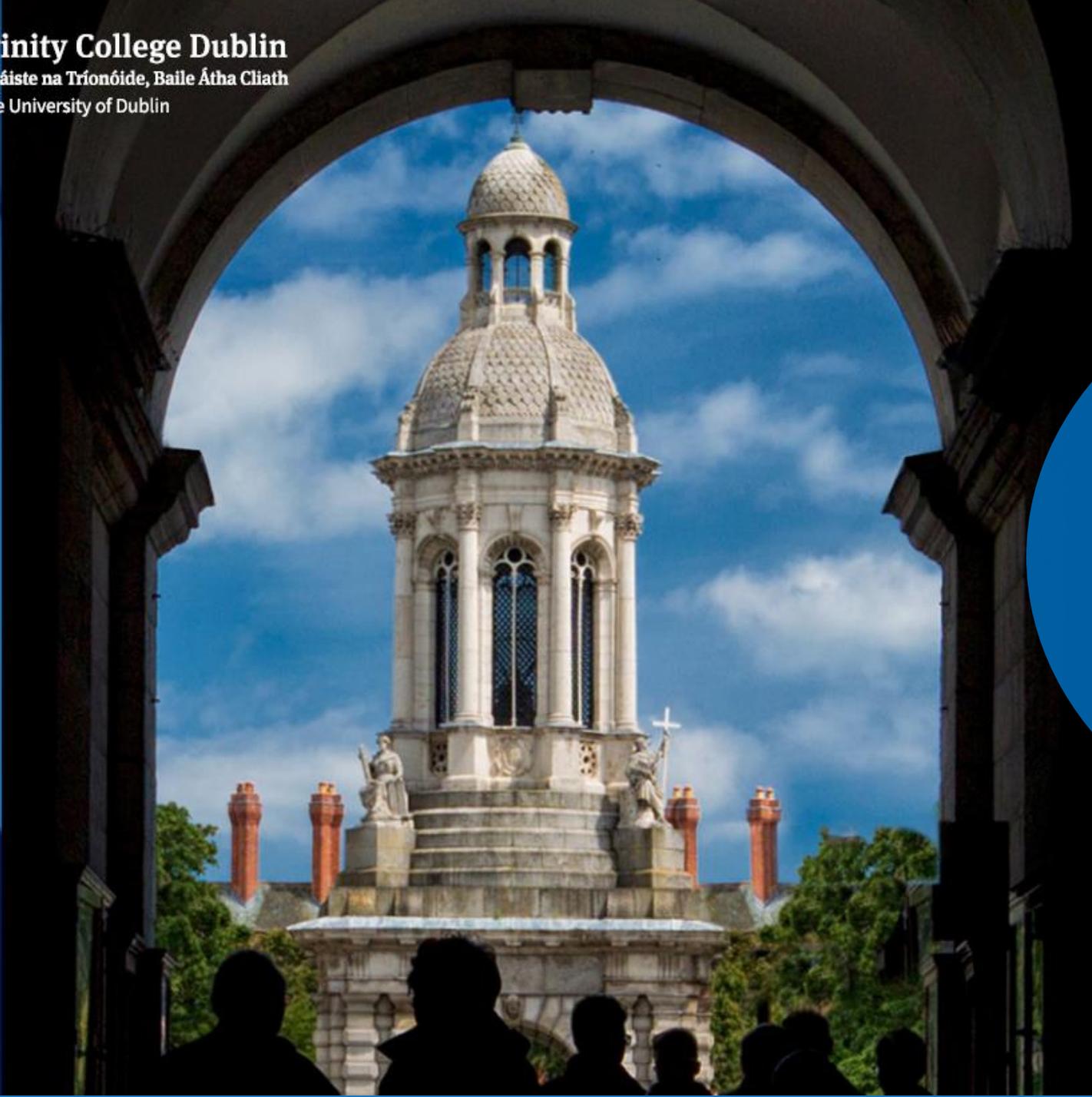




Trinity College Dublin
Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath
The University of Dublin



Postgraduate Renewal Programme's Accomplishment Report

February 2026



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Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath
The University of Dublin

The Vision for Postgraduate Education at Trinity

"A stimulating, inclusive, and sustainable research and learning environment, where curious minds and creative thinkers thrive."

Key Drivers of Success



Leadership

LEADERSHIP

Strong backing from Provost, VPCAO, Faculty Deans, Chief Officers, Directors, and School leaders drove success.

IN-HOUSE EXPERTISE

Long-term investing in and leveraging built capacity and loyalty.

PHASED HORIZONS

Built motivation, and quick wins sustained momentum for longer-term change.



Way of Working

WAY OF WORKING

Finding the right 'Way of Working' was transformative – process matters!



Collaboration

COLLABORATION

Broad and deep collaboration brought the right expertise to every issue



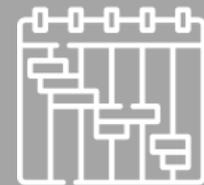
In-house Expertise

PROJECT MGMT

Structure and discipline underpinned success.



Phased Horizons

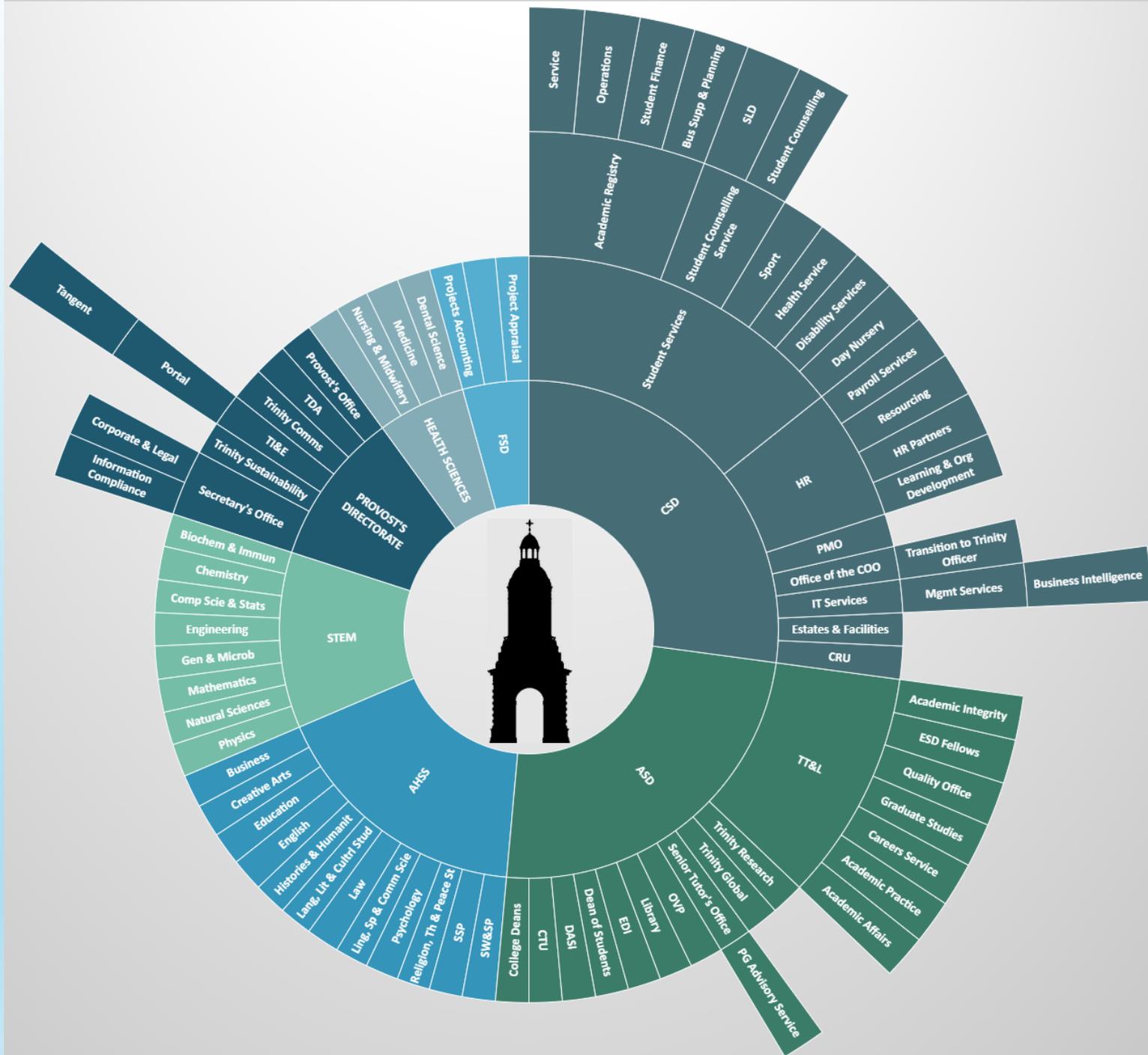


Project Mgmt

Collaboration that Transforms

Collaboration with the postgraduate community was the cornerstone of the Postgraduate Renewal Programme's success, shaping every stage of the Programme.

This ensured that its design, priorities, and outcomes truly reflected the needs and aspirations of our students and staff.

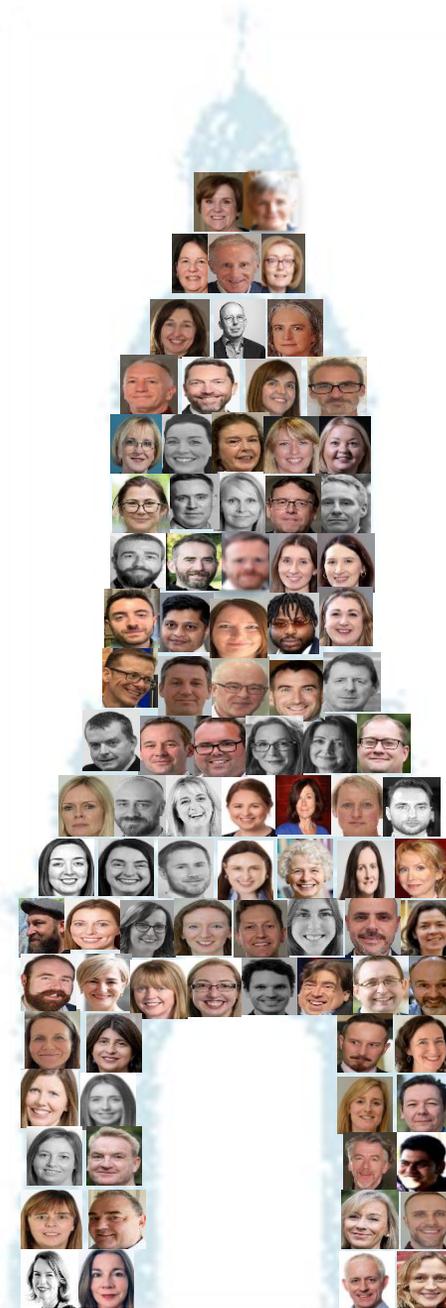


Celebrating Colleagues at the Heart of Renewal

At the heart of the Renewal Programme are the colleagues whose vision, expertise, and unwavering commitment made transformation possible.

Driven by vision, their collaborative spirit and innovative thinking shaped a future-focused postgraduate experience that reflects excellence and inclusivity.

111 colleagues were at the heart of the Postgraduate Renewal Programme, participating across its Steering Committee and six work packages. Over the lifetime of the Programme, this included 12 Chairs, 10 Work Package Leads, and 89 representatives/members, supported by a Programme Management Team that ranged from 8 to 11 staff.



Goals & Outcomes

Initial Goal

Actual Outcome



Driving Excellence in Graduate Education in Trinity

- ✓ Blueprint for **Trinity Triple I** (interdisciplinary, international, intersectoral) framework for PGT and PGR multi-dimensional skills development
- ✓ **English language requirements framework**
- ✓ **PGT Cyclical Review framework**
- ✓ PGT programme proposal development & approval process review



Enhancing Doctoral Education

- ✓ **Trinity Research Doctorate Awards**
- ✓ Research student **supervision agreement**
- ✓ **Multidimensional Skillset** for PGR students embedded in PDP
- ✓ **Code of Conduct** and **Conflict Management** Framework
- ✓ **Quality assurance**: Annual review, Confirmation processes



Supporting Research

- ✓ **Fee differential** write down
- ✓ **Take back time**: **digital transformation of PGR progression**
- ✓ **Who does what**: defined roles and responsibilities for **PGT supervision**, **PGR supervision** and **Thesis Committees**
- ✓ Flexible **PGT research dissertation model** framework



Data-driven decision-making

- ✓ **Way of Working**
- ✓ **Power BI report** functionality
- ✓ **OLAF** re-design

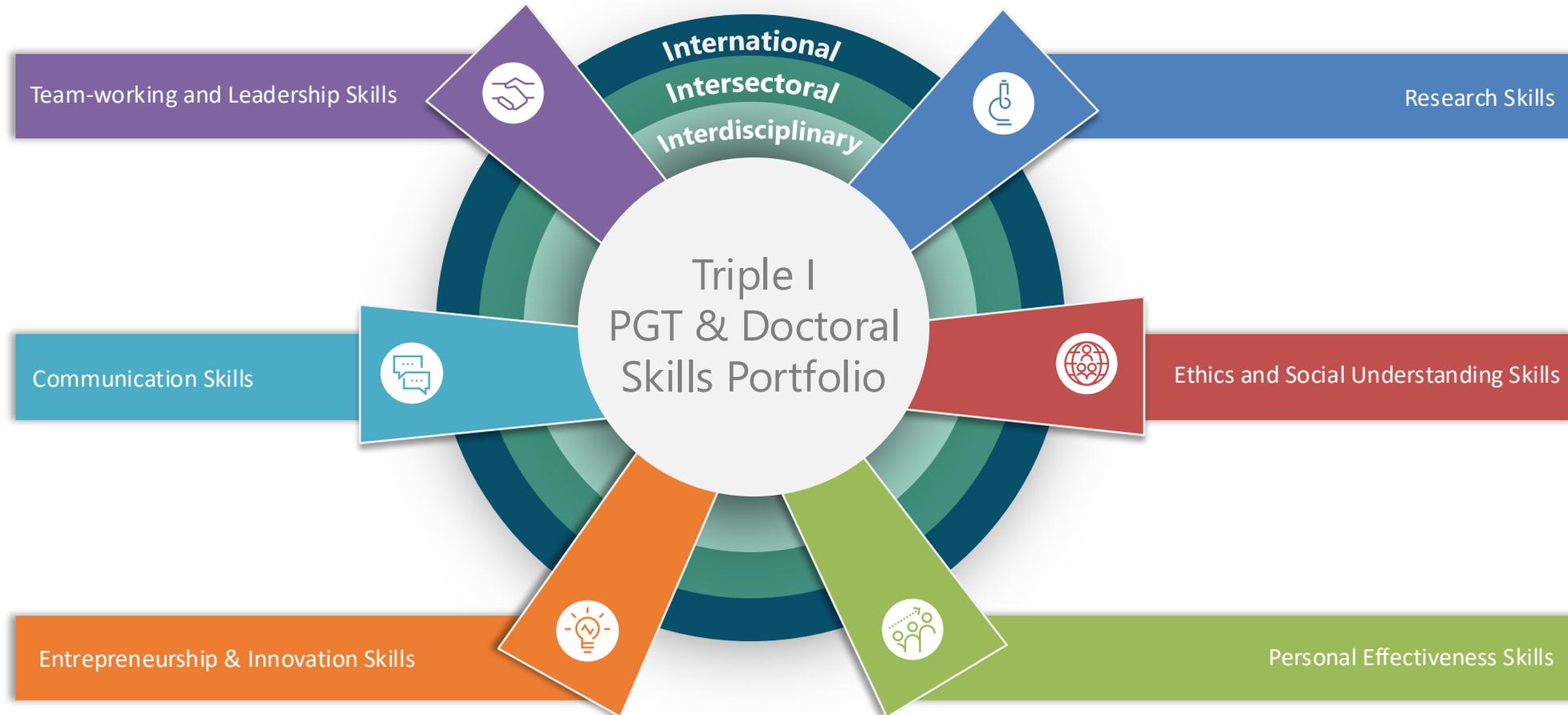


Building Community

- ✓ **PGR Lifecycle** guide
- ✓ **Guidelines on PGR students engaged in Teaching**; recognition of contributions.
- ✓ **PGT Exit Award policy**
- ✓ Integration of **Adjunct Staff**
- ✓ **PhD peer guidance network**

Triple I Framework for Multi-dimensional Skills Development

to be implemented by the Graduate Education Hub and Doctoral Academy



Spotlight on PG Student Impact



Key improvements enhancing the PG student experience

- ✓ Defined, transparent lifecycle for PGR students (from admission to viva).
- ✓ Defined expectations through Supervisor –Research Student Agreements.
- ✓ Streamlined, online PGR assess + progress workflow.
- ✓ Expanded professional development through Multidimensional Skillset (PDP)
- ✓ Consolidated TRDA scholarships and increased stipends.
- ✓ Improved clarity and fairness through PGT dissertation and supervision models.
- ✓ PGR students engaged in teaching now recognised and fairly compensated.



Student-centred Initiatives building community and belonging

- ✓ PGR Lifecycle Resource
- ✓ “Voice of the Student Community” consultations shaping programme actions
- ✓ Dean’s Induction for new PGRs
- ✓ Tailored supports / workshops for TRDA interdisciplinary research groups
- ✓ PhD Peer Guidance Network



What students told us

- ✓ Demand for clearer communication → delivered through lifecycle and frameworks
- ✓ Need for more support in early-stage navigation → delivered through induction & PDP
- ✓ Request for equity in funding → delivered through stipend increases & fee differential write down

Spotlight on PGT as a Pillar of Academic Excellence



Shift in Focus: PGT as a Pillar of Academic Excellence

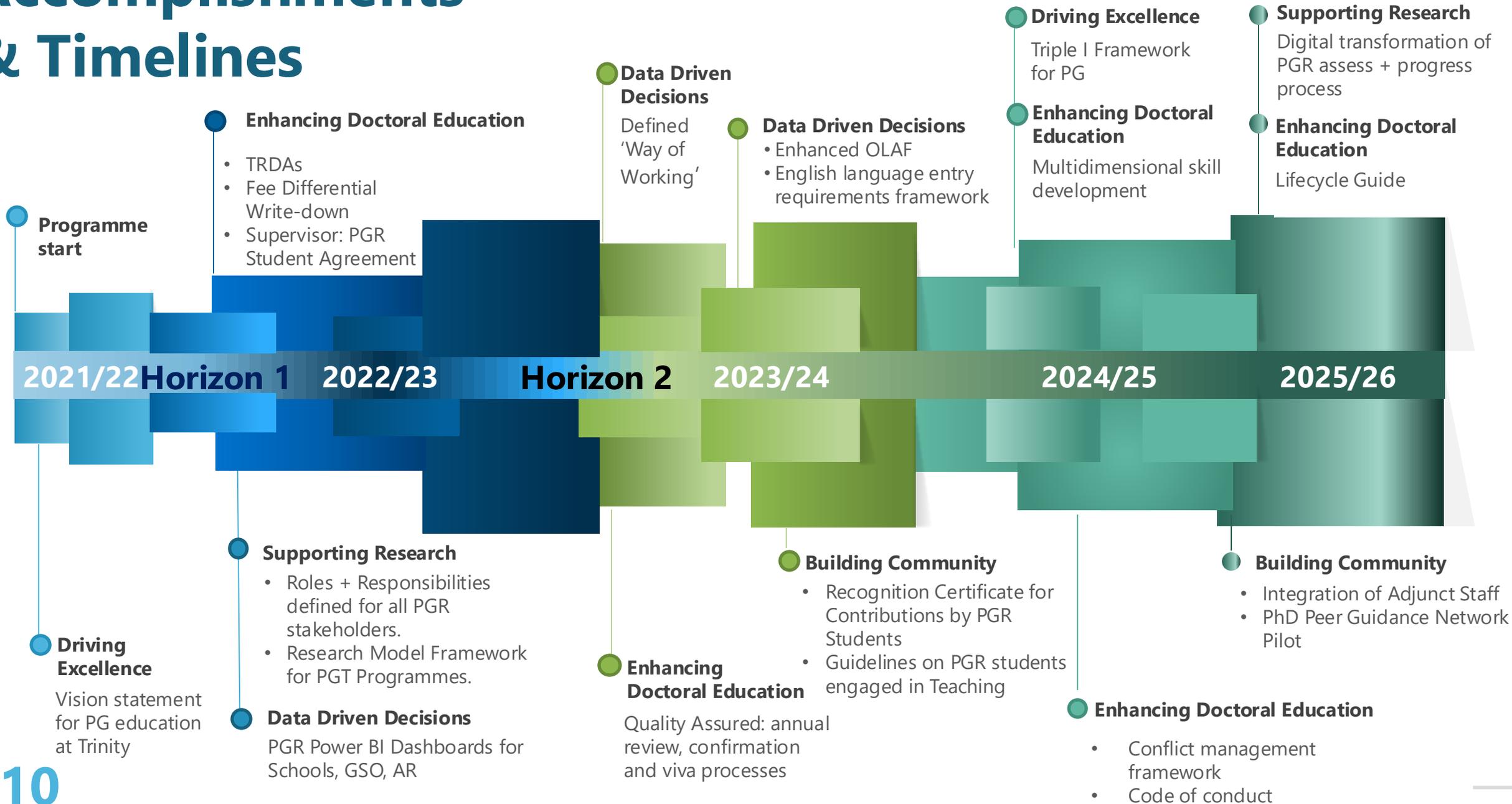
- ✓ Academically led redesign of PGT processes, ensuring programme development, supervision models, and quality assurance frameworks reflect academic integrity, intellectual depth, and disciplinary priorities.
- ✓ Highlighting PGT education as a core academic endeavour – central to shaping research-active, future-focused graduates and strengthening Trinity's academic reputation.
- ✓ A collaborative, School-led approach, ensured change was co-designed, supporting discipline-specific needs while improving coherence and quality across the institution.



Reinforcing the Academic Foundations of PGT

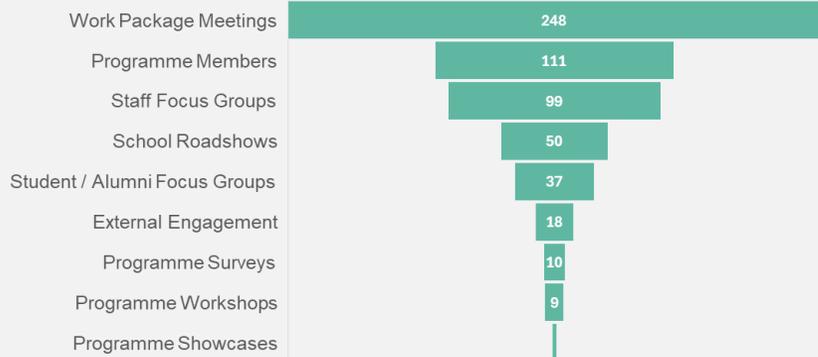
- ✓ Staff expertise shaped new supervision frameworks, dissertation models, and cyclical review processes, reinforcing standards and aligning PGT programmes with evolving disciplinary expectations.
- ✓ These academically led changes strengthened consistency, transparency, and fairness for students while protecting the scholarly purpose of PGT education.

Accomplishments & Timelines



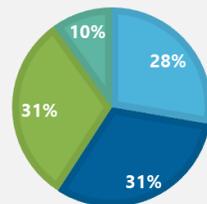
Voice of the Community

A Collaborative, Community-Informed Programme



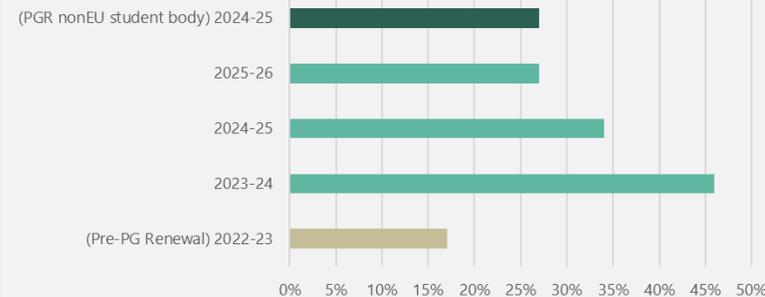
INITIAL CONSULTATION: RESPONDENTS TO SURVEY (1,941)

Academic / Research Staff PGR Students PGT Students Professional Staff



PGR Tuition Fee Differential Write-down

% nonEU PGR students funded by Irish State Agencies.



↑
112%
PGR
nonEU
funded
students

Take Back Time

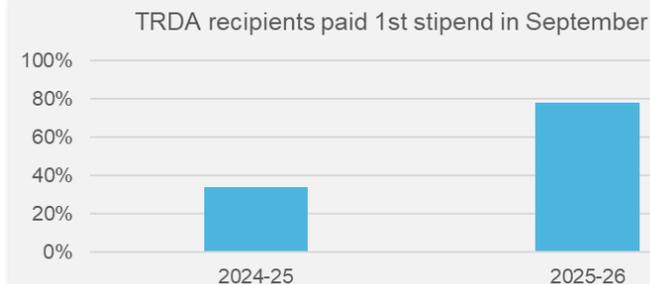
PGR Power BI Reports

46 (working weeks in an academic year) x **24** (Schools) x **1** (hour saved)
= **1,104 saved work hours annually**
(31.5 working weeks)

Performance & Impact Metrics:

Data-driven indicators of success - evidencing engagement, efficiency and improvement.

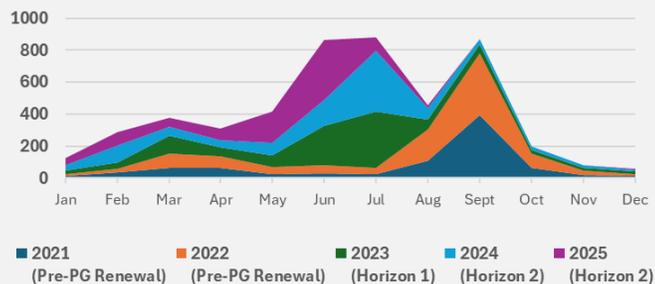
PGR Stipends



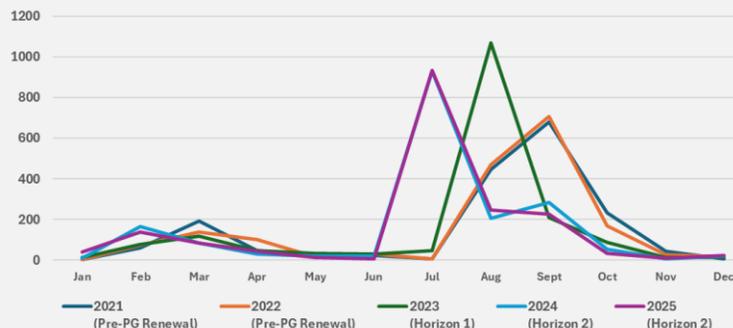
↑
129%
in stipend
paid in 1st
month of
registration

PG Research: Assessment and Progression

Timing of PGR Students Progressed in SITS - improvement over time



Timing of PGR Students Invited to Register - improvement over time



Academic Year Invited to Register

2021/22 112

2022/23 738

% Increase 559%

↑
559%
in on-
time
invitation
to
register

Value Matrix

	Value for Students 	Value for Schools 	Value for Trinity 
Strategic Impact 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Triple I Blueprint will ensure exposure to interdisciplinary, intersectoral, and international opportunities, enhancing graduate employability. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ability to 'take back time due to digital transformation of PGR progression. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthens doctoral research culture and global reputation. Positions Trinity globally. Integrating interdisciplinarity into doctoral research.
Quality Assurance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PGR: visibility and clarity of expectations and lifecycle milestones. Clear supervisory frameworks (Supervisor–Student Agreement; Roles & Responsibilities.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clear supervisory roles and expectations. Consistent admin practices for quality. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> QA frameworks developed for PGT and PGR (Supervision; Research; Cyclical Reviews of PGT programmes) Clarity on roles and responsibilities.
Governance & Processes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transparent online and streamlined assessment and progression process. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Defined supervisory frameworks (Supervisor–Student Agreement; Roles & Responsibilities.). Reduced administrative burden through introduction of Power BI reports and automation of PGR assess and progress processes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Governance gaps addressed (academic and operational oversight of central College awards) Data-driven oversight and decision-making
Financial Support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stipends for College awards increased to €25k, and scholarship schemes consolidated so that students benefit from fairer, more consistent funding. PGR teaching support now paid separately from stipends. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support for recruitment of qualified PGR students. Annual opportunity for ECRs to secure funding to recruit their first doctoral student. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To attract top talent and strengthen research output <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consolidated scholarships, and increased stipends. Improved funding structures (fee differential write down)
Experience & Outcomes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhanced support for professional development (PDP). Greater networking opportunities (Dean's Induction; PhD Peer Guidance Network) Tailored support for TRDA interdisciplinary doctoral research groups. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Embedding supervisor training in HR's AP Programme clarifies expectations and builds early-career supervision skills. Collaboration-led change improved staff ownership, cohesion, and overall experience. Stronger supervisor-student relationships. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Established a transferable change-management approach ('Way of Working') for wider institutional use.

Primary Challenges Overcome



Obstacles Faced

- ✓ Widespread change fatigue and resistance to change across the College community.
- ✓ Diversity in School needs and norms made Programme delivery difficult to navigate and standardise.



Solutions Implemented

- ✓ Phased, incremental horizons with early collaborative wins to rebuild momentum and trust.
- ✓ The Programme's Trinity-tailored *Way of Working* provided a structured, six-stage, stage-gate approach with continuous stakeholder input.



Key Wins

- ✓ Early, visible progress on priority actions, jointly delivered with the PG community to rebuild confidence and momentum.
- ✓ A unified and transparent delivery approach, improving efficiency, consistency, and collaboration across all Programme areas.



Reflections, Insights & Lessons Learnt

What we've discovered along the way.

- 01** **Small admin support unlocks big potential** – a little investment frees up significant talent that simply wouldn't have been possible otherwise.
- 02** **Understanding all stakeholders' perspectives is key** – the foundation for fit-for-purpose solutions.
- 03** **Colleagues are generous and engaged** when given the chance to shape decisions that affect them.
- 04** **Direct engagement works best** – nothing beats visiting Schools in person.
- 05** **Pause and reflect** – it's important to stop and appreciate progress.
- 06** **SITS capabilities exceed expectations** – it can do far more than imagined!
- 07** **Communication challenges persist** – but changes that make life easier gain traction.



Next Steps / Future Plans

Plans for 2026 and beyond to be delivered under College Strategy 2025-30, including the continued evolution of PGR processes in 2026.

01

Process Evolution through Automation:

- PGR Assess & Progress
- Thesis Examination Process

2026

02

Digital Transformation: Horizon 3

College Strategy 2025-30

03

From Vision to Value: publish a case study on the Postgraduate Renewal Programme

2026

04

Establish a Graduate Education Hub & Doctoral Academy

2026 (College Strategy 2025-30)

05

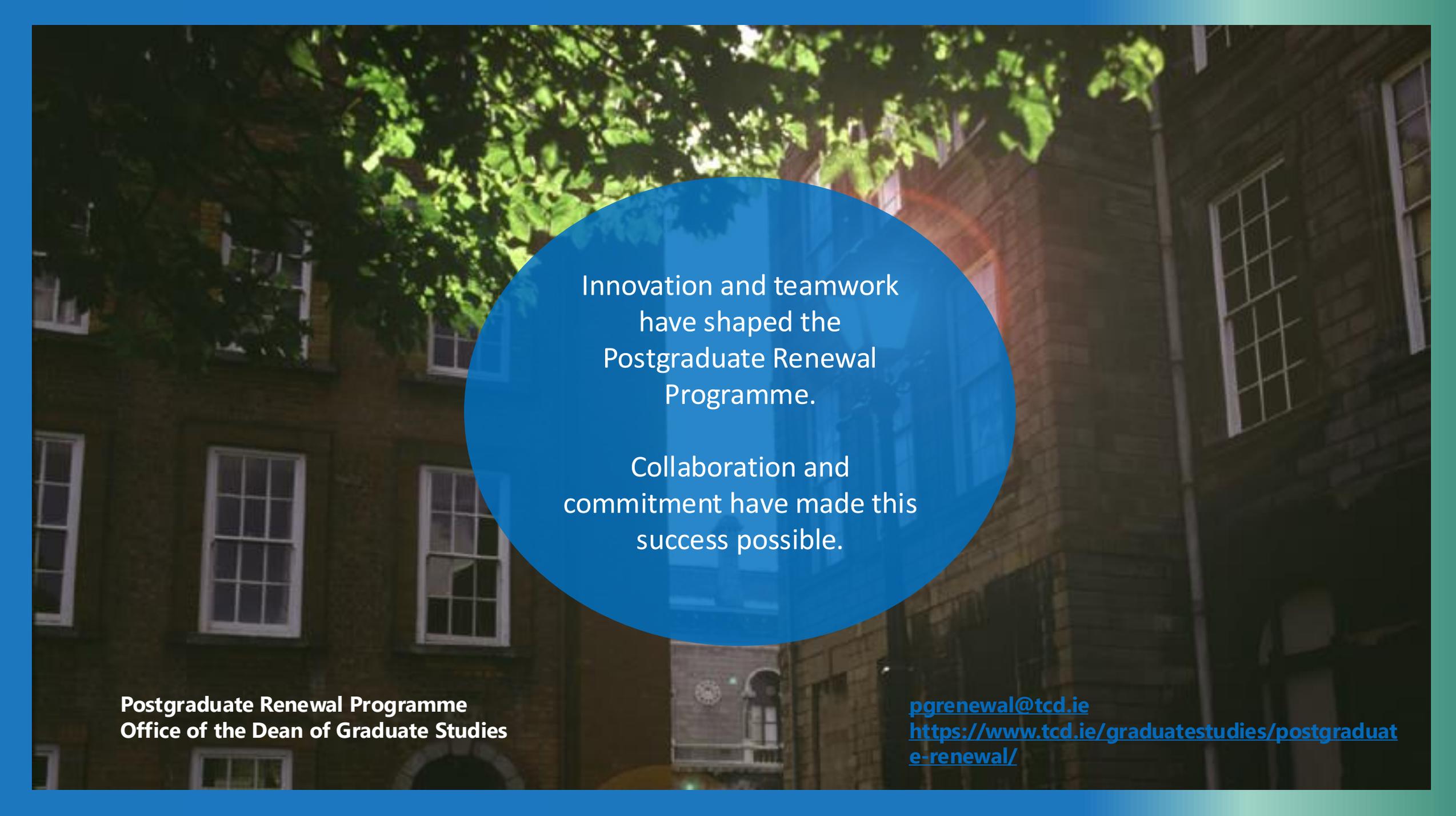
Implement Triple I Framework

2026 (College Strategy 2025-30)

06

Enhanced Supervision and Interdisciplinary training

2027 (College Strategy 2025-30)



Innovation and teamwork
have shaped the
Postgraduate Renewal
Programme.

Collaboration and
commitment have made this
success possible.

Postgraduate Renewal Programme
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