STRATEGIC PLAN
2018 – 2022
LIT’s Strategic Plan 2018 – 2022 is the bridge between our Institute of Technology status and our stated desire to become a Technological University after this plan is completed.

An educational journey that started for this institution with the foundation of the School of Ornamental Art on Leamy Street in 1852 will now see us reach the cusp of our applied university designation through the implementation of this plan.

This is a plan that has been drawn up by the LIT diverse community of internal and external stakeholders. It is an expression of our values as an institution, and its implementation will see us retain our autonomy as we move towards a different designation.

It is both ambitious and attainable, the result of over a year of information gathering, consultation and careful thought by a large number of individuals and organisations from a diversity of backgrounds.

The trajectory it sets us upon is one where we protect and build our ethos of inclusivity, while engaging increasingly closely with our partners in industry, business, community and government.

It puts us in the vanguard of research-informed Higher Education, renewing and extending LIT’s central focus on our students, while embedding a continuous improvement approach to what we do.

It strengthens our role as an economic generator at the heart of Ireland’s fastest-growing regional economy.

The plan’s 5 Strategic Priorities provide the direction required to concentrate our efforts on the areas where we can have the greatest impact, laying out where we plan to invest our resources and why.

These 5 Priorities are underpinned by 5 Strategic Enablers which will drive our capacity to deliver key outcomes including:

- A radical increase in capital investment, totalling €150 million over the period;
- Growth in student numbers by over 20% to 7,500
- This will include a 200% increase in International student numbers, a 30% increase in flexible students, a 120% increase in postgrad research students and a 27% increase in taught postgrad numbers.

LIT is at a very exciting stage on its journey of transformation. The institution has been through many guises in its history. The implementation of this plan will see LIT transformed once more, at a time when Higher Education itself is being transformed.

LIT will be at the forefront of that transformation to the benefit of our myriad stakeholders.
As a contemporary, research-informed institution, we will be centred on our students, delivering quality teaching and learning and an excellent student experience.

**€150 m**
In New Capital Investment

**21%**
Growth in Total Student Numbers (to 7,500)

**30%**
Increase in Flexible Student Numbers

**200%**
Increase in International Students

**27%**
Increase in Postgrad Taught Students

**120%**
Increase in Postgrad Research Students
This Strategic Plan to 2022 sets out the Institute’s redefined MISSION, VISION, educational PHILOSOPHY and VALUES for the next five years.

STAKEHOLDER INVESTMENT

LIT is built on partnership. Our stakeholders are central in the development and implementation of this plan.
VISION

LIT’s vision to 2022 is to be a leading provider of higher education that is student centred, research informed, industry relevant and accessible for all.

PHILOSOPHY

LIT’s educational philosophy is active learning through a fusion of theory and practice.

MISSION

Limerick Institute of Technology is a regionally focused Higher Education Institute with a national and international outlook. We empower our diverse student body by providing a quality higher education experience enabling economic, social and cultural development.

VALUES

The core values that underpin the Strategic Plan provide an anchor for all Institute actions and influence how we achieve results. Our values are detailed on the following page.
VALUES

SUPPORTIVE
We provide a higher education environment that nurtures, supports and engages our students, staff and external stakeholders, enabling them to achieve their full potential.

ACCESSIBLE
We enable wider access and participation in higher education by embracing diversity and providing a flexible offering.

EXCELLENCE
We embed continuous improvement in all Institute activities to support the achievement of the highest standards in all aspects of teaching, learning, research and related supports.

EQUITABLE
We promote fairness, equal opportunity, respect and positive outcomes for all our students and staff.

INNOVATIVE
We foster creative and entrepreneurial activities, in all their forms, in collaboration with our stakeholders to address the changing needs of our region.
The old question ‘if you don’t know where you are going, how will you know when you get there?’ is very relevant to strategic planning.
Field Marshal von Moltke is widely accredited with the statement that ‘no battle plan survives contact with the enemy’. He nonetheless believed in the meticulous planning of his campaigns and they are still widely studied in military colleges. It would, of course, be absurd to suggest any analogy between the substance of von Moltke’s war plans and the strategic plan of a higher education institute but there are none the less certain parallels that are inescapable: you must have a vision of how the world will look if your plan succeeds, you have to be clear about what you have to do to bring that about, what resources you will need, how you will organise to get the best results from your resources and how you will measure progress along the way. The old question ‘if you don’t know where you are going, how will you know when you get there?’ is very relevant to strategic planning.

Great effort has been put into ensuring that LIT’s Strategic Plan 2018–2022 ticks all these boxes and more besides. In particular the plan is based on wide-ranging consultation with those who have an interest in what we do: industry and commerce, local government, schools, education and training boards, our staff and their trades unions and our current student body. That consultation was deeply rooted in the key LIT value of being relevant to and engaged in the needs of the Limerick City Region and of Tipperary. The high level plan set out in this document is the tip of the iceberg; below it is an extensive range of detailed analysis and plans by which the high level objectives will be achieved and our values imbedded in everything we do. A reorganisation of the senior management team has been carried out to ensure that every key objective in the plan has a capable and accountable executive responsible for accomplishing it. But the success of the plan will depend on more than the sum of individual efforts – it will require a much higher level of teamwork and multidisciplinary effort across all the LIT campuses than has been traditional in Irish higher education.

The objective is to be the best that we can be in serving the diverse needs of our region. We believe that we have identified and are putting in place the key values, resources and actions needed to achieve that objective.

We will undoubtedly have to modify the plan, pace von Moltke, along the way but always pointing at the target of excellence in all we do.

Niall Greene
Chair, LIT Governing Body
The Strategic Plan 2018–2022 represents the next stage in the evolution of LIT as an organisation.
The Strategic Plan 2018 – 2022 represents the next stage in the evolution of LIT as an organisation that leads in the development of our regional economy and society. Previous plans and actions have given us a sound, strong baseline on which to grow and develop. The lack of investment in facilities over recent years and the consequent inability to drive a number of opportunities, mean that this plan is underpinned with a sense of renewal.

The evolution of Ireland and the Mid-West mean that what is required now is an institution for a new Ireland, with a clear focus on generating benefit for our stakeholders. Over the timeline of this new plan we are already committed to major new physical developments (of the order of €150m) across all of our campuses in the region. These physical developments will be matched by significant progress on all other aspects of this ambitious organisation.

It is the word ‘ambition’ that best sums up this plan. This Institution will be transformed at all levels and functions. It will deliver a greatly improved student experience whilst expanding our philosophy of active learning. It will deepen our already strong engagement with our myriad stakeholders across social, cultural and industrial sectors ensuring that a two-way dialogue leads to more informed course development and delivery.

It will challenge all of us as staff of LIT to continuously improve what we do and how we do it whilst ensuring the supports and training are in place to keep us on that journey. Teaching as at the core of what we do. This plan sets out the conditions for LIT to lead in the field of research-informed teaching and learning.

The targets we are settling are indeed ambitious but also realisable. We will remain as an autonomous organisation, whilst deepening regional relationships for the lifetime of this plan.

As an organisation we are committed to that ideal of being a technological university. In this plan, we renew that ambition. We are on that track. We are not, for now, part of a recognised consortium, but make no mistake our ambition is clear and the outputs of this plan will leave us in a very strong position to take advantage of changes in the Irish Higher Education system over the next 5 years.

This plan has been over a year in gestation. It has involved multiple stakeholders in its evolution. The involvement of staff and the student body has been critical. To all who have contributed and guided this plans evolution I offer my sincere thanks and appreciation.

Now lets get going!

Professor Vincent Cunnane
President
2011
LIT Vision & Strategy 2020 published
 Integration of Tipperary Institute into LIT (6,500 - 7,000 students)
 LIT and Thomond Park Partnership
 LIT take over Ennis Regional Learning Centre

2012
LIT Campus Development Plan launched
 LIT launches Enterprise Ladder Fund to provide financial support for client companies

2013
14 new Research Centres and Groups established throughout 2013
 LIT is the Irish Institute of the Year for the second time
 Planning commences for Limerick 2030 Strategy

2014
LIT joins UL & MIE in Shannon Consortium
 Signing of strategic partnership between LIT and GMIT

2015
LIT Interim Strategy Review
 LIT & LCETB sign new agreement to strengthen collaboration
 International Fashion Incubator Limerick (IFIL) launched
 Launch of SportsLab at LIT Thurles

2016
Professor Vincent Cunnane appointed as new LIT President
 Questum Acceleration Centre opens in Clonmel
 Launch of Limerick 2030

2017
Coonagh Campus Planning Permission granted with €14m capital funding
 LIT granted €20m funding for new Applied Science and IT building
 Review completed of Management Structures in LIT
 Launch of Regional Action Plan for jobs 2015 - 2017
This Institution will be transformed at all levels and functions. It will deliver a greatly improved student experience whilst expanding our philosophy of active learning.
As a regional organisation which uniquely spans all three counties, LIT has a critical function in the wider economic, cultural and social and development of the Mid-West region.
The LIT Strategic Plan for 2018 – 2022 has been developed in a period of significant adaptation for higher education in Ireland. This adaptation is being largely driven by industrial, social and economic change in our environment and the need to respond to it.

The application of new technologies to the teaching and learning processes within the higher education sector itself is also essential. The world to which higher education institutions must respond is a very different place to that in which LIT’s previous strategic analysis and plan was adopted in 2011.

The pace of change is continuously accelerating and it is no longer possible for higher education institutions (HEIs) to simply react; they must rather continuously innovate, adapt and renew their portfolios and their delivery systems and equip their staff to design, implement and benefit from change.

The higher education (HE) sector is central to Ireland's future development even if the resources to drive and sustain it have been challenged in recent times. This centrality has led to a very rich policy environment as is illustrated by the range of official publications in recent years regarding HE policy and performance (as illustrated in the diagram on pages 32-33) in which ever greater demands have been made on the HE sector. The sector continues to be characterised by its binary system of institutes of technology (IOTs) and universities (including colleges of education). The binary system is, however, being greatly challenged by two consequences of the Hunt report: regional clusters and the evolution towards technological universities (TUs). The latter, in particular, will have a profound influence on the nature of the IOTs and may lead to the breakup of the binary system. The danger is that the unique strengths of the IOTs could be diminished or even lost - their regional focus, their closeness to industry and commerce, their commitment to learning by doing, their wide range of qualification levels and the close relationship between their research and their teaching activities. As such the protection of these strengths in any new arrangement is critical. Within the higher education sector itself there has been significant consideration of such policy instruments and IOTs have responded to accelerating change by focussing in particular on institutional arrangements, quality of provision and performance evaluation. Financial constraints have impeded full implementation of many of these measures but, with Government resources becoming more available and the increasing recognition of the seminal position of higher education in the achievement of key national goals, it is possible to be more confident about the provision of increased capacity within the system and that there will indeed be sufficient resources available to enhance capabilities. Following that period of significantly reduced funding of the HE sector coupled with the significant increase in demand (and a decrease in staff numbers), 2017 saw the first increase in funding for IOTs in almost a decade.

Despite that increase Ireland still spends a lower proportion of its GDP on higher education than other OECD countries. This funding limitation has impacted on quality outcomes and the ability of IOTs to invest and advance in areas such as research, flexible learning and campus development.

As a regional organisation which uniquely spans all three counties, LIT has a critical function in the wider economic, cultural and social and development of the region.

The Technological Universities Bill, the underpinning legislation for the evolution of TUs, represents a major change for IOTs and the regions that they serve. LIT, after much consideration and consultation, has decided to continue as an autonomous institution of technology for the life of this plan, but it will redirect and reprioritise funding to develop the Institute in line with established technological university criteria whilst deepening engagement with regional partners. As part of the Shannon Consortium (LIT, University of Limerick and Mary Immaculate College), LIT has created new opportunities for learners, industry and the wider community. It is important that LIT maintains a focus on its regional development role in collaboration with its Shannon Consortium partners and in collaboration with industry through initiatives such as Limerick for IT and Limerick for Engineering but future proofs its development potential as a TU.
The Thurles and Clonmel campuses are an integral part of the community infrastructure and are central to a wide range of community activities.
This plan identifies five strategic PRIORITIES and five ENABLERS of equal significance, which will support the Institute in achieving its strategic vision and advancing in line with the criteria set out within the Technological Universities Bill.
PRIORITIES

1. Grow student numbers and diversify our student population

2. Provide high quality teaching and active learning that reflects the needs of industry

3. Increase LIT’s RDI capacity in areas that have a clear economic and social impact for the region

4. Deepen stakeholder engagement and increase our impact on the region

5. Deliver on LIT’s campus development plan to enhance the student experience

ENABLERS

1. Staff Engagement

2. Culture & Communication

3. Strategic Resource Management & Investment

4. Informed Decision Making Processes

5. Brand, Identity & Influencers
**Priorities**

1. **Grow student numbers and diversify our student population**
   In order to achieve this priority, LIT will:
   - Analyse the Institute's programme portfolio to ensure continued suitability and to identify new discipline areas
   - Maintain and enhance appropriate pathways and necessary supports to enable students continued progression through their educational journey
   - Enhance our flexible model of education to include new online and blended programmes that increase student enrolments, support continuous professional development (CPD) and enable life-long learning
   - Attract international students that generate additional non-exchequer income and enrich the overall student learning experience

2. **Provide high quality teaching and active learning that reflects the needs of industry**
   In order to achieve this priority, LIT will:
   - Ensure our academic programme offering and pedagogies are research informed and equip students with practical critical thinking and problem-solving skills
   - Enrich the student learning experience through innovative course delivery methods supported by technology, internationalisation and positive student-staff engagement
   - Expand work based learning and work placement opportunities
   - Upskill academic staff to keep pace with new technologies and pedagogies and incorporate these into their teaching and delivery methods

3. **Increase LIT’s RDI capacity in areas that have a clear economic and social impact for the region**
   In order to achieve this priority, LIT will:
   - Grow the quantity, quality and impact of Research Development and Innovation (RDI) activities and enable knowledge transfer and entrepreneurship
   - Promote a research culture to increase capacity and identify and support staff to be research active
   - Advance key research priorities relevant to the region
   - Further develop enterprise activities that foster innovation and entrepreneurship and shape the entrepreneurs of the future

4. **Deepen stakeholder engagement and increase our impact on the region**
   In order to achieve this priority, LIT will:
   - Strategically engage with regional stakeholders to ensure LIT contributes to the development of the region
   - Further develop the applied nature of programmes in collaboration with industry that equip graduates with the knowledge and skills to meet industry's ever changing needs
   - Deepen engagement with regional, national and international higher education providers to drive growth and investment in the region.
   - Utilise the Shannon Consortium framework to play a key role in addressing the opportunities and challenges of the region

5. **Deliver on LIT’s campus development plan to enhance the student experience**
   In order to achieve this priority, LIT will:
   - Continue to expand physical campus space and capacity
   - Develop a campus environment that delivers an appropriate balance of dynamic and flexible spaces for our educational communities
   - Create an accessible and suitably equipped physical and virtual environment that facilitates individual and group learning and optimises the use of facilities for the benefit of students and the region
   - Utilise the Mid-West Limerick city-region principles to ensure that the LIT campuses located outside of Limerick City continue to be developed (as per Campus 2030 Plan)
In addition to the above outlined priorities, LIT will focus on a number of horizontal enablers that will support the delivery of the Institute’s vision to 2022. These include:

1. **Staff Engagement & Development**
   LIT will attract, develop and retain a high performing, talented, diverse and flexible workforce to deliver quality teaching, learning, research, services and support.

2. **Culture & Communication**
   LIT will embed a culture of cross-disciplinary working, compliance, quality assurance and continuous improvement. The success of this change relies on individuals taking responsibility for actions and results, and the ongoing exchange of information.

3. **Strategic Resource Management & Investment**
   LIT will continue to develop, implement and incentivise effective resource allocation and resource generation. This will ensure that we will be in a position to leverage new funding opportunities, enable investment and manage resource constraints to maintain a financially strong Institute.

4. **Informed Decision Making Processes**
   LIT values informed decision making as a critical determinant of achieving our strategic priorities. In order to further develop this capacity, the development of a risk assessment culture is seen as a key enabler of ensuring that risk management policies along with robust and agile governance will enable, strengthen and inform the decision making process.

5. **Brand, Identity & Influencers**
   LIT will enhance the Institute brand and position the Institute as a HEI of choice regionally, nationally and internationally. LIT will utilise its key external links and groupings such as LIT Foundation Advisory Board, Alumni, RDI and other advisory bodies to extend the influence of LIT and help to deliver its strategic goals.
## SECTOR STAKEHOLDERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stakeholder</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION &amp; SKILLS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIGHER EDUCATION AUTHORITY (HEA)</td>
<td>Targets and capitation basis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SHANNON CONSORTIUM</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Structure</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GOVERNING BODY (GB)</td>
<td>Audit / Risk / Compliance / Strategy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GB SUB-COMMITTEES</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EXECUTIVE</td>
<td>Implementation Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REPORTING</td>
<td>Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) - progress and outcome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MANAGEMENT</td>
<td>Operational Plans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STAFF</td>
<td>Performance Management / Accountability / Review</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LIT’s vision is to be a leading provider of higher education that is student centred, research informed, industry relevant and accessible for all.
APPENDIX I: LIT GOVERNING BODY

At the time of preparing this Plan, the LIT Governing Body included the following members:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Niall Greene</td>
<td>Chairman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vincent Cunnane</td>
<td>LIT President</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tony Brazil</td>
<td>Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colum Cronin</td>
<td>SAP Ireland Ltd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philip Desmond</td>
<td>Student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maureen Falvey</td>
<td>Academic Staff Representative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ger Hartigan</td>
<td>Non-Academic Staff Representative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cllr. John Hogan</td>
<td>Tipperary Education and Training Board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michelle Brassil-Jones</td>
<td>Irish Film Board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tony Mahon</td>
<td>Academic Staff Representative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fionuala McGeever</td>
<td>Tipperary Education and Training Board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sean McMahon</td>
<td>Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simon Moroney</td>
<td>Munster Council GAA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maureen Ryan</td>
<td>ICTU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bernard Stenson</td>
<td>Analog Devices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cllr. Elena Secas</td>
<td>Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marie Slattery</td>
<td>Shannon Group (Not Confirmed)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cllr. Marian Hurley</td>
<td>Fine Gael Councillor in Limerick</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

LIT Governing Body strategy sub-committee:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Niall Greene</td>
<td>Chairman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vincent Cunnane</td>
<td>LIT President</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tony Mahon</td>
<td>Academic Staff Representative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fionuala McGeever</td>
<td>Tipperary Education and Training Board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sean McMahon</td>
<td>Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marie Slattery</td>
<td>Shannon Group (Not Confirmed)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michelle Brassil-Jones</td>
<td>Irish Film Board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jimmy Browne</td>
<td>LIT VP Corporate Services &amp; Capital Development</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The strategic planning process, led by the President, with the support of the LIT Executive and the Governing Body Strategy Sub-Committee, has been greatly assisted by the contribution of LIT’s staff, students and Governing Body. In addition, the time and contribution of LIT’s external stakeholders was greatly appreciated. We wish to acknowledge the role of Mazars in facilitating stakeholder engagement, our consultation process and in drafting this document. Some of the organisations available to participate in the process include:

- Department of Education and Skills
- Higher Education Authority
- Limerick City & County Council
- Clare County Council
- Tipperary County Council
- Tipperary Education & Training Board
- LIT Foundation
- Munster GAA
- Thomond Park Stadium
- Paul Partnership
- Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board
- Johnson & Johnson Vision Care
- Analog Devices
- Molex
- Intel Shannon
- Ormston House
- BDO
- EVA International
- FABLAB Limerick
- AIB Limerick
- Limerick Sports Partnership
- Irish Hotels Federation

APPENDIX II: ACKNOWLEDGMENTS
Below is a list of acronyms used throughout this document:

- **CPD** - Continuous Professional Development
- **KPI** - Key Performance Indicator
- **GB** - Governing Body
- **LIT** - Limerick Institute of Technology
- **GDP** - Gross Domestic Product
- **NPF** - National Planning Framework
- **HEA** - Higher Education Authority
- **OECD** - Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
- **HEI** - Higher Education Institute
- **RDI** - Research, Development and Innovation
The objective is to be the best that we can be in serving the diverse needs of our region. We believe that we have identified and are putting in place the key values, resources and actions needed to achieve that objective.