



AMERICAS ASIA PACIFIC EMEA

Appointment of
Chief Officer
Research, Innovation
& Engagement



Ollscoil
Teicneolaíochta
an Atlantaigh

Atlantic
Technological
University



Role Overview

The Chief Officer Research, Innovation & Engagement (R, I & E) is a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT), reporting to the President, with responsibility for the leadership and coordination of research and innovation, enterprise and community engagement and national and international relationships.

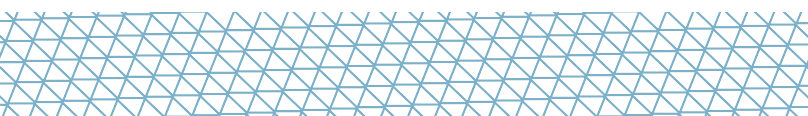
Working directly with the heads of faculties and functions, the successful candidate will play a key role in promoting a strong research and innovation culture across the university, building on to the strengths inherited from each legacy institute. In parallel, enhancing external stakeholder relationships and strengthening ties with funding agencies such as Taighde Éireann (Research Ireland), the HRB, Marine Institute and Enterprise Ireland is vital to the successful growth of the university and the regional ecosystem.

As a member of the SLT, the successful candidate will:

- Make a strong personal contribution to a collaborative and collegial leadership approach
- Contribute to and deliver the strategic plan through collaborative working, across internal and external networks and stakeholders

- Mentor and develop relevant teams, communicate effectively and strive to continuously improve the service provided for students and staff
- Uphold and role-model the values of ATU and work to positively impact the University community.

The transition to a Technological University comes with challenges, including the need for significant growth in research activity and an increase in post graduate capacity and capability. The role holder will lead this growth, maximising the use of all available levers. They should promote an “end to end” view of learning, creating a seamless and visible path from undergraduate study through to post graduate projects. Increasing research capability through post-graduate enrolments, fostering the organic growth of the research population, needs to operate in tandem with the expansion of contract research to deliver the required outcomes.



Role Overview

This role is instrumental in supporting the Northern and Western region to progress from a region “in transition”. The commitment to regional development must be maintained and built upon, with strong relationships with Enterprise Ireland, IDA Ireland, Udarás na Gaeltachta and the regional skills fora. Active support and contribution to regional enterprise plans is also an important part of developing this successful network of relationships.

As a committed member of the North West Tertiary Education Cluster (NWTEC), ATU is also dedicated to building cross border collaboration. This alliance allows for greater coherence of the education and skills provided by the four tertiary education partners, while also developing the research and innovation capacity of the region. The role holder will work closely with industry representatives, responding to skills gaps, boosting the local economy and strengthening the skills base for current and future requirements.



The broad range of activities and functional areas reporting to the Chief Officer Research, Innovation & Engagement include:

- Graduate School – capacity development to support postgraduate and graduate researchers
- Research Systems & Funding – bid and grant management support, guidance on funding routes and opportunities
- Enterprise Development, Commercialisation & Incubation – harnessing four innovation hubs, with over 100 incubation units, to support commercialising content and provide guidance to protect ATU and its partners, knowledge transfer, entrepreneurial community development
- Civic and regional engagement
- Online, Flexible and Professional Development (OFPD) – increasing capability to lead in the provision of excellent accredited, skills-based, flexible and online learning
- Partnerships (National & International) – development of existing and the creation of new external relationships, including cross border engagement
- Alumni & Philanthropy – maximising the ATU network to build relationships and support worthy causes across ATU.

Role Overview

ATU has an ambitious R, I & E growth agenda, successfully obtaining funding through TU RISE to support the creation of the required infrastructure.

The role holder will provide a strategic lead in driving “Engaged Research”, one of the five strategic “Guiding Lights”, with significant input into developing themes, such as:

- Elevating regional impact – being a global model for regional research excellence, addressing local challenges in the Northern and Western region while linking to global solutions
- Leading in Strategic Research Areas – grounding research in regional needs, with an international outlook, enabling ATU to be a recognised leader in targeted research areas and contributing to global sustainable development
- Collaboration and Partnerships – committing to impactful research, building enduring partnerships and an international reputation. Connecting the region with global networks to create a collaborative force for change
- Empowering Faculty and Student Researchers – empowering a global community of researchers from diverse backgrounds, who are dedicated to making a transformative difference, both locally and internationally
- Measurable Impact and Continuous Improvement – committing to excellence and accountability, celebrating research with local and wide-reaching benefits for society, the economy and the environment, while adapting to evolving regional needs and global drivers



This is a unique opportunity to be part of shaping the operational design in ATU, leading the effective transition to an enhanced R, I & E structure, including departmental structure, selection of staff, alignment of faculty relationships and campus presence.



Responsibilities

Leadership

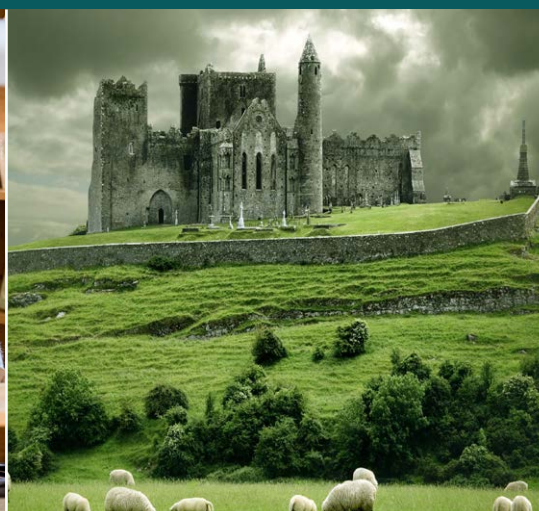
- As a member of ATU's SLT, provide strategic leadership across all campuses, contributing to the development and delivery of the University strategy and vision
- Promote a positive, inclusive and productive research culture supportive of the University's strategic ambitions
- Lead, develop and implement the research strategy for ATU
- Foster a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship by encouraging creativity, supporting interdisciplinary collaboration and effectively facilitating technology transfer and commercialisation
- Develop and embed strategies to ensure the growth of research income
- Engage and contribute to the development of regional enterprise plans
- Play a leading role in the development of the Northern and Western region of Ireland
- Encourage and develop interdisciplinary activities between Faculties and Schools
- Assume the role of lead person on campus, where appropriate and deputise for the President on any/all campuses as required
- Other duties, as may be reasonably required by the President

Operational Management

- Support the development and enhancement of the University Research Office and Graduate School
- Provide oversight and management of budgets and resources to ensure the effective project management of research activity
- Promote the provision of ATU's Online, Flexible and Professional Development accredited courses, supporting lifelong learning, skills development and career advancement, regardless of location
- Stay updated on relevant trends, best practices and policies across higher education and promote continuous learning and development within the teams
- Produce a detailed annual report for the function, which will also feed into the University Annual Report

Research, Innovation & Engagement

- Ensure that the University fully exploits the regional and national infrastructure and systems, connecting the region with international research infrastructure and expanding capacity to enable targeted research
- Play a leading role in the communication, dissemination and exploitation of research activity and results
- Provide direction and support for faculties and researchers in securing funding, conducting impactful research and contributing to the National Open Research Forum (NORF)
- Lead out on the reviews for grant applications of major strategic and financial importance to ATU, advising on improvements to increase success rates
- Support the development and evaluations of post-graduate research and enterprise training programmes with leading research funders to ensure added value
- Ensure compliance on R, I & E relevant legal and governance issues, including intellectual property rights, export controls, state aid funding rules, tendering requirements, research ethics and risk assessments
- To encourage and reward research, academic excellence and collegial participation throughout the University
- Build on external networks and alliances, cultivating mutually beneficial partnerships. These will include bodies such as Enterprise Ireland, IDA Ireland, Research Ireland, Udarás na Gaeltachta, government agencies, regional skills for and non-profits
- Build and develop contacts within national and international academic communities to build relationships and increase research collaborative working
- Strengthen and grow relationships with alumni, donors and supporters to support ATU's research strategy and foster a culture of philanthropy and social impact
- Actively support university-wide research collaborations, as well as collaboration with universities internationally through networks and alliances such as EU GREEN
- Promote leadership, mentorship and professional development opportunities for R, I & E staff to maximise their potential and impact
- Encourage staff development to meet the overall needs of the University in the context of its research development.
- Promote diversity, equity, and inclusion within the research ecosystem, fostering a welcoming and inclusive environment for all stakeholders



Person Specification

This role provides a unique opportunity for an individual to make a major impact on both research and economic activity within the region. The successful candidate should possess vision and passion and be self-motivated to drive research, innovation and engagement best practice.

They should be a strategic thinker with strong leadership skills and be aligned with ATU's mission and values. It is also important to be focussed on delivering a positive social impact and improve the experience of both students and staff.

Essential Skills and Experience

Qualifications

- A doctoral qualification or equivalent

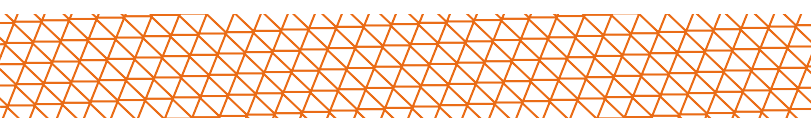
Leadership

- Demonstrable research profile and reputation.
- Experience of developing and implementing strategy in a large and complex organisation
- A background in research and innovation or external engagement, facilitating the development and execution of innovative research initiatives and academic collaborations in a multi-disciplinary environment
- Extensive experience in research management, innovation, or related roles within higher education, public, private, or non-profit sectors

- Experience in setting policy or contributing to its creation, implementation and evaluation in an academic setting, or knowledge intensive organisation
- Demonstrable experience in building, creating and leading a research culture in a large and complex organisation
- Demonstrable experience in actively promoting equality, diversity and inclusion

Operational Management

- Proven experience of managing financial and physical resources including resource utilisation and forecasting
- Ability to lead, motivate and persuade others, both academic and professional services staff, including those over whom the role does not have line management responsibility
- Demonstrable experience managing or contributing to change in a complex operating environment
- Experience driving continuous improvement initiatives
- Proven project management and problem-solving abilities
- Outstanding communication skills with the ability to develop and deliver effective communications including the analysis and presentation of complex data





Person Specification

Research, Innovation & Engagement

- Experience of building and maintaining partnerships with external stakeholders, regionally, nationally and globally
- Excellent understanding of the national and international higher education context and trends within the sector, particularly related to research and innovation
- Experience of delivering growth and developing capability and capacity in research, innovation and engagement areas
- A proven record of leading and working with others to help build their research skill and knowledge, and to support and guide their professional development
- Demonstrable knowledge of research compliance, technology transfer, intellectual property and regulatory requirements
- Experience of working in, or with, commercial companies, including in the SME sector and representative industry bodies
- An ability to motivate, influence and lead diverse stakeholders

Personal Attributes

- Ability to handle demanding and competing workloads
- Ability to face challenging situations and consensus build during times of change
- Strong judgement and decision-making skills both independently and within a collaborative setting
- Commitment to ATU Values

Desired Skills & Experience

- Membership of appropriate representative and/or professional bodies
- Experience working across a multi-campus environment
- Experience driving continuous improvement initiatives within the context of a Graduate School and/or Research Office
- Demonstrable experience and awareness of sustainability principles and building these into decision making
- Strong knowledge of the full student lifecycle, from recruitment to graduation and into post grad
- Significant leadership experience in research and grant administration and experience of managing significant financial resources
- Experience engaging with unions
- Understanding of the role of a regional institution and experience engaging and collaborating with diverse regional stakeholders
- Experience engaging with EU University Alliances or similar international university networks

Salary Scale

€166,473

Hours of Work

35 hours per week.

Annual Leave

The annual leave entitlement for this post is 30 days per annum.

Pension Entitlements

The successful candidate will be admitted to the appropriate public sector pension scheme.

Nature & Duration of Contract

The appointment will be offered on a fixed term wholetime basis for a period of five years. This contract may be renewed for one further period of up to five years.

Location

Multi-campus coverage, with base location to be agreed.

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

ATU is committed to being a fully inclusive University which actively recruits, supports and retains staff from all sectors of society. We value diversity as well as celebrate, support and thrive on the contributions of all our employees and the community they represent.

We are proud to be an equal opportunities employer and encourage applications from everybody, regardless of race, sex, ethnicity, religion, nationality, sexual orientation, age, disability, gender identity, marital status/civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, as well as being open to flexible working practices.

Sustainability

Through its Sustainability for the Future - Vision 2040, ATU is committed to constantly improving sustainability on campus and throughout the University. It is crucial we embed sustainability in all our disciplines, operations and engagements, to achieve a sustainable and healthy planet, both for people and for the natural systems we share our planet with and rely upon.

The successful candidate will be expected to embed sustainability principles throughout their decision making.

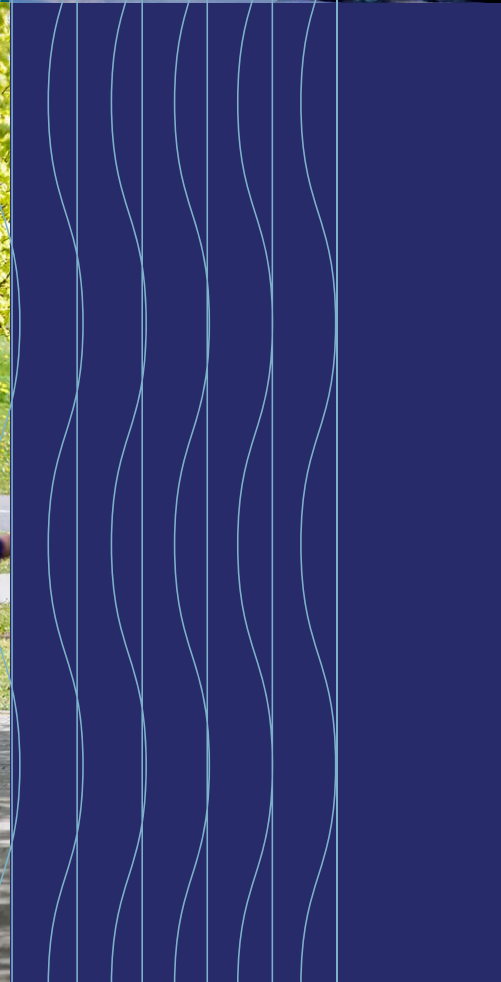
As a member of the senior leadership team, this role is fundamental in driving "Sustainability for the Future", one of ATU's five strategic "Guiding Lights." Our Sustainability for the Future, 2024-2028 strategic objectives are in Governance and Accountability, Climate and Environment Action, Education and Research, and Community and Social Responsibility. This role will have significant input into developing these themes and collaborating across the University community to ensure ATU is recognised as a leader in sustainability and our graduates positively contribute to a more equitable, inclusive future firmly rooted in the respect and protection of our natural world.





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Perrett
Laver

AMERICAS ASIA PACIFIC EMEA

Suite 101

Grafter House

10 Ely Place

Dublin 2

D02 HR98

+352 (0) 1 905 3537

