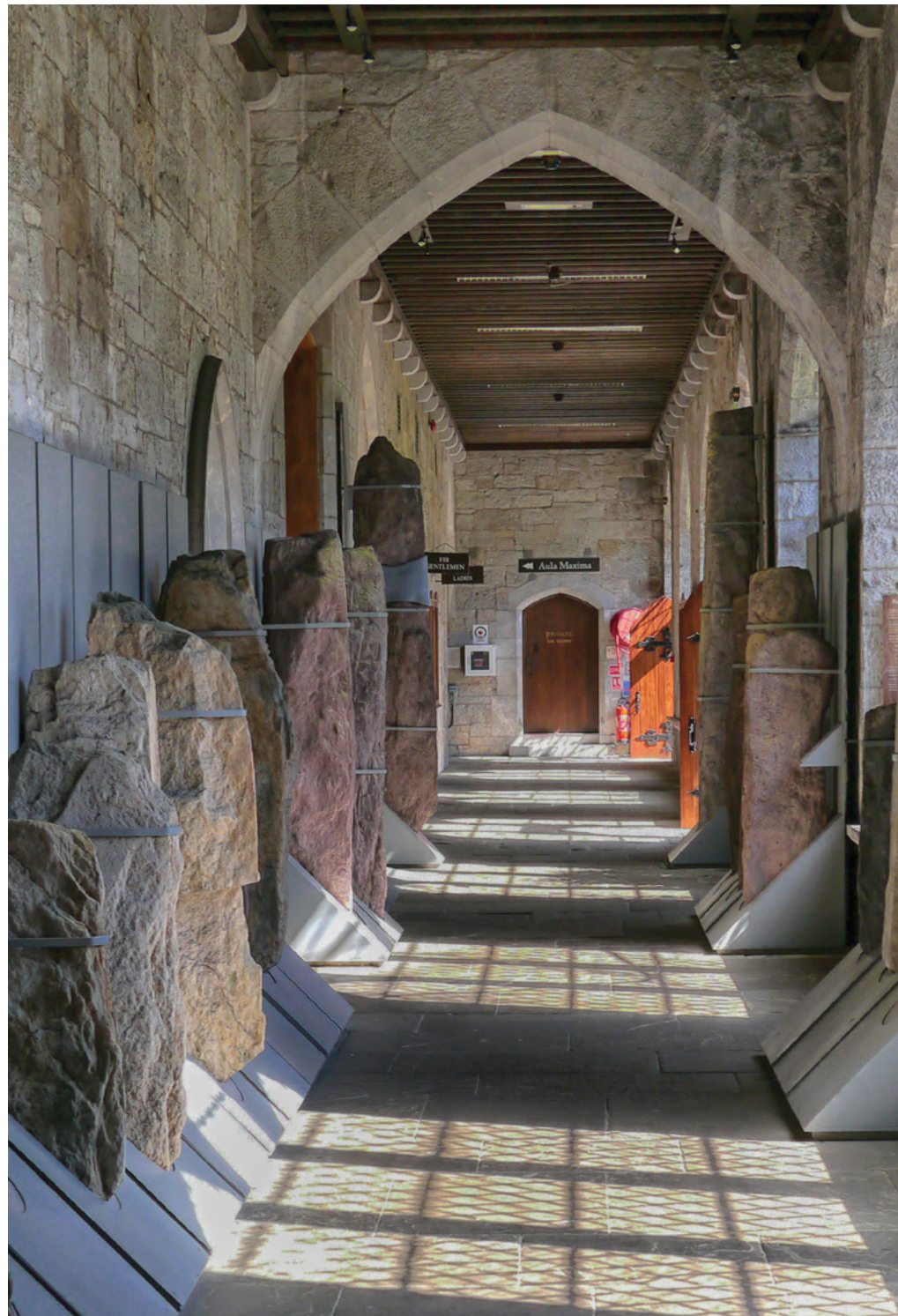
- 29** Expand and improve the university's estate and infrastructure through the construction and commissioning of new facilities:
- > Student Hub;
 - > Cork University Business School;
 - > Dental School;
 - > Clinical Medical School;
 - > Health Innovation Hub Ireland facility;
 - > phase one of the Space and Infrastructural Plan for the humanities and social sciences, including the Creative Hub;
 - > Engineering building;
 - > Life Sciences building;
 - > student accommodation;
 - > sports facilities.

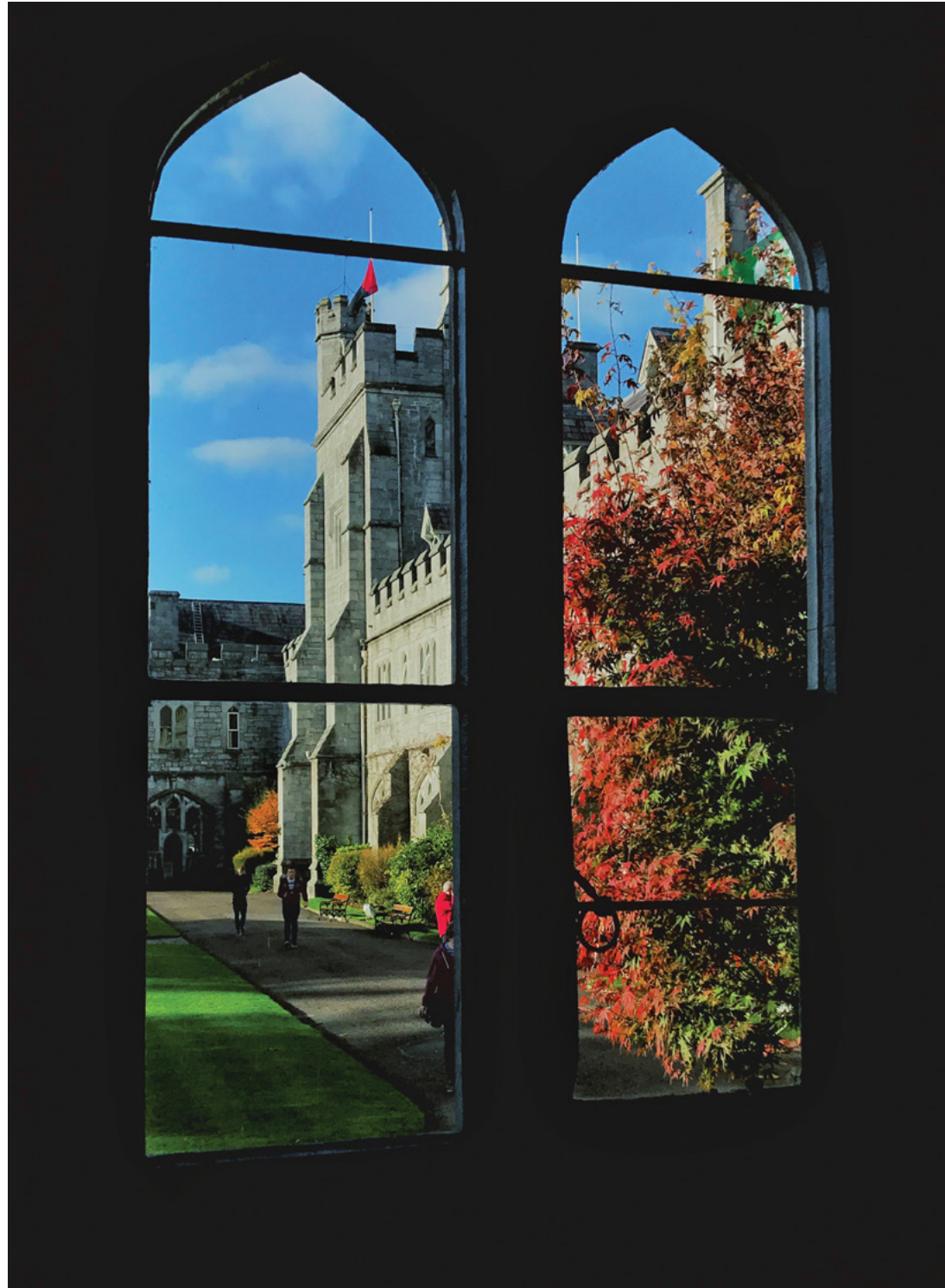
In addition, begin the construction of facilities for the School of Law; and enhanced facilities for the UCC library; complete the remodelling of the Kane Science Building; and realise a new approach to capital planning and development in light of demographic growth and the needs of the National Planning Framework to 2040.

- 30 Further develop and integrate information systems to improve services to staff and students; acquire additional unique library and archival collections to support teaching and research; and implement a capital lifecycle replacement plan for ICT infrastructure.
- 31 Simplify the university's main processes by deepening and expanding engagement with continuous improvement/lean process improvement methodologies to achieve significant savings and efficiency improvements.
- 32 Implement UCC's Sustainability Strategy 2016 to increase sustainability by making sustainability goals, targets and implementation plans part of the university's educational, research, ancillary operations, infrastructural development and interactions with the community. By doing so, maintain and improve our position as one of the greenest universities in the world.

TARGETS

- Achieve the OECD recommended 3% net income surplus by the end of the plan period.
- Raise €100m in commitments from philanthropic sources.
- Fund an additional 30 academic positions from philanthropic sources.
- Achieve an annual reduction in energy consumption of 3% in support of the national target of a 33% reduction in carbon emissions by 2020 versus levels in 2000.





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