

Introduction

The Library at NUI Galway performs a series of delicate balancing acts. On the one hand we ensure long-term access to past, and indeed present, scholarship. At the same time we provide the expertise, spaces and technologies which make possible new forms of learning and research to build the future. Moreover, the responsibilities to manage our printed collections and support our region sit alongside building digital collections and helping to meet global challenges. We facilitate user autonomy while ensuring skilled support from Library staff; we provide online assistance but also engage in person; and we strive to increase diversity across our collections while recognising the special importance of the Irish language and of our regional heritage. This strategy commits to observing all of these balances.

The context for the strategy, spanning the period 2021-2025, has no precedent. As I write, the coronavirus pandemic continues to disrupt previous norms, especially for higher education. Two unique developments are in prospect for the Library. Staff, services and collections are likely to relocate for two years to accommodate construction work at the James Hardiman Library. Furthermore, a quarter of the Library staff may retire in this period, resulting in a loss of valuable knowledge and experience.

Opportunities abound, however. Library staff and users are responding in an agile fashion to the pandemic which has accelerated a digital shift, encouraging everyone to think differently about services, collections and spaces. The Digital Library provides an excellent platform on which to build as an enabler of increased online access, productivity and creativity. The transformation of the James Hardiman Library building into an exciting learning environment, a meeting place of scholarship and community, creates many possibilities for the Library and the University. Staffing changes will engender

a healthy focus on succession planning, staff development and the establishment of the next-generation leadership team.

Some themes recur throughout this strategy. Alignment with the University strategy, Shared Vision, Shaped by Values, chimes well with the long-standing value of libraries to promote the public good. Understanding the changing context in which Library users operate informs the vision and priorities for each of the five themes, recognising new preferences, expectations and possibilities. These shape evolving roles for the Library in learning and research. The strategy acknowledges the diversity of backgrounds and journeys our communities experience. There is a strong awareness of interdependence with others on campus and of the value of partnerships to advance national and international collaborations. Library staff are conscious of the part they can play in addressing the global priorities outlined in the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

This is an ambitious strategy, resulting from a valuable process of consultation across a period of 18 months. Its predecessor, The Journey to 2020, delivered significant progress across all its priority objectives and this creates confidence in achieving similar outcomes this time around. The expertise, agility and commitment of the Library staff will continue to be the foundations for success. Engaged support from the University Management Team will be vital to enabling the ongoing investment in people, collections and technologies required. The road ahead may have a few bumps but we approach it in a spirit of mutual support, confidence and excitement.

John Cox

University Librarian

Note: The Library strategic plan will support the achievement of commitments, flagship actions and capital development priorities identified by the University in its strategy to 2025. Alphanumeric references in superscript, eg AEOS, APOS, Signal this throughout the text and an appendix lists in full those University commitments, actions and capital projects the Library will help to advance.

Strategic Themes

Inspiring Learning by transforming the Library building to **Opening Scholarship** promote community **Driving Research** and engagement to make University research through expert staff, digital infrastructures outputs, educational resources and heritage and collections in collections globally and print and online openly available The five themes of this strategy are:

Being Digital

maximising opportunities afforded by online collections, technology-enriched spaces and emerging technologies

Sustaining Excellence

ensuring a supportive culture for staff and users, promoting diversity and operating sustainably

Our Vision

The Library will be a catalyst for your success as NUI Galway's hub for scholarly information discovery, sharing and publication.

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Library Strategy

Library Staff













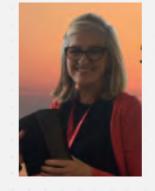








































Being Digital

The Vision for 2025

NUI Galway's Digital Library is open and accessible to all our communities. Conducting library business online is convenient and enhances your learning or research. The Digital Library is a platform for productivity as access to services, collections and supports is seamless and responsive. Digital collections, often locally created, are easily discoverable and underpin scholarship. The transformed Library building is a high-technology location which promotes creativity and offers excellent preparation for the evolving world of work and future learning. This dynamic environment stimulates discovery, innovation, and new interdisciplinary partnerships. The human element remains paramount and Library staff provide expert advice in person and online.



Global changes in technology have had a profound impact on how universities and libraries operate. The Library strives always to understand evolving user expectations, preferences and behaviours and to develop services accordingly. A definite shift towards digital access is evident, accelerated by experience during the coronavirus pandemic and including mainstreamed online teaching, learning and research. This mandates a prioritisation of digital access, manifested in a preference for acquiring materials in online format where available, enabling digital research, providing remote service support and promoting effective digital citizenship for responsible digital creation, sharing and privacy.

The Library will continue to embrace the power of digital, realigning how we do our business and designing a transformed, digitally enabled, Library building that will meet the needs of our communities long into the future AEO6, PBO3. Its technology-rich spaces will ignite curiosity and collaboration, enabling students to take control of their own learning and to be active co-creators of knowledge rather than only passive recipients of information CROS. There will be a combination of technologies, including wearable, immersive and intelligent.

The Library will look to take the opportunities that artificial intelligence and machine learning offer for data-driven scholarship, including collections as data, text and data mining and intelligent search and discovery CE10. Data stewardship will be an important area of expertise for Library staff who will continue to develop their skills and services to support users, recognising the vital importance of human help and guidance. The Library is committed to optimising the digital environment to support online teaching, research and study; this will include partnership with systems providers to deliver robust, highly functional and often cloud-based infrastructures.

Priorities

Digital Experience

The University strategy seeks to deliver an excellent student-centred, research-led teaching and learning experience. The Library will strive to improve our users' digital experience by opening new channels of discovery and communication, creating new online resources and supports and embedding the Library within the curriculum. A further priority will be to work proactively with University stakeholders to equip students with the research, digital literacy and information skills necessary to become leaders in their fields CEO2, AEO3.

Digital Collections

Collections are the lifeblood of scholarship and access will be digital as far as possible, both to maximise availability and to enable new forms of interaction with text and data AE11. The Library will emphasise the effectiveness and comprehensiveness of its discovery tools, leveraging visualisation and related technologies.

Developing digital collections will involve partnership with academic staff, especially to ensure ease of access to module learning materials, including increased use of Open Educational Resources to reduce textbook costs for students APO3, APO4. A targeted annual digitisation programme for archives and special collections will maximise access. The curation of our digital heritage, past and present, will be secured by implementing a digital preservation policy.

Digital Creativity

The transformed Library will include spaces for experimenting, collaborating, and creating in a digital environment AEOG, PBO3. Such spaces will facilitate conversations between Library staff and users on incorporating digital tools and methods into scholarship and the classroom.



Context

Open scholarship addresses all scholarly activity, removing any restrictions that constrain the flow of academic knowledge. It promotes new approaches to the process of research, education, and innovation, ensuring that publications and other outputs are properly and ethically managed and evaluated and are made freely available under terms that enable reuse, redistribution and reproduction of the work and its underlying data and methods.

The public good is at the core of open scholarship as a key component of an open and equitable society. It empowers the University's wider communities to be lifelong learners and researchers and reduces inequalities by opening access to scholarship, to educational resources and to heritage collections CPO2. It supports the greater good by capturing and making available records and oral histories of events that affect our society.

Being open places NUI Galway on the international stage as a proactive collaborator for innovation, engagement, and creativity. Making the University's research globally and openly accessible increases its reach, impact and reputation APOG, AE13. Open scholarship promotes a more collaborative, ethical and transparent research process and enables partnerships both within and beyond the University with the wider community and with global partners CPO4.

The Library will contribute towards the creation of an environment in which open scholarship can flourish APO4. This will include the ongoing development of local publishing platforms to streamline open access to University outputs and the deployment of transnational data sharing infrastructures such as the European Open Science Cloud (EOSC) as appropriate CE10. Collaboration with research funders and with local partners, including the Research Office and Information Solutions and Services, will advance open scholarship, incorporating the development of more equitable and broadly based research assessment systems. A redefined relationship with scholarly publishers will concentrate investment of existing resources in open access publishing services.

Priorities

Thought Leadership

The Library will be a thought leader in advancing open scholarship on campus, sharing expert commentary and interpretation about developments as they happen. The intent will be to support and influence University decision-making in this area, recognising the value of combining leadership from the top with grassroots activities such as the Open Scholarship Community Galway. The programme of skills training, support and guidance on open scholarship practices will expand APO4.

Supporting Infrastructures

Developing infrastructures to support open scholarship will be a priority AE13. Locally, the Library will launch an NUI Galway open publishing platform for University research outputs and Open Educational Resources, ensuring effective peer review, copyright control, discoverability and preservation AP04. The focus nationally will be on collaboration to negotiate transformative agreements with publishers that enable open access to NUI Galway research, and supporting the development of a national open data repository CP04.

Open Library Practices

The Library will be open in all its activities, by making the skills programmes and workshops it organises openly available, by opening access to archives and special collections where possible and by collaborating with global, national and regional partners to develop shared collections and exhibitions CCO4, CPO4.



Inspiring Learning

The Vision for 2025

The Library, outside of lectures and tutorials, continues to be the preferred location for curricular engagement. The unique and compelling learning environment it promotes is widely recognised, making it a prime motivator for students to frequent the campus. Nowhere else provides the meeting place and perfect balance of conditions necessary for simultaneous immersive engagement in a multiplicity of fields and subject matters. The breadth of materials, the engaged community of practice, the supportive, empathetic and knowledgeable staff, the tailored environment and technology all help promote optimal curricular focus. Concurrently, user access to materials is simplified and largely unrestricted. This combination allows the widest choice and autonomy for the learner. It provides a potential springboard to serendipitous knowledge acquisition, creative effort and idea generation, while enabling new understanding, new behaviours, skills, and preferences from a community of like-minded learners, all within the University's pervading culture of excellence.

Context

The learning environment for higher education has changed significantly, with a shift in emphasis from teaching to learning. Today's students learn more independently and value facilities that enable them to explore ideas autonomously. There is a growing emphasis on participation, interaction with other disciplines and independent learning beyond the lecture. Active, collaborative and social learning requires appropriate space. It is therefore very timely that the University strategy to 2025 commits to "A new Library, incorporating a Learning Commons that encourages and supports new forms of learning and engagement".

The transformed Library building will be a space for learning, research, collaboration and contemplation AEO6, PBO3. It will inspire creativity and motivation, provide abundant natural light and reflective spaces, harnessing learning technologies as appropriate. This environment will promote a flourishing of communities of practice where a repertoire of behaviours, resources and responses to events is shared and optimised as practitioners learn from each other AEO3.

Access to high quality support will underpin the effective use of the new facility AE02 Library staff recognise the diversity of the student body, understanding the range of experiences and challenging journeys that students from many different backgrounds face ^{CR01}. Our focus will be on meeting the expectations of students and helping them to realise their aspirations at and after university, including the development of skills for learning, life and work CEO2. There will be a combination of online support, accessible helpdesks, and tuition in skills such as digital literacy and academic writing, all linked by a promotion of global citizenship and contribution to society AEO3, CEO4.

Priorities

Learning Environment

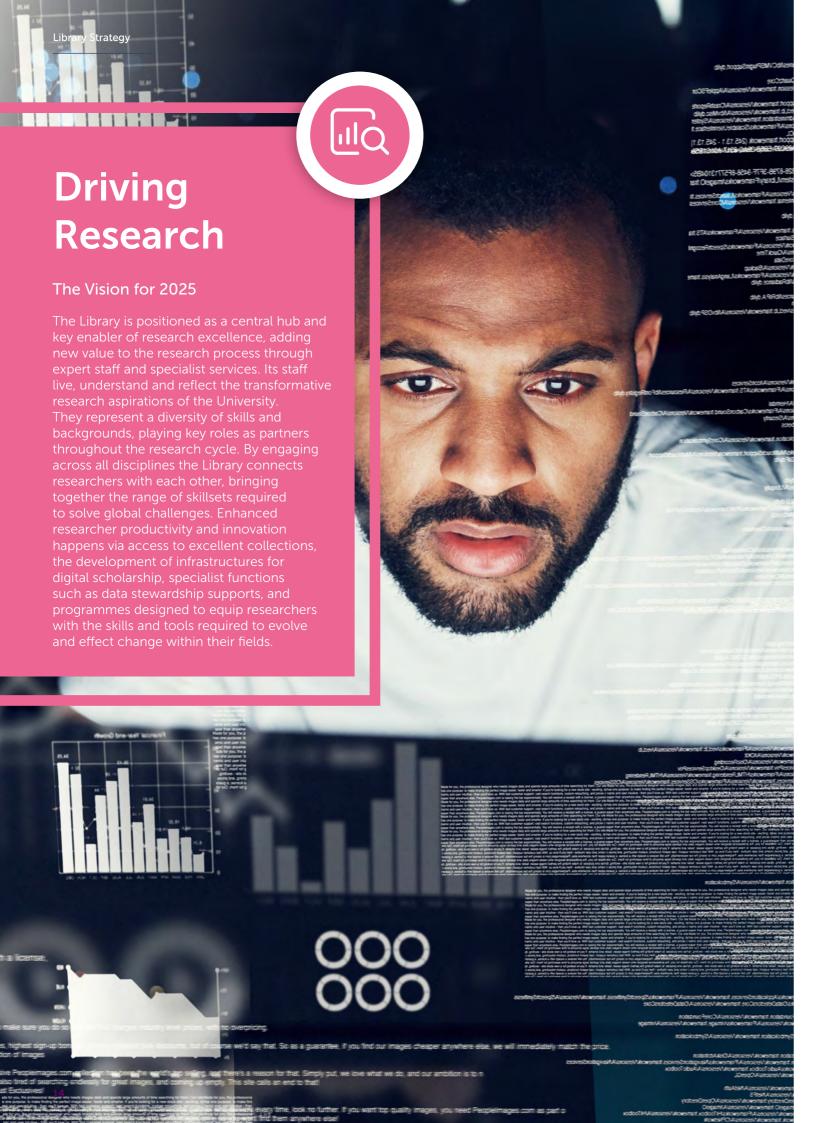
The Library building transformation project holds the key to realising a stimulating learning environment. Library staff will partner with others to design a place of community, intellectual and social, for the University. Its vital components will be ubiquitous technology, facilities for collaboration, diverse and versatile spaces to meet a variety of needs, high levels of comfort, accessible support, appropriate staff accommodation and generous opening hours AEOG, PBO3.

Embedded Collections

A deliberate acquisitions programme to source diverse and overlapping information resources in multiple formats will enable Library collections to provide multiple means of engagement and to promote individual choice and autonomy CR01, CE02. The Library will further enhance the relevance, value and authenticity of learning programmes by continuing to make available archives, special collections, and other primary sources for teaching and learning.

Academic Skills

Students want to develop essential transferable skills to prepare them for employment and future life choices. The Library will continue to develop its programme of information literacy, which promotes a critical approach to the identification and use of sources, and digital literacy, which focuses on dimensions such as content creation, communication, collaboration and responsible digital citizenship CE01, CE02, AE03.



Context

Technology has exerted a major influence on research in recent times. Shared network access promotes global, collaborative, team-based and crossinstitutional research, with a doubling of the number of internationally co-authored scientific papers. The University strategy notes research collaborations with 3.267 international institutions in 114 countries and international co-authorship of almost 60% of our research papers. Evolving technology infrastructures, platforms and workflow tools deliver increased access to a range of research materials, including laboratory notebooks, questionnaires, software code and datasets. Research has become increasingly data-driven and computational across all disciplines, not just the sciences, and digital scholarship encompasses the advance of digital humanities research.

The role of the Library in research includes engagement with open scholarship, research impact, digital scholarship, research data management and researcher skills development APO4. This represents a recent expansion which will continue, as will the investment in staffing, technologies and collections. Library staff partnering with researchers and across internal teams will be characterised by versatility and a mix of skills and backgrounds. Their expertise will be vital to researchers at all career stages AE11. Increasing Library roles in curation and publishing will need investment in technology platforms. Library creation and publication of new online resources, such as digitised archives and curated datasets, will open up new modes of enquiry, often across disciplines CE10. Researchers will depend on access to excellent collections in all formats, including unique primary materials.

Close engagement with the research community will underpin the Library's development of skills programmes to enhance researcher productivity. Partnerships with the Research Office and the Graduate Studies Office will be vital in ensuring a clear understanding of needs and pressure points but also opportunities for collaboration.

Priorities

Digital Scholarship

The Library will evolve and implement its Digital Scholarship Strategy, encompassing a range of activities including digitisation and digital preservation, research data management and the curation of born-digital collections. The provision of spaces, tools, equipment and training for digital scholarship will be a priority and will influence the transformation of the Library building AEOG, PBO3. In the immediate term the MakerSpace will evolve into a rapid response innovation centre.

Research Collections

Development of Library collections for research will have many dimensions. Locally, these will include not only new additions to our archives and special collections but also the fullest promotion and use of the unique collections already held. Nationally, the Library will continue to make a major contribution to shaping the development of IReL, the Irish Research eLibrary, as essential research infrastructure ^{CCOS}. There will be a strong emphasis on embedding the evolving skills researchers need to use diverse collections effectively.

Community Engagement

The transformation of Nuns' Island to an innovation district and the development of a cultural and performance space will enable the Library to cultivate campus-community partnerships CCO2, PBO1, PBO2. These partnerships will engage the wider community with our vast array of digital, cultural and heritage resources and will promote crowdsourced research and citizen science CCO4, AP13.

Sustaining Excellence

The Vision for 2025

Everybody using the Library enjoys a positive and enriching experience. You encounter an increasingly diverse staff committed to high standards and to developing its skills and services as your needs change. Library services are easy to use and accessible to all in person or online. You feel pride in the transformed Library building as a go-to place of exciting possibilities, a space that inspires scholarship, creativity and interaction, embodying our campus as a community built around knowledge. Sustainable practices reflect a consciousness of global as well as local and regional responsibility. Excellence is a lived priority, clearly signalled in everything the Library does.



Context

The Library promotes excellence by enabling scholarship to flourish and by providing an experience which inspires curiosity, awareness of global sustainability and a desire to advance the public good. Culture and physical environment are twin pillars in realising excellence as a driving force for the Library. Libraries by tradition have a strong service ethic and NUI Galway is no exception. Our ambition is to build on our culture of caring responsiveness to user preferences and behaviours while striving for improvement, driven by an awareness of changing needs alongside a sensitivity to everyone's well-being CROS, CRIO.

In addition to prioritising staff skills development and effective recruitment two other pressing needs have emerged. The first is to increase the diversity of our workforce to reflect more accurately our diverse user population ARO8. This effort will include an ongoing emphasis on equality, diversity and inclusion in all we do CR01. Opportunities to offer increased employment to students and to benefit from their talent and perspective will be explored. Secondly, succession planning will be a priority as more than a quarter of Library staff will by 2025 reach what has until recently been the normal retirement age. There will be a strong focus on cultivating leadership skills for the next-generation Library management team, and on empowering staff CE01, CE04, AE01

The University has a once-off opportunity to transform the physical environment of the Library building. The building will represent the University's values CVO1. It will respect and showcase scholarship as a highly democratic place, open to every discipline and inclusive of all communities CPO3, APO1, APO2, PBO6. Sustainability will be a key principle informing its construction and operation, creating an exemplar to inspire effective environmental practices in all who use it ASO3, ASO5, ASI3. Most of all, the commitment of the Library staff to excellent service will make the building a success for everyone.

The Library's culture of consultation, partnership and determination will be at play in transforming the building and in other projects. Working effectively with others will be vital to delivering excellent outcomes. Responsibility towards our regional and national roles will be evident through a commitment to the Irish language in Library services and collections CR12, CP06. This will be complemented by a strong sense of global mission in practicing sustainability and promoting worldwide access to material the Library digitises or publishes online.

Priorities

Transformed Building

Commit to designing a transformed learning environment as a platform for student engagement and innovation in teaching and assessment, also realising the opportunities offered for Library staff to deliver new services and user experience AEOO, PBO3.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Keep equality, diversity and inclusion at the forefront of all operations, including staff recruitment and development, governance, service planning and collection development CRO1.

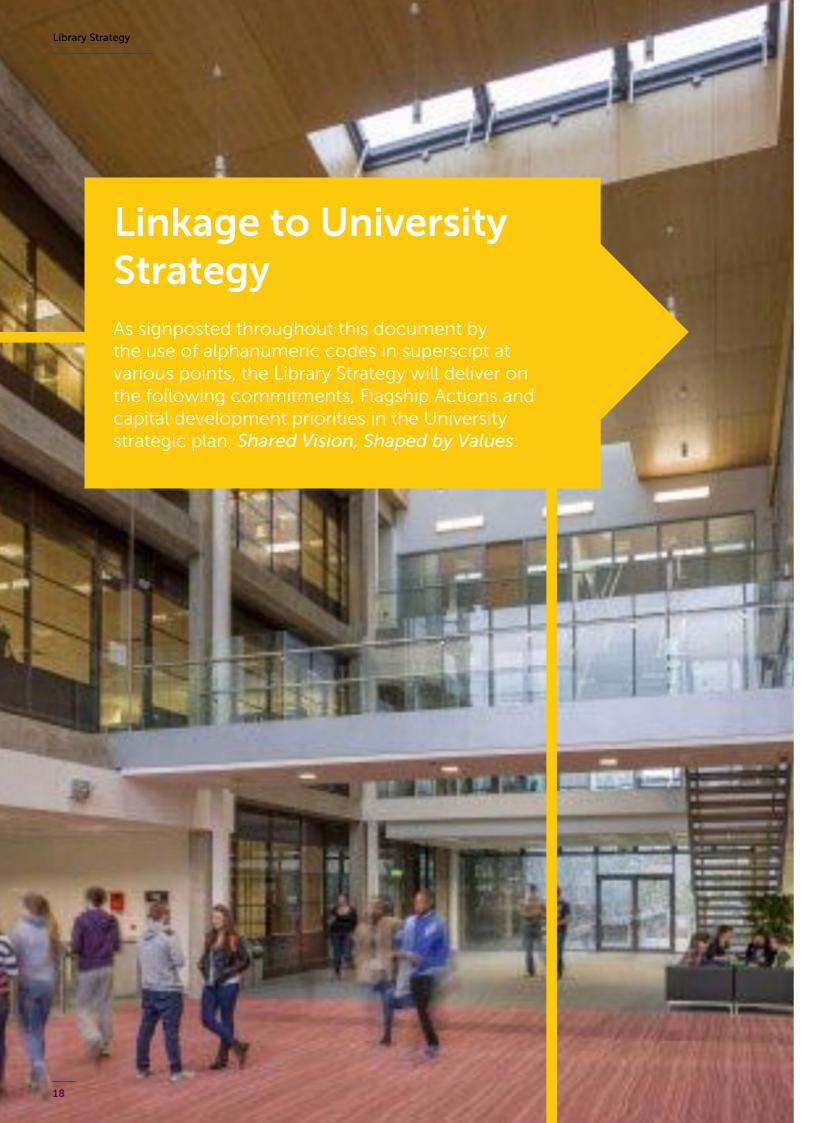
Global Sustainability

Take a global view, maximising sustainability in terms of environmental practices, working arrangements and resource management and monitoring performance against the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals CSO3, CSO7, ASO1.

Excellent Communications

Communicate the Library offering effectively, while placing an equal emphasis on listening to and responding to user feedback ^{CCO7}.

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COMMITMENTS

Respectful NUI Galway

- **CR01** We will proactively remove barriers to equality and diversity in our University, recognising the individuality of our people's journeys.
- CR05 We will support students in their studies, progression and wellbeing as part of a community where they are encouraged to define success holistically and inspired to achieve it.
- **CR10** Everyone working on NUI Galway campuses can expect to be enabled to do their best work in a positive and safe work environment, which is mindful of employees' physical, intellectual and wellbeing needs.
- CR12 Recognising the unique and influential role our university plays in our region's society and economy, we will work with businesses, organisations and networks across the west of Ireland to ensure that our university is positively serving our region.

Open NUI Galway

- **CP02** We will build an inclusive culture that proactively seeks to improve access to education, enable collaboration and support our people regardless of their background.
- **CP03** We will invest in a physical environment that ensures our university is open and accessible to all our communities.
- **CP04** We will strive to make a positive impact on society through partnering with other universities, organisations and communities, locally and internationally, to enable the creation and sharing of knowledge, expertise and technologies.
- **CP06** We will work with our communities to enhance our bilingual campus and share our passion for the Irish language with the world.

Sustainable NUI Galway

- **CS03** We will future-proof our university by ensuring the environmental, social and financial sustainability of all our operations.
- CS07 Building on the work of our Community and University Sustainability Partnership and its approach to 'learn, live and lead' sustainability across the university mission, we will embed sustainability in our culture, operational policies and governance structures, and empower our communities to be champions of sustainability.

Excellent NUI Galway

- **CE01** We will support ambition and enable the excellence of our people, who are leaders, innovators and critical thinkers that share a passion for understanding, educating and improving the world.
- **CE02** We will deliver an excellent student-centred, research-led teaching and learning experience. This will be underpinned by increased investment in supports that develop critical thinking, leadership, professionalism and employability.
- **CE04** We will provide programmes of development, including mentoring, coaching and training, and enhance our physical and virtual environment in order to empower our staff, students and partners to fulfil their potential.
- **CE10** Engaging with our partners locally, nationally and worldwide, we will invite ambition in research that underpins the area of realising potential through data and enabling technologies.

Our Communities

- CC02 We will find new ways to deepen our partnerships with community groups and organisations in the Galway region in an open and inclusive way
- CC04 We will partner with and support regional and national development cultural and creative organisations, regionally and nationally, to celebrate our distinctive culture and make cultural expression available to all
- CC05 We will actively engage with government, state bodies, development agencies, the Saolta hospitals group and other educational institutions to maximise our contribution to
 - CC07 Meitheal model We will establish a Meitheal Scoláirí that engages with students to enhance trust and co-operation in decisionmaking in our University.

Our Values

• **CV01:** Our core values will be the lived experience of our people and of those with whom we live, learn and partner.

FLAGSHIP ACTIONS

Respectful NUI Galway

 AR08 We will increase the diversity of leadership and university structures to represent the increasingly diverse composition of the NUI Galway community.

Open NUI Galway

Access and Inclusion

- AP01 We will implement a capital development programme that is student-centred, communityfocused and disability-conscious, to enhance access and engagement with our campus and facilities
- **AP02** We will adopt the Principles of Universal Design in our learning and working environment to increase accessibility, accommodate different approaches to learning and enable students to fulfil their potential
- AP03 We will further develop our pathways for accessing education, building on our designation as a University of Sanctuary, to deliver a portfolio of supports for all communities to access higher education
- AP04 We will create an Open Scholarly Community in which the process, content and outcomes of research are ethically managed and openly accessible, and promote the use and production of Open Educational Resources

Collaboration and Partnerships

- **AP06** We will develop and implement a clear strategy for internationalisation and international collaboration that maximises the global impact and reach of the University in the context of the Government's Global Ireland programme
- **AP13** We will embed engaged research across the University by involving and collaborating with the public throughout the process of our research activities



Library Strategy 2021-2025

Sustainable NUI Galway

Living positive change on campus

- **AS01** We will commit to and sign the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Accord and aim for SDG Champion status
- **AS03** We will embed sustainability across our learning, research and the student experience, so that our entire campus community can gain the necessary knowledge and skills to become sustainability role models and leaders
- **AS05** We will embrace proven new technologies to increase our buildings' energy efficiency and Building Energy Rating, by integrating sustainability in all Buildings and Estates planning and development under the auspices of the national Climate Action Plan
- **AS13** We will set ourselves ambitious targets in the area of building design and sustainability

Capital Development Priorities

- PB01 A new innovation district, incorporating a riverside campus, on Nuns' Island / Earls Island as the primary driver of the urban regeneration of Galway city
- PB02 A landmark cultural and performance space, acknowledging our role as a national cultural institution and our contribution to Galway as a city of culture
- PB03 A new Library, incorporating a Learning Commons that encourages and supports new forms of learning and engagement
- PB06 Universal design principles in our capital development across all our campuses and a programme of retrofitting older buildings to enhance physical access for all.

Excellent NUI Galway

People

- **AE01** We will develop and implement a People Strategy to enable colleagues to reach their potential and support NUI Galway to achieve its ambitions, which includes a structured programme for staff training, development and mentoring
- **AE02** We will support and enhance student transition and progression by developing and implementing a Student Success Strategy, and by investing in new processes and systems, through the Student Digital Pathways programme, that meet student needs and future-proof our university

Teaching and Research

• **AE03** We will mainstream academic peer supports, academic skills supports and curricular innovations, recognising the centrality of excellence in teaching and learning to the mission of our university

• **AE06** We will redevelop our Library for the twenty-first century, establishing a Learning Commons that encourages and supports new forms of engagement in learning across our communities

Impact and Reputation

- **AE11** We will actively contribute towards building Galway's reputation as an internationally recognised centre of excellence for medtech, data science, culture and creativity, climate and oceans, public policy, and innovation in the Government of Ireland Future Jobs Strategy
- AE13 We will develop a compelling content programme to showcase the outcomes and impact of our research and innovation, nationally and internationally



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Library Strategy

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