

TITLE: **Programme Coordinator (Access & Transition to Higher Education)
(2 Year Fixed Term)**

LOCATION: **Dublin Road Campus, Galway**

REPORTING TO: **Access & Disability Officer**

DURATION: ***2 Year Fixed Term with the possibility of renewal for a further year***

The National Plan for Equity of Access to Higher Education 2015-2019 seeks to address the underrepresentation of particular groups in Irish higher education. Priority goal five challenges regional higher education clusters with the development of “regional and community partnership strategies for increasing access to higher education with a particular focus on mentoring” (HEA, 2015)

GMIT, along with cluster partners NUI Galway, Sligo Institute of Technology and Letterkenny Institute of Technology were successful in securing funding from the Programme for Access to Higher Education (PATH) Strand 2 & 3 competitive fund.

The Cluster’s proposal, The Attract- Transition- Succeed (ATS) project addresses priority goal five with the development of an innovative, inclusive and sustainable model of regional access in order to increase the diversity and social mix of the student population within the higher education institutions (HEIs) in the West and North-West of Ireland. The ATS methodology addresses the full lifecycle of access targeting the pre-entry, transition and success (including retention) phases of higher education by working in partnership with communities. ATS recognises the complexity of access to higher education and the challenges of improving progression and retention rates for students from under-represented socio-economic groups across our region. Our proposed approach also recognises the diversity of under-represented groups in Irish Higher Education and proposes a range of initiatives to widen successful participation.

The Access, Transfer & Success initiative in GMIT has two main elements;

- 1) **Pathway to College** - a school based pre-entry access programme designed to inspire, support and create alternative pathways to third level education. GMIT will work with students studying leaving certificate applied, Maths Foundation Studies and English Foundation Studies with the aim of encouraging participants to engage in further study.
- 2) **Mentoring for Transition and Success** - A formal mentoring programme designed to support the transition into higher education for non-traditional entry route students from socio economic groups that have low participation in education.

Essential criteria for selection/shortlist purposes:

- An undergraduate level 8 degree. A postgraduate qualification in education, community development or a related area would be an advantage.
- A deep understanding of educational disadvantage and widening participation in higher education and a demonstrated commitment to diversity, inclusion and social justice.
- A minimum of three years’ experience of working in second/third level education sectors or in community based projects, including experience of outreach activities targeted at widening participation or enhancing student success in the second level education sector and/or working with mature student and non- traditional student demographics.
- Ability to work in a team-based environment developing and delivering solutions on time and to specification.

- Motivated and proactive attitude, willing to take ownership and initiative in all work assignments.
- Excellent analysis and problem-solving skills.
- Excellent verbal and written communication skills.

Desirable criteria for selection/shortlist purposes:

- Experience of developing and managing a mentoring or volunteer programme.
- Experience of working in large funded projects and budgetary management experience with high-level communication, writing, financial, administrative and IT skills.
- Project management/coordination experience.
- Experience of website maintenance, newsletters and social media dissemination techniques.
- Experience of engagement with international partners and/or networks.
- Full clean driver's license and access to a car.

Job Description

The person appointed will:

- Build sustainable collaborative relationships with communities, representative organisations and individuals experiencing deep disadvantage, to support access, transition and success in higher education.
- Design and deliver a secondary school based pre-entry access programme aimed at students studying leaving certificate applied, Maths Foundation Studies and English Foundation Studies, designed to inspire, support and create alternative pathways to third level education.
- Develop a formal mentorship programme to support the transition into higher education for nontraditional entry route students from socio economic groups that have low participation in education.
- Coordinate both the pre-entry access and the mentoring programmes to include the development of materials, administrative, marketing and promotional activities and liaison with stakeholders.
- Recruit, train and manage volunteers from the GMIT community to become mentors to students registered on the mentoring programme.
- Organise a certificate of participation and an award ceremony for participants on both programmes.
- Participate in relevant committees associated with the GMIT PATH programmes and the wider cluster as required.
- In collaboration with GMIT's cluster partners undertake research on both programmes.
- Periodically, provide reports to the HEA and the steering committee on the progress and the outcomes of both programmes with a view to continuous improvement.

HOURS OF WORK: 37 hours per week.

ANNUAL LEAVE: 27 days annual leave per annum (New Entrant) as per Circular 0009/2014.

For existing staff who have their leave entitlements set in accordance with Circular 0009/2014, these staff will, upon promotion:

- Maintain their current leave entitlement, if the leave entitlement for the grade to which they are promoted is lesser than their current entitlement, subject to a maximum entitlement of 30 days annual leave.

The successful candidate will be appointed to point 1 of the scale with annual increments.

Salary Scale: €46,771.00 (Point 1) (*Analogous to Grade VI salary scale for salary purposes only*)