



Legal Innovation Centre Development Strategy 2017-2019



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Legal Innovation Centre

Development Strategy 2017-2019

About

The Legal Innovation Centre is a unique, multi-disciplinary research and education unit within Ulster University.

Established in 2016 the Centre is a pioneering initiative which brings together experts from the School of Law and the School of Computing and Intelligent Systems. Undertaking work at the forefront of the technological transformation of legal services, the Centre promotes and supports the use of technology in legal services, by:

- Providing education and training to equip law students and legal professionals with the tools to navigate the emerging tech-driven legal services market;
- Undertaking research for industry clients, the public sector and the academic community, to explore and better understand the impact of legal technology; and,
- Developing technological innovations through partnership with stakeholders in order to capitalise on the benefits of tech-enabled practice.

The Centre welcomes opportunities for collaboration, partnership and knowledge-exchange to realise the benefits of technology in enhancing the work of the legal services profession and promoting access to justice.

As a new Centre, there is much work to be done to build the capacity of the Centre and to realise our vision of become the foremost authority on legal services innovation in the UK. This two-year strategic plan identifies immediate and longer-term measures intended to enhance the personnel, facilities, information, and other scientific assets that are fundamental to conducting work at the scope, scale, and quality needed to fulfill our mission.

The release of this development strategy follows the publication of the University's 'Five and Fifty' Plan and the University's Research and Impact Strategy, both of which set out an ambitious vision for the development of the University over the next five years.

The schedule of work proposed by the Legal Innovation Centre and contained within this document, has been designed with reference to the overarching ambitions laid out in these strategy documents. The goals identified within our development strategy are intended to underpin the development of the Legal Innovation Centre and make a tangible contribution to achieving the University's overall strategic objectives.

Our Mission

The Legal Innovation Centre works to *understand*, to *educate*, and to *innovate* so as to realise the transformative potential of technology within the legal services sector and as a tool to enhance access to justice.

- We seek to understand the current and future role of legal technology in the provision of legal services and access to justice and the implications that arise as a result of this, by conducting methodologically rigorous independent research;
- We seek to educate current and aspiring lawyers as to the role technology will play in their work, to prepare them for a future in which technology is integral to the delivery of legal services by providing inspiring, engaging and intellectually stimulating teaching at the CPD and graduate level, and;
- We seek to innovate, by working collaboratively with industry partners to engineer legal technology innovations that realise the transformative opportunities that technology can bring to: the delivery of legal services, the provision of legal education, and the promotion of access to justice.

Our Strategy

Our Development Strategy addresses the period 2017-2019. The overarching objectives of the Strategy are to:

- Set the direction for the successful development of the Centre over the forthcoming period;
- Address strategic issues critical to realising our mission for the Centre;
- Establish how we intend to engage with our stakeholders;
- Align Centre staff and stakeholders around the Centre's vision and objectives;
- Pursue an agenda for the Centre which complements and furthers the University's 'Five and Fifty' strategic plan and the University's 'Research and Impact Strategy 2016-2021';
- Further the understanding of the Centre as a strategic asset to the university, the local legal profession, and the wider UK Community.

Strategic Goals 2017 – 2019

Goal 1 – Knowledge

Enhance knowledge through research and teaching excellence

- 01.1 Anticipate the research needs of our stakeholders
- 01.2 Develop and enhance the Centre's core research and expertise
- 01.3 Define priorities based on stakeholder input and emerging issues
- 01.4 Enhance interdisciplinary research across the University
- 01.5 Develop and expand research through collaboration
- 01.6 Expand relationships with faculty, researchers, and students at Ulster University and at other universities
- 01.7 Expand relationships with potential clients and partners in government, industry, and the NFP sector
- 01.8 Provide graduate level research opportunities for students
- 01.9 Provide opportunity for Post-Doctoral Positions
- 01.10 Enhance the legal technology knowledge of LLB students
- 01.11 Deliver teaching at the Graduate Level
- 01.12 Expand our range of CPD courses
- 01.13 Explore how applied and experiential legal technology learning could be deployed in our courses
- 01.14 Explore how we can contribute to the up-skilling of unemployed/underemployed members of our local community
- 01.15 Explore how legal technology education can be delivered within vocational training

Goal 2 – Service

Support policy development and decision-making

- 02.1 Assist in the development of research-led decision-making within the public sector by:
 - Contributing to public consultations in areas of relevance
 - Developing strong links with Government organisations, policy makers, the judiciary, and regulatory bodies
 - Providing policy-friendly accessible research insights
 - Exploring alternative (non-academic) publication formats
- 02.2 Engage with industry stakeholders to better understand their research priorities
- 02.3 Provide opportunities for cross-faculty collaboration between University students by developing engagement initiatives
- 02.4 Collaborate with the Law Clinic in beneficial endeavors in the access to justice space.

Goal 3 – Visibility

Enhance the visibility of the Centre

- 03.1 Take an active role in initiatives within the University and the Public Sector

- 03.2 Contribute to Ulster University’s reputation for research excellence by conducting methodologically rigorous research
- 03.3 Share expertise with stakeholders, to become the recognised UK resource for work at the intersection of law and technology
- 03.4 Develop a media and public engagement plan for the Centre
- 03.5 Build meaningful networks to promote the work of the Centre
- 03.6 Develop a strategic vision for outreach, public engagement, and public education that serves the wider community
- 03.7 Participate in professional societies, e.g. Society for Computers and Law, Legal Geeks network, ILTA, ELTA, LSA and SLSA

Goal 4 – Capacity

Ensure effective staffing and leadership, efficient administration and adequate funding

- 04.1 Develop a staffing system that supports the unique nature of the Centre
- 04.2 Ensure an optimum level of stability, evolution, and growth the Centre
- 04.3 Secure stable, diverse, and growing funding for the Centre in order to build our capacity to deliver on our intended goals
- 04.4 Work with the Office of Innovation to build upon funding, leveraging the most value possible
- 04.5 Work with the Office of Corporate Engagement to bring about industrial research partnerships and industry-funded PhD’s and Post-Doctoral projects
- 04.6 Explore opportunities for funding from research-funding organisations
- 04.7 Ensure the Centre is accommodated on the new University campus with a facility that anticipates and accommodates our plans for growth

Ulster University ‘Five and Fifty’

Our goals and associated objectives underpin the development of the Legal Innovation Centre as it embarks upon its first two years.

As a part of Ulster University, the Centre has an imperative to work towards the broader strategic goals of the University as outlined in the University’s Five and Fifty. The ‘Five and Fifty’ Plan is structured around four key priorities, which link to a number of related objectives:

Civic Contribution

- Employment and Widening Access
- Social and Economic Development
- Campus Identities
- Meaningful Networks

Academic Excellence

- Teaching Excellence
- Student Experience
- Research with Impact
- Researcher Development

Operational Excellence

- People and Culture
- Reputation
- World-Class Infrastructure
- Financial Sustainability

Global Vision

- Global Citizenship
- International Networks
- Global Challenge, Local Impact
- Diverse University Community

The strategic objectives of the Legal Innovation Centre are intended to make a tangible contribution to advancing the ‘Five and Fifty’ agenda. In doing so, the Legal Innovation Centre’s Development Strategy works towards a shared, University-wide vision of success, and places value on the expertise, energy, creativity and insight that we draw from our colleagues within the Ulster University community.

The Table below indicates how the strategic objectives of the Legal Innovation Centre overlap with those of the ‘Five and Fifty’ Strategy.

Ulster University ‘Five and Fifty’ Strategy		Legal Innovation Centre Development Strategy
Priority	Objectives	Our Contributing Objectives
Civil Contribution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment and Widening Access • Social and Economic Development • Campus Identities • Meaningful Networks 	01.8, 01.9, 01.10, 01.13, 01.14, 01.15 01.1, 01.3, 01.7, 02.1, 02.2, 04.2 01.4, 02.1, 02.2, 02.3, 02.4, 03.1, 04.6 02.3, 03.1, 03.5, 03.6
Academic Excellence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaching Excellence • Student Experience • Research with Impact • Researcher Development 	01.6, 01.8 - 01.15, 02.3, 04.4 01.8 - 01.15, 02.1, 02.3, 04.4 01.1 - 01.7, 02.1, 02.2, 02.3, 04.4 01.8 - 01.15
Global Vision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Global Citizenship • International Networks • Global Challenge, Local Impact • Diverse University Community 	01.3, 02.1, 03.3, 03.5 01.1 - 01.3, 03.1 - 03.6 01.4 - 01.15, 03.1 - 03.6 01.9, 01.12, 04.1, 04.6
Operational Excellence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People and Culture • Reputation • World-Class Infrastructure • Financial Sustainability 	04.1 - 04.6 01.1 - 01.15, 02.1 - 02.3, 03.2, 03.3 04.1 - 04.3, 04.6 04.1 - 04.6

In addition, our objectives complement the goals laid down in the Ulster University ‘Research and Impact Strategy’. In particular, our work will make a contribution towards increasing the number of industry-partnerships, increasing the number of PhD students and contributing high quality research outputs under the research themes of ‘Sustainability’ and ‘Social Renewal’.

Implementation

Resources

The goals outlined within our Development Strategy present an ambitious programme of work which will demand additional resources and capacity building if we are to succeed in fulfilling our objectives.

Implementation

Implementation of the Legal Innovation Centre’s Development Strategy will be a concerted effort across Centre management and staff. It will require additional details, timelines, milestones, assignments, and oversight. Accompanying this Development Strategy is our Work Plan 2017-2018,

which give further shape to our development vision. Our Work Plan 2017-2018, details the work we have commenced and the work we intend to commence during our development period in order to realise our strategic development objectives.

Governance

Advisory Group

The Legal Innovation Centre is led by Centre Director Dr Catrina Denvir (School of Law) and Executive Directors, Dr Eugene McNamee (School of Law) and Dr Kevin Curran (School of Computing and Intelligent Systems). The work of the Legal Innovation Centre is guided by an Advisory Group composed of invited representatives from within the University, as well as invited representatives from the Legal profession. Our Advisory Group provides us with the opportunity to invite the oversight, advice and input of University colleagues and our founding stakeholders.

The aim of the Advisory Group is to assist in the development of the Centre. More particularly the Group's role is to:

- Advise on the positioning and value of the Centre for the development of the Legal Sector in NI;
- To suggest refinement or development of operational protocols and procedures;
- To aid the Centre in keeping abreast of relevant developments within the sector and knowledge from other sectors;
- To provide high-level policy suggestions;
- To promote as appropriate the work of the Centre;
- To provide a link between the Centre and the organisations and bodies represented in the Group.

Consultative Committees

Within the 2017-2019 period, the Centre will work to convene a Curriculum and Course Development Consultative Committee and a Research and Development Consultative Committee to bring together stakeholders with a view to ensuring the curriculum and research work of the Centre is informed by community and professional priorities.

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