Towards a Learning Innovation & Research Hub

20th November 2024
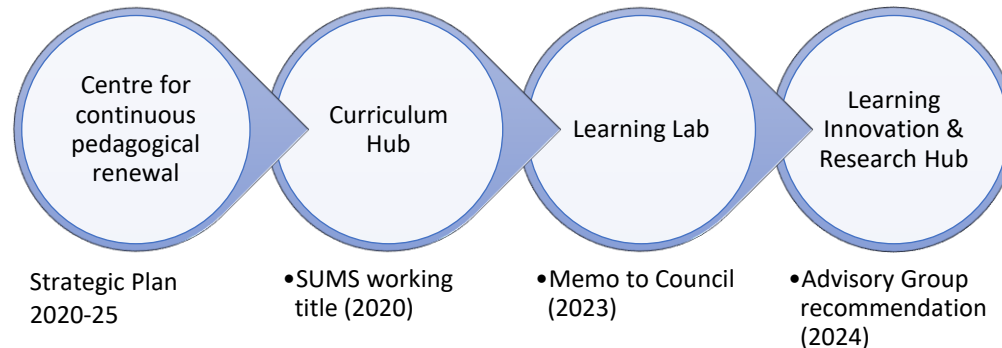
Council

Trish Callaghan
Academic Secretary

Council Request, Nov 2023

*"**to scope out how the existing resources** might align to establish a **Learning Lab model** for Trinity and, if the model is approved, to recommend how the Trinity Learning Lab might be operationalised."*

- 2020-25 Strategic Plan Objective

- SUMS research 'Development of a Centre for Continuous Pedagogical Renewal' Report, October 2020

Advisory Group

- A Learning Lab Advisory Group was established comprising 12 members from across the academic, student, and professional communities (Appendix 1)

- Agreed title "Learning Innovation and Research Hub"

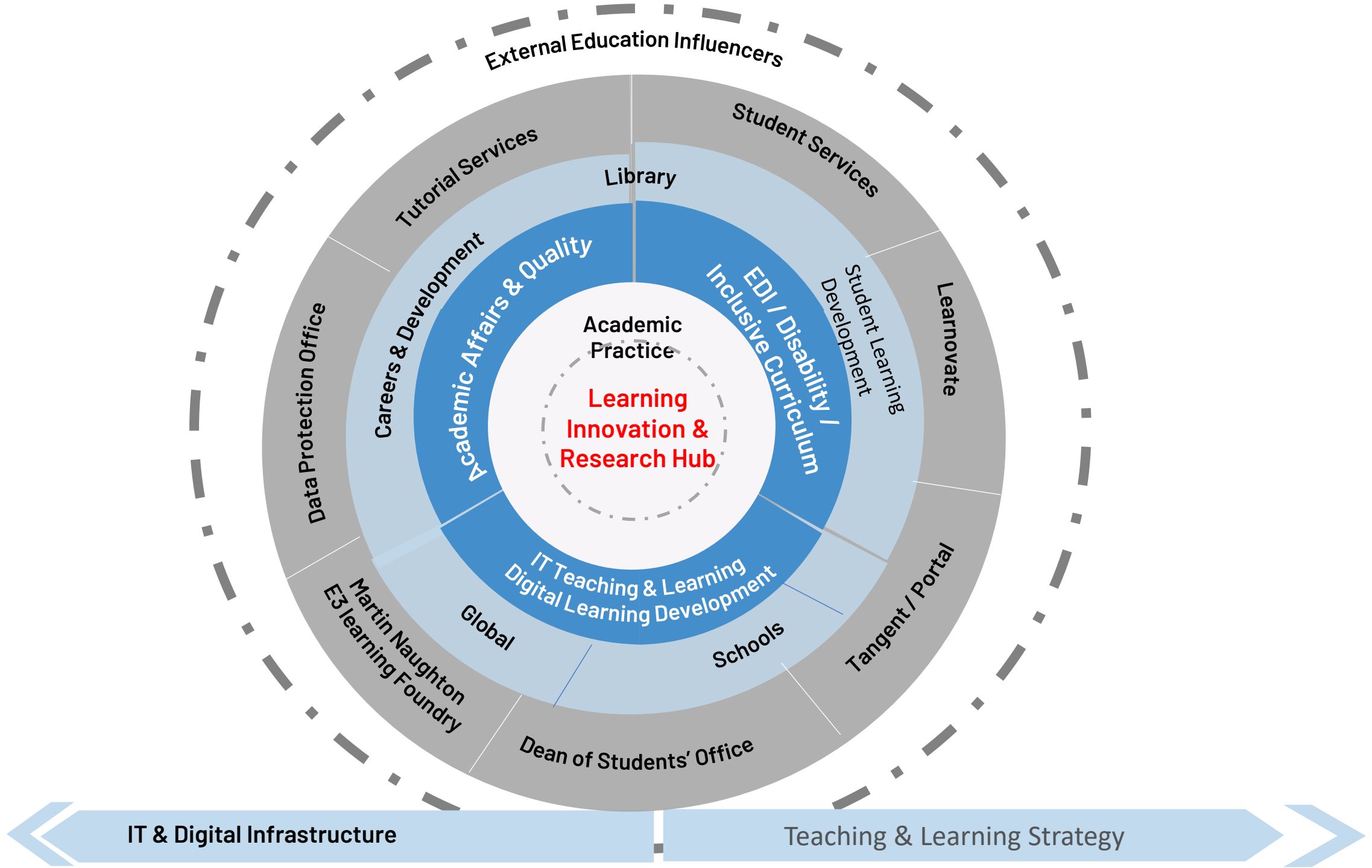| Centre for continuous pedagogical renewal | Curriculum Hub | Learning Lab | Learning Innovation & Research Hub |
| Strategic Plan 2020-25 | •SUMS working title (2020) | •Memo to Council (2023) | •Advisory Group recommendation (2024) |

Rationale

✓ unprecedented pressures on teaching staff and students from a continual stream of new demands and initiatives from national and international regulatory bodies
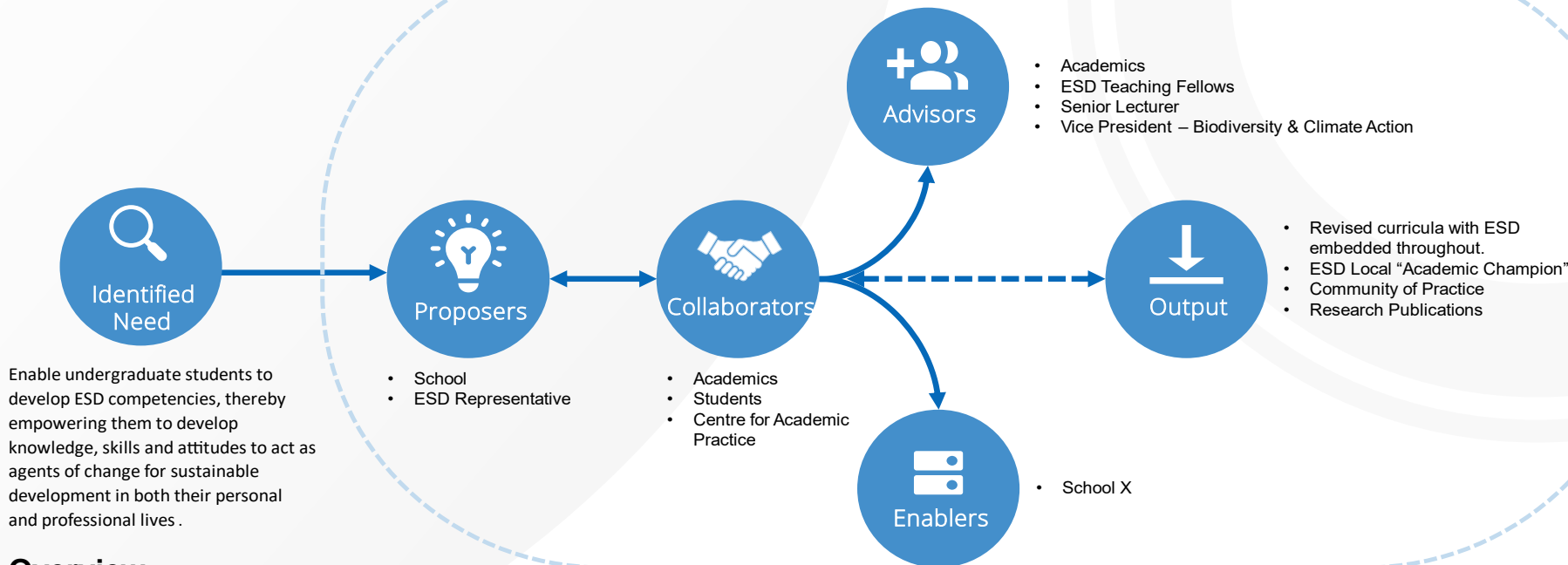
Among demands are

- digital transformation

- (generative) AI

- learning analytics

- different modes of education delivery

- student wellbeing

- disparities in access to education

- increasing student numbers and diversity

- micro-credentials

- Impact of the pandemic teaching and learning

- climate change and sustainability

- graduate employability

2 Year Feasibility Study

- To define a structure that empowers Trinity College academic staff, teaching and learning support staff, and students to respond to educational challenges by (co)researching pedagogical and digital learning innovations, evaluating and, as appropriate, integrating successful innovations within Trinity College curricula.

Enable the development of student ESD competencies in the undergraduate curriculum

Identified Need

Enable undergraduate students to develop ESD competencies, thereby empowering them to develop knowledge, skills and attitudes to act as agents of change for sustainable development in both their personal and professional lives .

Proposers
- School
- ESD Representative

Collaborators
- Academics
- Students
- Centre for Academic Practice

Advisors
- Academics
- ESD Teaching Fellows
- Senior Lecturer
- Vice President – Biodiversity & Climate Action

Enablers
- School X

Output
- Revised curricula with ESD embedded throughout.
- ESD Local "Academic Champion"
- Community of Practice
- Research Publications

Overview

In response to international, national and institutional imperatives and strategic priorities, it is necessary to embed education for sustainable development (ESD) within undergraduate programmes through transformative, action-oriented pedagogical approaches along with integration of relevant sustainability content. Building on work undertaken in Trinity to date and elsewhere, the objective is to revise and redesign the programme curricula to enable learners develop the ESD competencies (as defined by UNESCO 2017) which include anticipatory, normative, strategic, collaborative and critical thinking competencies, self-awareness, integrated problem solving and systems thinking. It is expected that the results of this project will support other educators and programme leaders across disciplines to consider how they might embed ESD into their curricula.

7

Recommendations

1. Approve the establishment of a Learning Innovation and Research Hub feasibility project.
2. Appoint the Senior Lecturer, Professor Wade, as the senior academic with expertise in pedagogical innovation to provide academic oversight.
3. Establish a Teaching and Learning Advisory Group, chaired by the Senior Lecturer and with student, academic and professional staff representation, to establish the remit, define specific needs, resources, and risks, and to oversee the set-up and operations of the Learning Innovation & Research Hub including the identification of appropriate space and core technologies.
4. Appoint an academic to provide leadership in the coordination of the Hub's remit.
5. Commence discussions on harnessing the expertise of existing teaching and learning services to support the establishment and operations of the Hub and identify capacity and gaps.
6. Assign Trinity Teaching and Learning staff to support the work of the Advisory Group and to project manage the initiative.
7. Assign Strategic Alignment of Teaching and Learning Enhancement (SATLE) funding to seed fund projects and core additional staffing resources in research, pedagogy, and digital expertise.
8. Evaluate the initiative after two years of operations to determine the future direction of a Learning Innovation & Research Hub at Trinity College Dublin.

END