



**Consultation Paper**  
**Department of Education and Skills**  
**Statement of Strategy 2016-2018**

**Please complete this consultation paper in respect of your area of interest and/or expertise:**

**Name:** Cecil Keaveney

**Organisation:** Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies(DIAS)

**Email:**cecil@admin.dias.ie

- |  |
|--|
| <b>1. How well does the Education Service meet the needs of children and students? What improvements can be made for</b><br>a. <b>within existing resources</b><br>or<br>b. <b>through new provision</b> |
|--|

DIAS does not have a direct role in the education of children. Students based in DIAS are registered with Universities in Ireland and abroad and generally are completing their Ph.D studies with us. Joint supervision is provided by DIAS and the University.

Improvements are possible by way of provision of specialist courses provided in niche subject areas. These courses would be available to students registered in Irish Universities and run at the different locations so that students can access the courses locally. An example of such a program would be the Griffith Awards that funded the IGGP Courses.

A further improvement would be the concentration of effort in encouraging students to consider continuing to study science as a career. Within this program would be the recognition of the gender problems that exist.

An additional improvement would be the provision of some teaching opportunities for Ph.D students.

Finally it is clear that a problem exists in regard to course selection by those moving to Third Level. The provision of a program that would lead to a reduction in the numbers changing courses would be of significant benefit

- |  |
|--|
| <b>2. Comment on work currently being undertaken by the Department in your area of interest and/or expertise. (What are we doing well, what could we do better)?</b> |
|--|

The area of interest for DIAS is at Third/Fourth Level. Of significant concern is lack of resources available to those engaged in basic research. The fact that the major funder of research is outside the Dept. is a concern as this inevitably leads to a bias towards a funding model for progressing applied as opposed to basic research.

The reduction in the overall funding and the impact of the ECF within the "Third" Level is a major concern. The projected increase in those looking to continue in education past second level will lead to a major inability to deliver the necessary courses at the required level. The consequential inability to deliver students with the competencies to drive the economy forward will reduce our ability to attract FDI.

The introduction of Compact agreements for the “Third” Level can lead to better use of resources. However the basis agreed for measuring success in these models needs constant review.

**3. Are there opportunities (e.g. new areas of work) which the Department should consider when developing the 2016 - 2018 strategy which would advance the achievement of our mission, vision and objectives across the continuum of education and skills?**

Reference has already been made to the opportunities that exist for the improvement in attracting more students to science whilst taking initiatives to address the gender problems that prevail.

It would appear that following the Brexit vote there are opportunities to enhance our research base. This could see teaching academics and scholars coming to Ireland who would previously have looked to the UK as a possible location to pursue their career. Opportunities would also appear to exist in extending research collaboration amongst fellow Europeans.

**4. How should success on achieving our strategies be measured.**

Success in the area of basic research can be measured in a number of ways including the level of external funding that institutions succeed in attracting by way of competitive applications. Further indicators can be found by way of publication and citations.

Success in improving our research capability will also be evident from the numbers of researchers returning to this country to pursue their career. This would be a reversal of the anecdotal evidence that many left when the funding for research was restructured during the downturn in our economy.

**5. Comment on any issues relating to the continuum of education and skills, in addition to your particular area of interest and/or expertise**

**6. Any other observations that you would suggest the Department should consider in the formulation of our strategy for education and skills 2016 - 2018**

The extent to which the new strategy can be implemented will have a dependency on the level of funding available to the Dept. The current funding problem in the Third Level is recognised by the Dept. if you review the number of exercises that have been carried out in an effort to put in place a funding model that will work. There is little disagreement that a decision needs to be made on a solution to the current underfunding. If it is underfunding continues it negates any progress made in improving the Primary and Second Level. It will inevitably lead to a collapse in the ability of the Third Level to deliver the number and quality students needed to sustain our progress.

<b>1. Prioritising Early Years</b>
<i>(a) Comment on the approach contained in the Programme for a Partnership Government (are we capturing the essential issues, are there additional matters we should take into account).</i>
<i>(b) How should progress on Prioritising Early Years be measured?</i>
<i>(c) What would you consider to be the priority actions and outcomes in this area?</i>

<b>2. Tackling Disadvantage</b>
<i>(a) Comment on the approach contained in the Programme for a Partnership Government (are we capturing the essential issues, are there additional matters we should take into account).</i>
<i>(b) How should progress on Tackling Disadvantage be measured?</i>
<i>(c) What would you consider to be the priority actions and outcomes in this area?</i>

<b>3. Diversity and Choice for Parents</b>
<i>(a) Comment on the approach contained in the Programme for a Partnership Government (are we capturing the essential issues, are there additional matters we should take into account).</i>
<i>(b) How should progress on Diversity and Choice for Parents be measured?</i>
<i>(c) What would you consider to be the priority actions and outcomes in this area?</i>

<b>4. Promoting Excellence and Innovation in Schools</b>
<i>(a) Comment on the approach contained in the Programme for a Partnership Government (are we capturing the essential issues, are there additional matters we should take into account).</i>
<i>(b) How should progress on Promoting Excellence and Innovation in Schools be measured?</i>
<i>(c) What would you consider to be the priority actions and outcomes in this area?</i>

<b>5. Promoting Creativity and Entrepreneurial Capacity in Students</b>
<i>(a) Comment on the approach contained in the Programme for a Partnership Government (are we capturing the essential issues, are there additional matters we should take into account).</i>
<i>(b) How should progress on Promoting Creativity and Entrepreneurial Capacity in Students be measured?</i>
<i>(c) What would you consider to be the priority actions and outcomes in this area?</i>

<b>6. Making Better use of Educational Assets within Communities</b>
<i>(a) Comment on the approach contained in the Programme for a Partnership Government (are we capturing the essential issues, are there additional matters we should take into account).</i>
<i>(b) How should progress on Making Better use of Educational Assets within Communities be measured?</i>
<i>(c) What would you consider to be the priority actions and outcomes in this area?</i>

<b>7. Special Needs Education</b>
<i>(a) Comment on the approach contained in the Programme for a Partnership Government (are we capturing the essential issues, are there additional matters we should take into account).</i>
<i>(b) How should progress on Special Needs Education be measured?</i>
<i>(c) What would you consider to be the priority actions and outcomes in this area?</i>



<b>8. Meeting the Skills Needs of the Future</b>
<b><i>(a) Comment on the approach contained in the Programme for a Partnership Government (are we capturing the essential issues, are there additional matters we should take into account).</i></b>
<b><i>(b) How should progress on Meeting the Skills Needs of the Future be measured?</i></b>
<b><i>(c) What would you consider to be the priority actions and outcomes in this area?</i></b>

Submissions will be subject to the Freedom of Information Acts (details available at <http://www.education.ie/en/The-Department/FOI/>). Submissions may be published online, in which case particular information exempt under the Freedom of Information Acts, such as personal contact details and commercially-sensitive information, will be omitted. *By completing this consultation and submitting the information, you are indicating your consent to this approach.*