



An Roinn Breisoideachais agus Ardoideachais,
Taighde, Nuálaíochta agus Eolaíochta
Department of Further and Higher Education,
Research, Innovation and Science

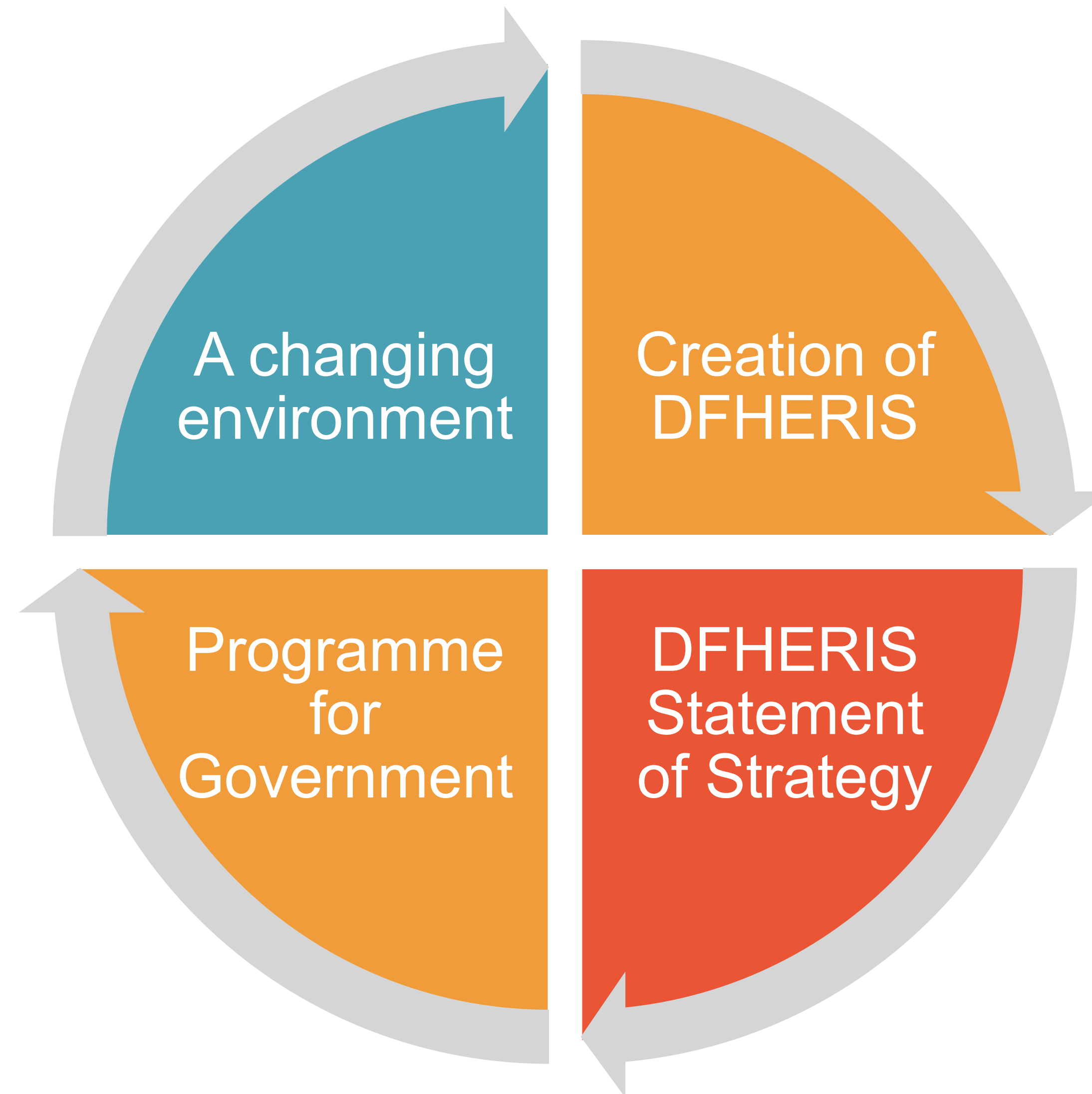
Progressing a Unified Tertiary Education System

Stephanie Thompson,
Assistant Principal Officer, DFHERIS

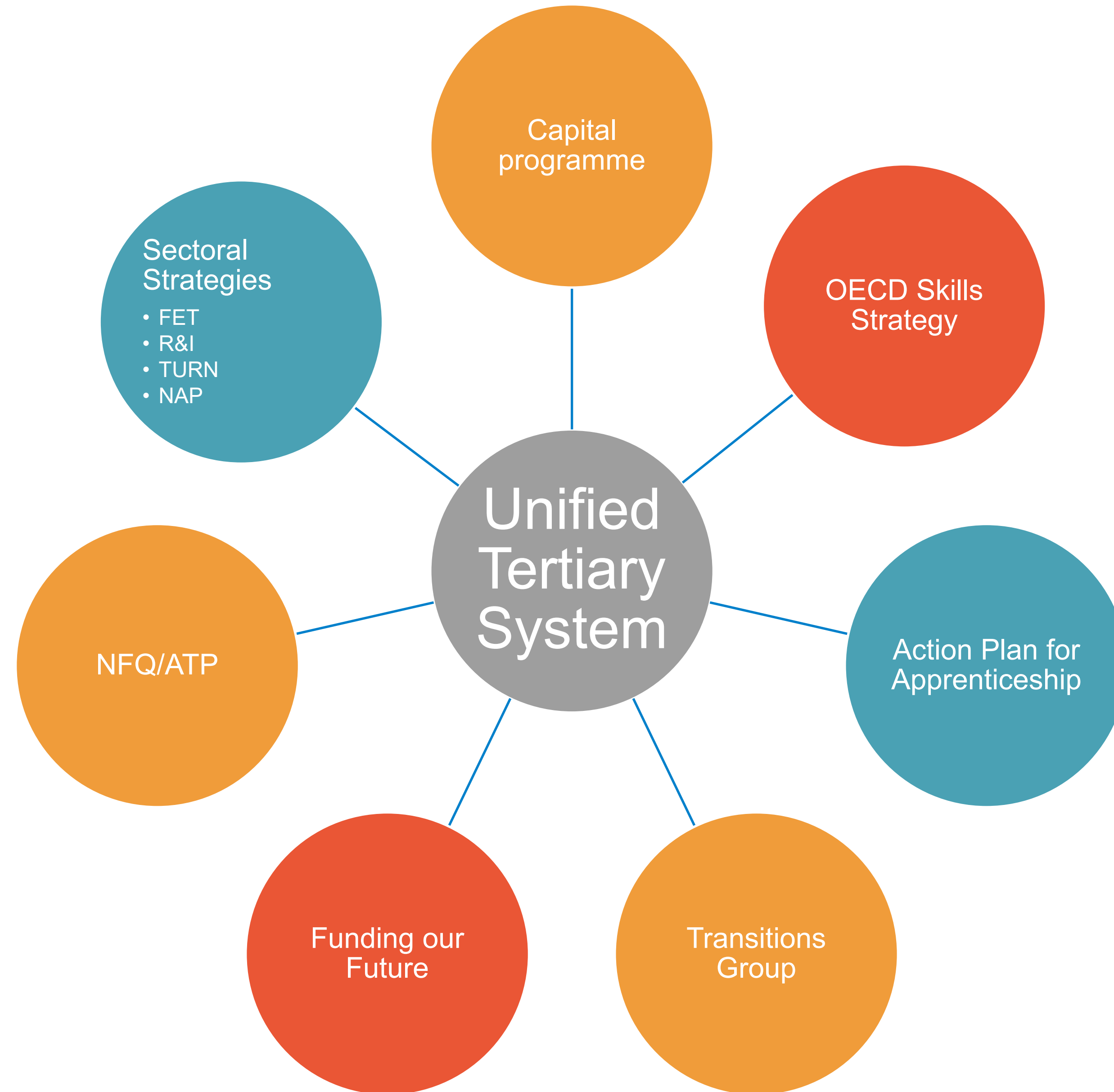
19th October, 2022

QQI 10th Anniversary Conference

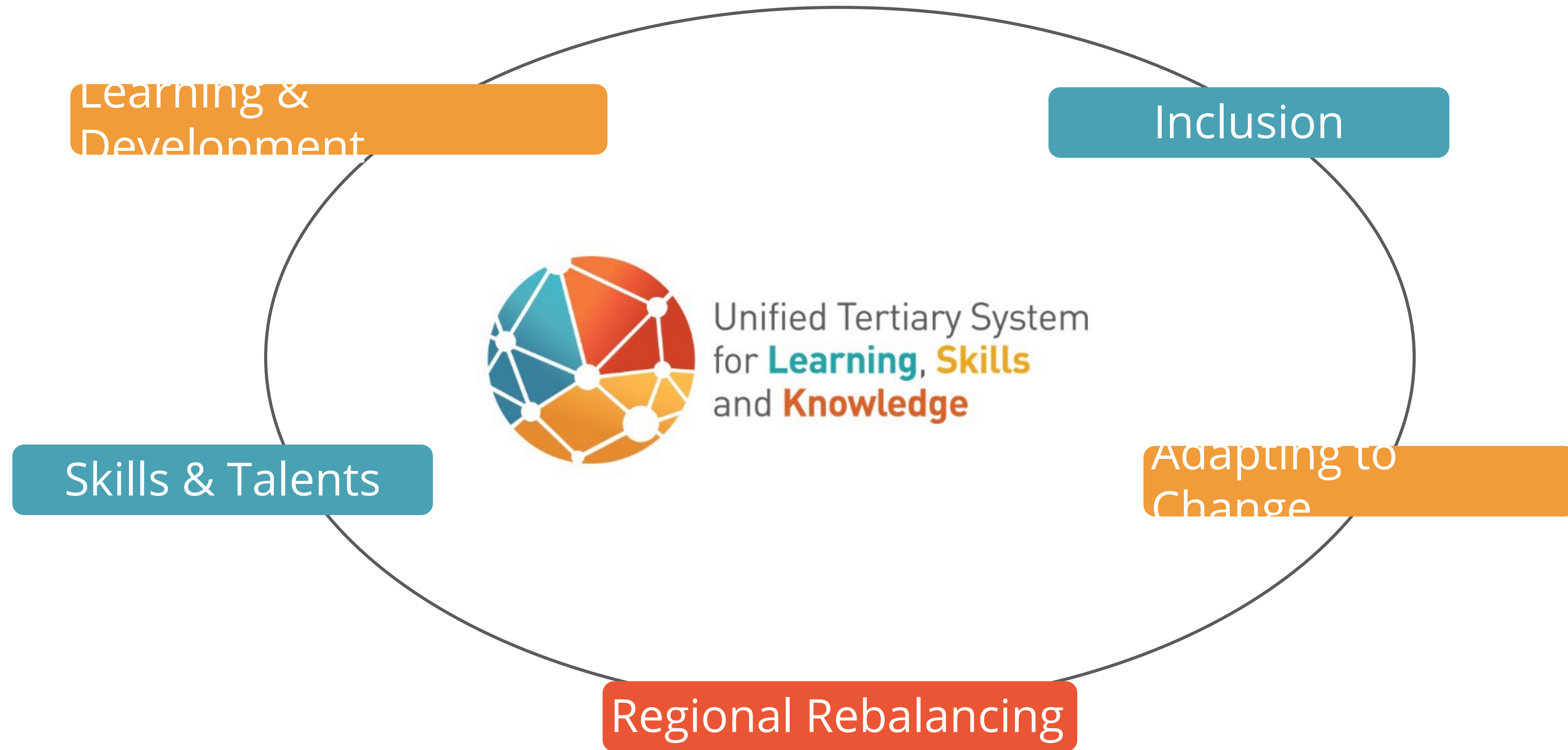
Scope for Change



Policy Context



Objectives of a more unified system



Approach to Policy Development



Initiating the Conversation

- Providing and documenting a unified system lens
- Open Dialogue with Units and Agencies

Building the Vision

- Outcomes and actions collated
- Policy Platform paper
- Spotlight Actions
- Memo for Government

Public Consultation

- Online Consultation
- Stakeholder Briefing
- Ongoing Engagement



Approach to Policy Development

Ongoing Engagement

- Continued Engagement with DFHERIS colleagues, Agencies and Stakeholders
- Annual Spotlight Action Event

Building an Evidence Base

- DFHERIS Evidence for Policy Unit
- Future Funding working group

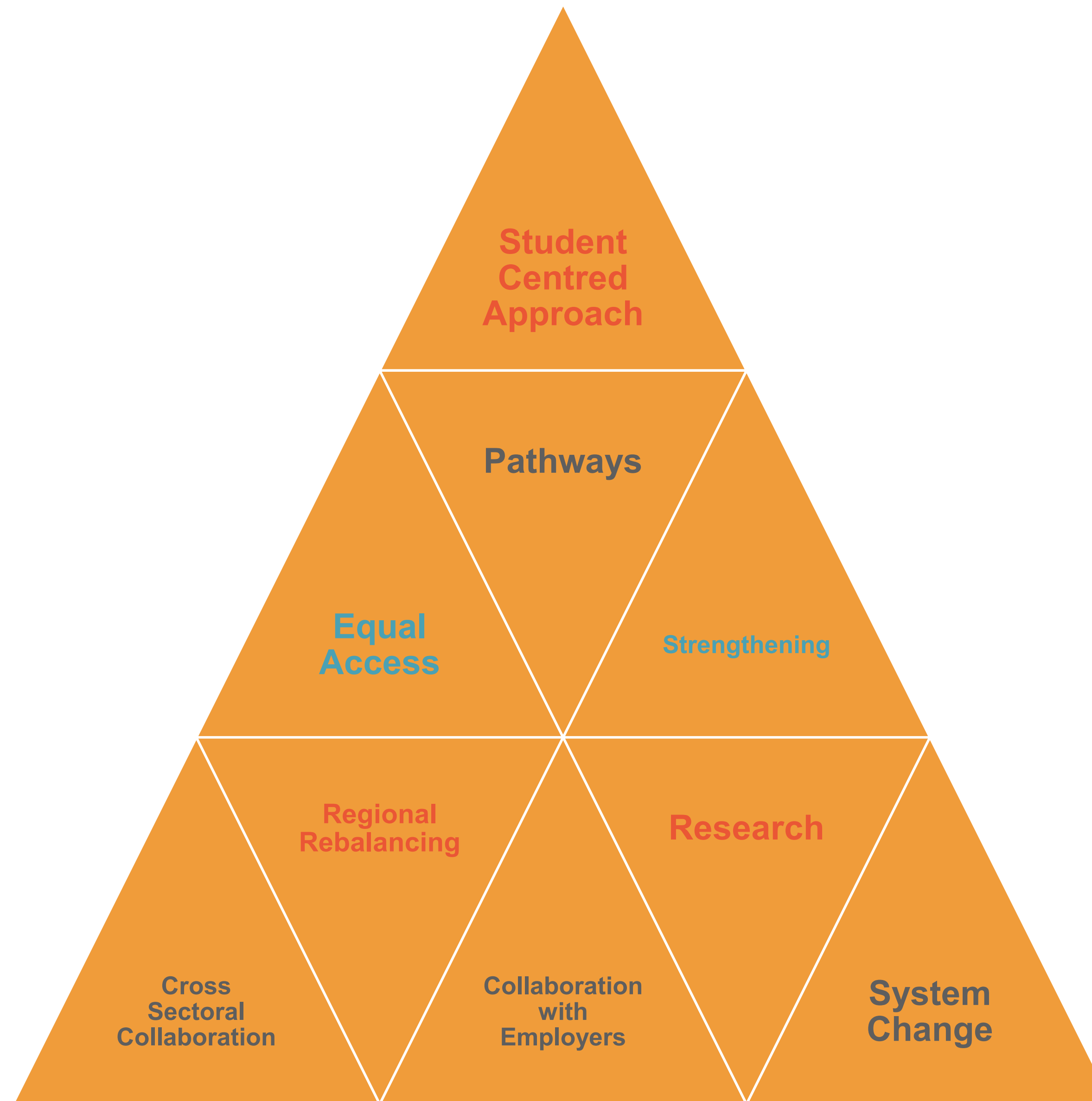
Development of Strategy

Phase 1 - Online Consultation





Some emerging themes...



Spotlight 2022 – Areas of Action



Some notable progress



National Access Plan 2022 - 2028

- Includes action to build on and improve partnerships and collaborative pathways between the FET and HE sectors, community partners and employers
- Appointment of a PATH co-ordinator in the FET sector to support further education to higher education transitions for priority groups

HE & FET Capital Call

- Evaluation criteria to ensure more unified approaches to the use of space and wider campus development

Sectoral Research & Evaluation Group

- Brings together relevant research and evaluation activity conducted by DFHERIS, HEA, SOLAS, QQI, IRC, SFI and Skillnet Ireland.

Collaborative Programme Design

- SOLAS and HEA looking to develop a model for collaborative programme design, development and delivery
- Funding has been created to support this objective



TU Contracts

- Inclusion of deliverables which support a unified tertiary education approach in the revised academic contracts for Technological University staff

QQI Level 6 Report

- QQI Report: Comparability of Level 6 Awards on the National Framework of Qualification has been completed. QQI commencing Phase 2 explorations of Level 6 awards in consultation with the DFHERIS, the HEA and SOLAS

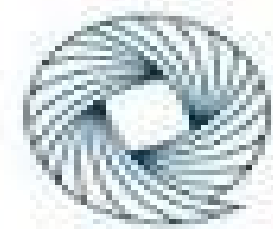
Impact 2030

- SFI and IRC collaborating to develop multi-disciplinary mission oriented research and innovation programmes in 2022 and 2023
- Planning commencing for a landmark research bill to create a new competitive funding agency bringing together the functions and activities of the IRC and SFI

Career guidance and information

- DFHERIS has established a working group consisting of Departmental and CAO representatives aimed at the development of a single portal on career information and study options for students.

Quality and Qualifications Ireland



QQI

Quality and Qualifications Ireland
Dearbhú Cáilíochta agus Cáilíochtaí Éireann

- Already a unified agency, branching across FET and HE
- Therefore, a key agency in progressing the unified tertiary system vision

Policy Outcomes linked with QQI



ATP Policy

RPL and
Micro-
credentials

Level 6
Awards

Pathways

Shared QA
review
process

Guidelines

Collaborative
programmes

CAO
enhancement

Career
guidance and
information

Workforce
Planning

Spotlight actions 2022 linked with QQI



Support mainstreaming of good practice

Develop and publish unified further education and training and higher education QQI Guidelines for: blended and online learning; assessment practice; academic integrity

Enhancing the reputation of qualifications under the NFQ

Develop workforce planning in priority areas

Expand the development of sectoral qualifications frameworks by QQI across further education and training and higher education

Improve transitions/pathways opportunities

Establish a QQI Forum and conference to develop the NFQ and ATP [access, transfer and progression] policy to progress a more unified tertiary system

What will success ultimately look like?



Strategy for Tertiary Education

Creating...

lifelong and
lifewide learning
and research
systems for a
more diverse
range of learners
and researchers

Delivering...

a system of
coherent and
complementary
learning and
research
programmes for
knowledge and
skills needs

Building...

a comprehensive
network of links
and pathways

Our Ask...



- To **lead and join** in this vision of a more unified system
- To **contribute to** stakeholder engagements
- To **identify** additional actions that can assist in progressing the vision



Unified Tertiary System
for **Learning**, **Skills**
and **Knowledge**

Our Ask...



- **Adopt** a unified tertiary system lens to your work to influence change
- ☐ What are we doing that would work well in an unified system of further and higher education and research?
- ☐ What are we doing that will not work well?
- ☐ Can we broaden the scope of reference for our work?
- ☐ How can we ensure that we work with a wider range of stakeholders?



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Thank you

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