

## RESEARCH STRATEGIC PLAN

### **5.3.6 The Research Culture**

#### **5.3.6.1 Premise**

Research is integral to teaching and learning and essential to knowledge growth. It is a fundamental cornerstone of higher education and, accordingly, of the National Strategy. Research underpins the educational process, benefitting students and academic staff by enhancing and enriching the teaching and learning experience. Research makes a difference, sharpening the critical intellect to assess and evaluate, to weigh and to measure, to calculate and to review, and to learn from the experience of the past how best we can proceed into the future. These are the skills of the here and now, and these are the skills most acutely required among the graduates of the Twenty First Century. These are the skills we seek to imbue among students of the College, and these are the skills we aspire to see in our graduates.

In the coming period, Mary Immaculate College will commit to supporting and resourcing the on-going development of the research skills base among our staff and students. In recent years the College has invested heavily in building its research skills base, through financial supports, staff up-skilling, external collaboration and dedicated administrative structures. This has produced rich dividends, with staff engagement in research now at an all-time high, as evidenced by an almost exponential increase in staff publications and presentations at professional conferences over recent years.

This effort will be maintained and developed further, and the cross- fertilisation of research with teaching and learning will be a particular focus for us in the coming years, along with an increased emphasis on research that contributes significantly to public policy. Through research and knowledge transfer, Mary Immaculate College will contribute to the Irish economy as well as to quality of life at local, regional, national and international levels.

#### **5.3.6.2 Goals & Targets**

**Goal 1: To cultivate an increased awareness of the role of research as an integral part of Academic endeavour**

##### **Targets**

- Number of staff-focused initiatives and information strategies aimed at promotion of research activity
- % increase in overall research engagement by staff
- % increase in doctoral qualifications held by staff
- Number of student-focused initiatives aimed at promotion of research activity
- % increase in overall research engagement by students

## **Goal 2: To recognise, support and incentivise excellence and achievement in research**

### **Targets**

- Review conducted of current supports, challenges and opportunities surrounding research engagement by staff, resulting in related recommendations
- Number of review recommendations adopted and implemented
- Number of incentivisation systems aimed at increases in individual staff research outputs
- % of staff availing of research supports
- % increase in number of externally-funded research appointments

## **Goal 3: To ensure that the College supports effective leadership in the field of research**

### **Targets**

- Enhanced College infrastructure for the support of research and coordinated engagement by staff
- Develop and operationalise research engagement and output data capture systems linked to central management information systems
- Number of Personal Research Plans (PRPs) and Departmental Research Plans (DRPs) negotiated and agreed
- Number of benchmarking exercises aimed at informing MIC research strategies and aligning output with commensurate national and international standards

## **Goal 4: To increase research support from external sources**

### **Targets**

- Number of external funding opportunities accessed
- % increase in research income from external sources

## **Goal 5: To establish direction and priorities for inter-disciplinary research**

### **Targets**

- Review conducted of current supports, challenges and opportunities surrounding interdisciplinary research engagement by staff, resulting in related recommendations
- Number of review recommendations adopted and implemented
- % increase in inter-disciplinary research activity involving inter-faculty, inter-institutional collaboration
- Number of inter-disciplinary studentships introduced
- Number of inter-disciplinary seminars
- Number of new centres established for inter-disciplinary research focused on agreed themes

**Goal 6: To foster research collaborations with HEIs, employers, commercial partners, local development stakeholders and public agencies**

**Targets**

- % research and knowledge transfer initiatives aimed at enhancing public policy and practice
- % research and knowledge transfer initiatives through commercial partnership leading to increase in value of the Knowledge Economy
- Number of collaborative research linkages and research networks created with other HEIs at regional, national and international level
- Number of inter-institutional applications for research funding opportunities
- % successful inter-institutional applications for research funding opportunities
- Review and recommendations leading to increased participation in scholar exchange programmes
- Number of recommendations implemented
- Number of and % increase in scholar exchange

**Goal 7: To promote the status and recognition of MIC as a research active College**

**Targets**

- Increased collaboration with Corporate Communications function to devise and implement awareness-raising strategies for research activities and outputs
- Demonstrable increase in recognition of MIC research profile