RCSI Student Engagement and Partnership (StEP) Programme

Name of Institution/Organisation

RCSI University of Medicine and Health Sciences

Who led the initiative?

Deputy Dean for Student Engagement (Professor Celine Marmion), Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences

Date and timeframe of the initiative

2018 – 2024 and ongoing

What was the reach of the initiative?

Since the launch of the StEP programme in 2020-2021, 178 staff (academic and professional) and 171 students have worked in partnership on a total of 68 StEP level 1 funded projects (10 week projects run during semester 2 with student contact capped at 3 hrs/week) and 41 StEP level 2 funded projects (8 week full-time projects during the summer).

The project outputs are far reaching. They span all four pillars of the StEP programme, from institutional management and key decision-making processes, teaching, learning and assessment, academic research and engagement with the local community and social environment.

They also contribute to the four themes within the RCSI strategy 2023-2027 'Innovating for a Healthier Future', namely 'Health and Societal Impact', 'Education and Student Success', Research and Innovation' and 'Foundations for Sustainable Impact'.

Aims/Objectives

To support RCSI's strategic vision of embedding a universal culture of student engagement and partnership and, in so doing, provide a distinctive, vibrant and transformational educational experience that sets students up for success at RCSI and as future health science graduates.

Rationale and Identified Needs

A seminal report published in the Lancet Commissions in 2010 put forward a vision and a series of recommendations to provide a transformative learning experience for healthcare professionals of the future. [1] It sought a transition from an informative learning environment where students acquire knowledge and skills 'to produce experts', to formative learning, socialising students around values 'to produce professionals' to transformative learning. This latter transformative approach focuses on nurturing and developing leadership attributes to produce 'enlightened change agents of society'.

As a university with a singular focus on health sciences, we believe that promoting and nurturing a culture of student engagement and partnership 'enables' our students (and future health science professionals) to further develop their collaborative and leadership skills. This facilitates their development as 'enlightened change agents' with the capacity to truly influence and transform human health in the future. This was the rationale behind the development of the RCSI Student Engagement and Partnership (StEP) programme.

[1] J. Frenk, L. Chen et al., 'Health professionals for a new century: transforming education to strengthen health systems in an interdependent world', The Lancet Commissions, 2010, 376, 9756, 1923-1958; DOI: https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(10)61854-5

Frameworks, Policies, or Strategies Aligned (internal, local or national)

The following are relevant internal, local, national and international frameworks or policies.
- RCSI strategy 2023-2027 'Innovating for a Healthier Future'
- National Student Engagement Programme (NStEP) strategy
- ASPIRE Award for Excellence in Student Engagement
- UN Sustainable Development Goals
- HEA Higher Education Healthy Campus Charter and Framework
- A Vision for Partnership – USI Student Engagement Policy

ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS IN IRELAND

Categories	Elements	Topics	Target Groups
Commit	Leadership, Strategy & Governance	Digital Transformation	Students
Coordinate	Curriculum and Assessment	Education for Sustainable Development	Staff
Consult	Innovation in Teaching	Academic Integrity	Wider community
Create	Professional Development	Inclusive and Equitable Teaching Practices	Other
Celebrate & Continue	Research and Evaluation	Innovations in Assessment and Feedback	
		Student Engagement and Partnership	
		Collaborative and Interdisciplinary Approaches	
		Artificial Intelligence	
		Other : UN SDGs	