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SLIGO COUNTY COUNCIL

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## **Sligo County Council declare support for Connacht-Ulster Alliance**

*Council support ambitions for Technological University for the Connacht-Ulster region*

A motion supporting the establishment of an alliance by IT Sligo, GMIT and LYIT with a view to achieving Technological University Status was supported at the July meeting of Sligo County Council.

President of IT Sligo, Professor Terri Scott, attended the meeting to brief council members and officials about the launch of the 'Connacht-Ulster Alliance' and the importance of achieving Technological University status for Sligo and the wider region.

The official launch of the 'Connacht-Ulster Alliance' will take place on July 9<sup>th</sup> in the GMIT Castlebar Campus, at an event to be attended by the Taoiseach, Enda Kenny TD.

Cathaoirleach of the Council Councillor Veronica Cawley stated that all the members were aware of the significant impact IT Sligo has on the region. Indeed many of the members are former students of the IT and have children who have been and currently are enrolled in courses there. The members are fully supportive of this Connacht-Ulster alliance and also agreed to lobby all Oireachtas members in the region for the support in this initiative.

County Manager Hubert Kearns also stressed the importance of IT Sligo to the region agreeing with the sentiments expressed by the members. He added that the establishment of a Technological University in the region would be vital in attracting investment to the area and in providing a financial boost to the west and north west.

Professor Terri Scott said that the priority for IT Sligo and its alliance partners GMIT and LYIT is "to continue to provide access to higher education from Higher Certificate right up to PhD level, and to ensure the quality and quantum of higher education provision and applied research in our region is maintained and enhanced."

Re-designation with Technological University status will only be facilitated if higher education institutions meet rigorous criteria laid out by Government, explained Professor Scott, but the ambition of the Connacht-Ulster Alliance is to meet that criterion and to maintain an equality of access to higher education in the Connacht-Ulster region. The anticipated timeframe for the process as set out by Government in the National Strategy for Higher Education is up to five years.

**Communications Office**  
**Sligo County Council**  
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