NATIONAL FORUM

FOR THE ENHANCEMENT OF TEACHING

AND LEARNING IN HIGHER EDUCATION

# Teaching Experts: Learning Impact Awards – Phase 2

# Call for Nominations
# May 2015

# Contents

# Overview

The Teaching Experts Award process is the second phase of Ireland's National Learning Impact Awards in Higher Education. The award identification process will be rigorous and highly selective. Once submitted by their institutions, nominations will be reviewed by a Teaching Expert Awards evaluation panel. Not more than 20 nominees will be shortlisted, and there will be no more than 7 category award winners. Everyone on the shortlist will be invited to attend the National Forum Teaching and Learning Summit where they will be formally recognised. The 7 category award winners will be announced at this event.

**OUTLINE OF PROCESS - AT A GLANCE**

All nominations from a **single institution must be submitted as one pack** to the National Forum.

| STAGE 1: | | TO BE PREPARED BY NOMINATING INSTITUTIONS IN COLLABORATION WITH THEIR IDENTIFIED NOMINEES | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **INITIAL SUBMISSION** | **REQUIRED MATERIAL (Further details in Appendix 1)** | **Maximum length** | **Who should take responsibility for preparing the material?** | **Deadline** |
| | A **letter of nomination** from nominee's institution | 500 words | **Senior Post Holder** | |
| | A Presidential note of **endorsement of the individual or team** from nominee's institution | 250 words | **President** | |
| | A **short video clip or podcast** (prepared by the nominee) | 2 minutes | **Nominee** | Full submission with all these elements to be submitted by institutions on or before **5pm on 15th October 2015** |
| | A **written statement** by the nominee | 1000 words | **Nominee** | |
| | A **brief outline of the nominee's proposed teaching exemplars**/resources (to be further developed in stage 2) | 300 words (per proposed exemplar) | **Nominee** | |

**BETWEEN STAGE 1 AND 2 TEACHING EXPERT AWARDS EVALUATION PANEL MEETS TO SHORTLIST**

| STAGE 2: | TO BE PREPARED BY NOMINEES WITH SUPPORT FROM THE NATIONAL FORUM | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **DETAILED SUBMISSION OF EVIDENCE** | **REQUIRED MATERIAL** | **Maximum length** | **Deadline** |
| | **Short bio and photograph** of nominee for the National Forum website | 250 words plus photo | |
| | **Two** developed and usable **teaching exemplars** | **To be developed during stage 2** | **To be completed during October and November 2015 in advance of presentations** |
| | Further **evidence of learning impact** | 5 pages collated data (max.) | |
| | Further development of the nominees video or podcast material to produce a **high quality National Forum Talk (to be completed with the support of the National Forum)** | 3-5 minutes | |
| | **Presentation to an open forum** which will include the teaching expert awards panel (comprising national and international expertise) | 30 minutes | **27th November 2015** |

# Introduction

The National Forum leads a two phase Learning Impact Award system. The implementation of the first iteration of phase 1 was completed with the presentation of teaching hero awards in September 2014. This document now outlines phase 2, which will be completed in 2015. Table 1 shows the characteristics of the two learning impact award phases:

Table 1

| Learning Impact Awards phase 1: Teaching Heroes – student led | |
|---|---|
| Led by students with support and guidance from the National Forum | FIRST ITERATION OF PHASE 1 COMPLETED IN 2014 |
| Qualitative in nature with important analysis of testimonials | |
| Celebratory, inclusive and endorsing | |
| Broad in reach with heroes identified from almost all Irish HEIs | |
| Shedding further light on students' experiences and definitions of excellent teaching in higher education and celebrating, sharing/embedding these insights across the sector | |
| | |
| Learning Impact Awards phase 2: Teaching Experts – Institutionally led | |
| Led by institutions—presenting expert role models for excellence in teaching and knowledge about learning impact[1]. | FIRST ITERATION OF PHASE 2 TO BE COMPLETED BY DEC 2015 |
| Resource generating—process that will give rise to the creation of high quality teaching resources and materials that showcase excellent teaching | |
| Evidence-based—there must be strong and demonstrable evidence of the nature of the expertise and its impact on student learning | |
| | |

**The two phases of the Learning Impact Award process will support a strong ongoing partnership between students and academic contexts, and between 'heroes' and 'experts', to help inform and shape our sectoral professional development strategies, frameworks, and learning cultures.**

**PLEASE NOTE:**

**If you have any queries on this call please submit your question/s to info@teachingandlearning.ie. All queries will be responded to within 24 hours and replies will be available on the FAQ section of the Teaching Expert Awards page on the National Forum website www.teachingandlearning.ie.**

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[1] This does not presume or require that an institution necessarily has a teaching awards system in place but will require active engagement by institutions in the identification of expertise.

# Key Features of the Teaching Expert Awards Process

- **INSTITUTIONALLY NOMINATED AND ENDORSED, WITH NOMINEE INPUT**
- **ENHANCEMENT THEME FOCUSED, WITH DIVERSITY OF SCOPE**
- **SEVERAL KEY AIMS, AND TWO KEY STAGES**

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## The key aims of the Teaching Expert Award

- Identify and recognise the prominent thinkers, researchers, leaders and professionals in higher education teaching and learning across all disciplines in Irish Higher Education.
- Encourage others involved in higher education teaching to learn from, use and adapt the teaching and learning knowledge and exemplars developed by teaching experts.
- Disseminate and share effective, specific approaches in the teaching of particular disciplines with a focus on learning impact.
- Lead to improvements in collaboration and enhancements in the professionalisation of higher education teaching practice.
- Further promote and inform the National Forum enhancement theme (currently Teaching for Transitions).

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# Overview of the Teaching Expert Award Process

## Stage 1:   INITIAL SUBMISSION

Institutions who wish to nominate individuals or teams[2] for the teaching expert award should work in collaboration with their identified nominees to make the initial submission by the specified date.

Required material for the initial submission:

1. A letter of nomination (500 words max.)
2. A Presidential note of endorsement (250 words max.)
3. The preparation by the nominee(s) of a short video or podcast (2 minutes max.)
4. A short written statement by the nominee(s) (1000 words max.)
5. A brief outline of the nominee's proposed teaching exemplars/resources (to be further developed in stage 2) (300 words per exemplar outline)

(For additional details of these elements of the submission, see Appendices.)

This material will be reviewed by an expert panel and a shortlist of not more than 20 nominees will be selected.

## Stage 2:   DETAILED SUBMISSION OF EVIDENCE

**With guidance and appropriate support from the National Forum, shortlistees will generate a more detailed collection of evidence of their expertise to:**

- Provide a short bio and photograph for the National Forum website
- Develop two teaching exemplars (a template will be provided by the National Forum)
- Provide further evidence of learning impact which could include evidence of: student performance; student retention; student learning experience; student transition; student engagement; student motivation; student evaluation
- Develop the initially submitted video/podcast material to produce a high quality National Forum Talk (with the support of the NF)
- Give a presentation to an open forum which will include the teaching expert awards evaluation panel (comprising national and international expertise)

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[2] Not more than 7 persons all of whom must be from the same institution. A team nomination counts as one nomination from an institution

**Note:**
1. The teaching exemplars developed will be peer reviewed by those with expertise in the specific discipline area of each nominee that is shortlisted.
2. All those shortlisted will attend the Teaching Expert Awards ceremony on the 10th December in the Printworks, Dublin Castle.
3. All those shortlisted will be recognised and celebrated at the awards ceremony and will be invited to join a network of national teaching award recipients
4. Individual winners in categories determined by the teaching expert awards panel will be announced. Winners will receive a uniquely designed Teaching Expert Award
5. The peer reviewed teaching exemplars and National Forum talks will be made available to the sector as a resource to showcase teaching excellence.

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# General Guidelines for Institutions

## Nomination eligibility and conditions

- All staff involved in teaching in Irish Universities, Institutes of Technology, DIT and Private Colleges, Colleges of Education, RCSI, NCI and HECA colleges in the Irish higher education sector are eligible to be nominated and considered for a Teaching Expert Award - regardless of discipline, level or term of appointment. Individuals and teams may be nominated. In the case of a team nomination, identified teams may not exceed 7 members and the role and contribution of every team member to the development of expertise and impact must be made clear in the submission.
**Note: current National Forum board members and current members of the National Forum directorate team are ineligible to be considered for the award.**
- All nominees must be **nominated** by a member of their institution who is in a formal position of responsibility (e.g. Registrar, HOD, Dean, Dean or VP of Teaching and Learning or equivalent) **endorsed** by the President of their institution. Detailed guidance for institutional nominators and nominees is in Appendix 1.
- Institutions can nominate individuals or teams. Teams can consist of 2 to 7 members. In the event that any team is larger than 7, only the 7 leading and most instrumental members of the team should be selected.
- Institutions must send all their nominee submissions in a single collated pack by the specified deadline.
- The maximum number of nominations submitted by an institution must not exceed the maximum allowable. Each team nomination counts as one nomination from the institution.
- Those identified for nomination must agree to the nomination and will need to contribute to their institutional submission in collaboration with their nominator.
- While institutional nominations will be brief, nominees should note that if shortlisted they will be required to provide further evidence of impact and to develop two teaching exemplars that can be readily shared and used by others. Such evidence

could include for example: evidence of student engagement, motivation and performance; evidence of innovation for impact; evidence of impact on the practices and pedagogies of others; evidence of leadership and change at the level of the institution/department/discipline; evidence of outstanding student outputs in the form of student research, performance, awards or other key achievements.

- Only the individuals or teams who, in the considered opinion of the Teaching Expert Awards evaluation panel, have demonstrated outstanding expertise, excellence and impact relating to teaching and learning will make the shortlist. Therefore, **nominating institutions should only put forward their very best candidates**.

## Focus, diversity and breadth of expertise

- The award system invites submissions demonstrating expertise in any area related to teaching and learning enhancement. Submissions that showcase expertise relating to the current enhancement theme 'Teaching for Transition' will be particularly welcome http://www.teachingandlearning.ie/priority-themes/enhancement-theme/).
- The award system will welcome a diversity of expertise and impact in teaching and learning across the higher education sector. A focus on sharing and disseminating the impact of outstanding role models will remain a key function of the awards process.

All shortlisted nominees will be recognised. Final award categories (7 max.) will not be defined until all submissions have been reviewed.

## Important Considerations for Nominators

1. Institutions are only expected to be involved in stage 1 of the nomination process. The evidence required at this stage is quite brief and concise – but must be based on a wider set of evidence of impact that will then be subsequently sought and evaluated. Therefore, only individuals or teams who are prepared to engage with the process and with the subsequent requirements should be nominated. Nominees who are shortlisted will be required to work subsequently with the National Forum in the preparation of a detailed evidence base and the development of key teaching exemplars related to their practice.

2. This process has been designed in such a way as to enable all institutions to nominate, regardless of whether or not they have established award systems at an institutional level. Please note that institutional or regional awards may have different characteristics, requirements and criteria from those specified here. Whether or not your institution has an awards process, the general guidelines provided will be useful in identifying suitable nominees for this National Learning Impact Awards system.

3.    Award winners will be invited to join a new network of National Teaching Award recipients and will have further opportunity to play a leading national role in sharing and promoting excellent practice within and beyond their own disciplines.

# Deadlines and Timelines

## STAGE 1

Deadline for institutions to submit nominations for the Teaching Experts Awards:

**15th October 15th 2015 at 5pm**

## STAGE 2

Panel meets to discuss, evaluate and agree shortlist; shortlist announced: **29th October 2015**

Supported preparation with shortlisted nominees of teaching expert materials and resources:  **November 2015**

Open forum presentations and dialogue: **27th November 2015**

Panel assessments, award categories and selection completed by: **5th December 2015**

## AWARD ANNOUNCEMENT AND PRESENTATION

All shortlisted nominees who progressed to stage 2 will be acknowledged and celebrated at the National Teaching and Learning Summit: **10th December  2015**

## FURTHER GUIDANCE TO INSTITUTIONAL NOMINATORS AND NOMINEES

The Teaching Experts Award process aims to embody the highest ideals of teaching excellence, scholarship and impact in Irish higher education. Identifying 7 category award winning experts, it complements but differs from the National Forum student-led Heroes awards process, the first phase of which concluded last year.

### General information

The call for nominations will be sent by email and hard copy to the offices of the Presidents and VPs, at all Irish higher education institutions.

Registrars, Heads of Department, Faculty Deans, Heads of School or Directors/Deans, VPs of Teaching and Learning should be invited to submit nominations to the National Forum Teaching Experts Awards System.

## Appendix 1a      GUIDELINES TO INSTITUTIONS

### NUMBER OF NOMINATIONS

The maximum number of nominations that can be put forward by an institution is based on current (FTE) enrolled student numbers:

| Current Student FTE Enrolments | Maximum Number of Nominations |
|---|---|
| Up to 5000 | 1 |
| 5000 - 10000 | 2 |
| 10000 - 15000 | 3 |
| 15000 – 20000 | 4 |
| 20000+ | 5 |

### THE INSTITUTION'S LETTER OF NOMINATION (500 words max.)

The letter of nomination should be written by someone in a position of responsibility (head of department, faculty dean or dean of teaching and learning/research, Associate VP, Associate Registrar, Registrar or Vice President). The letter should summarise the rationale for the nominated individual/team and should refer to evidence, with a particular focus on the nominee's impact on the National Forum enhancement theme (Teaching for Transitions). The nomination letter should be written by someone who is familiar with the nominee's work. The strongest type of nomination letter will provide a clear, comprehensive and authentic understanding of the nominee and their impact on teaching and learning. While not long enough to provide direct evidence, it should refer to evidence

(including, for example, any awards that the nominee has won or been shortlisted for at institutional, regional, national or international levels, student endorsements and feedback, published work, leadership, professional development and other evidence of impact).

(NOTE that Heads of Department and Deans are also eligible to be nominated, but must not self-nominate.)

**PRESIDENTIAL NOTE OF ENDORSEMENT (250 words max.)**

A short note endorsing the nomination from the President of the nominee's institution.

# Appendix 1b         GUIDELINES TO NOMINEES

## (i)  PERSONAL STATEMENT (1000 words max.)

Nominees must provide a personal statement of their expertise and impact in teaching and learning with a particular focus on 'Teaching for Transitions'. Nominees should list briefly the key indicators of their practice that speak to excellence and impact. They may refer in particular to their own discipline(s) or key areas of expertise and to innovative, impactful approaches to their own teaching to student learning and where relevant to the teaching of others.

Your statement should address the following questions:

1.  **On what basis is your nomination as teaching expert being made? (250 words max.)**
2.  **To what extent has your expertise had an impact on student learning? (250 words max.)**
3.  **What are the implications of your expertise in terms of national impact? (250 words max.)**
4.  **In what way has your teaching expertise had an impact on teachers within and beyond your discipline? (250 words max.)**

## (ii)  THE NOMINEE AWARD SUBMISSION VIDEO OR PODCAST

Teaching experts must demonstrate capacity to engage as teachers in a world that is increasingly digital, and the Teaching Expert Awards evaluation panel must be able to get a sense of each nominated individual or team.  Therefore, as part of the institutional submission nominees are **required to submit a short (2 minute max.) video clip or podcast of themselves talking about an aspect of their teaching or teaching excellence within their discipline**.

This short video or podcast must be prepared by the nominee, and submission for the award must be accompanied by a link to the video/podcast.

**Guidelines for the video/podcast:** see Appendix 2

## PROGRESSING TO STAGE 2

(Further detailed guidance will be provided to all stage 2 shortlistees.)

**The National Forum will directly support and assist the development of stage 2 submissions.** Those who progress to stage 2 will be required to include:

1. **A brief bio and photograph**

2. **The production of 2 substantial, applicant-authored and fully replicable teaching and learning exemplars** (which they will have outlined briefly as part of stage 1). Exemplars can include samples of effective strategies, original assignments, lab experiments; exceptional, engaging fieldwork, innovative lecturing, multimedia, artefacts, tools, videos, games, visuals, activities and in particular those teaching interventions that aid and support effective teaching for transitions. Such exemplars will be resources that can be easily used by others, and will capture the context, approach, resources and ways of assessing learning impact used in their teaching.

3. **Further evidence of learning impact**. This could include evidence of student feedback, peer-evaluation, student achievement as a result of nominee's support/intervention/practice/research or other data. This evidence of impact should be provided in a collated document that is no more than 5 pages in length (a simple sign off will be required from the host institution to confirm that as far as they are aware the information and the way that it has been presented is accurate). The document can include graphs, tables or other collated data and should provide details of how this evidence was collected and what it represents.

4. With the support of the National Forum, produce a high quality **National Forum Talk** based on their original video/podcast submission.

A quality, peer-reviewed process for evaluating the awards submissions will be agreed by the evaluation panel as part of the first teaching experts process. This will become a nationally agreed approach to evaluating teaching and learning exemplars. The National Forum enables these quality assured teaching and learning submissions to be captured and adapted for subsequent use across the sector.

**Please Note that by participating in the Teaching Expert Awards process, nominees agree that, if shortlisted, their teaching and learning exemplars and National Forum Talk can be distributed as a resource to the sector to exemplify teaching excellence.**

## GUIDELINES FOR PREPARING VIDEO TALK/PODCAST (STAGE 1)

### The Video Talk/podcast

- Should be no longer than 2 minutes.
- Can be a video/podcast of the nominee(s) talking about their teaching or a video/podcast that the nominee(s) has/have already prepared or might use in the course of their teaching and learning work. (Videos/podcasts can be very diverse in terms of content. Nominees may want to use this as an opportunity to develop a clip that they can use in their own teaching, so they can select an area of interest within their own domain of expertise, or they may decide to talk more directly about teaching and learning processes.)
- Does not have to be 'high production values' – it can be produced simply on phone video or 'photobooth' standard.
- The topic can include a focus on the nominee's approach to teaching, and /or a focus on their discipline but should not repeat what is in the nominee's statement.
- The main purpose of the video/podcast is to demonstrate nominees' willingness to engage with communications technology.
- If you are shortlisted the Nation Forum will subsequently support you in developing your video/podcast into a higher production quality National Forum Talk. (The National Forum Talks when completed at stage 2 with the support of the Forum will enable nominees to showcase and present well-formed ideas that give a clear, brief picture about a key aspect of their teaching expertise or an aspect of their discipline/area of expertise that they know they teach well or innovatively.)

### Develop an idea

The specific topic and focus you choose is up to you, but we particularly encourage talks that include some reference to the National Forum enhancement theme (Teaching for Transitions). The 2 minute video/podcast might include:

A focus on your approach to teaching, or a focus on your discipline (or both).

A teaching and learning related approach from your own research or practice that is new or innovative.

An approach that challenges a prevailing belief in the higher education sector about teaching and learning – or about the teaching and learning of an important aspect of your discipline.

A well established idea with a compelling new argument behind it based on your own practice, research or insights.

Something that will be useful and can add value to the practice of others– for example, it might take evidence or observations and draw a larger conclusion or it might suggest how to deal with a common teaching and learning related challenge.

**Other key tips to help you prepare:**

Nominees are strongly advised not to spend time and resources on the production of the stage 1 video/podcast but to focus on the message that they want to communicate. Video/podcast talks will be reviewed for clarity, precision, insight and capacity to engage.

- Write your topic down in one or two sentences. Ask yourself these questions:
    - Does my topic speak to impact on student learning?
    - Does it make some reference to the National Forum enhancement theme (teaching for transitions)?
    - Is its own specific theme focused and clear?
- Refine your idea. Consider making a list of important points. Plan to practise and rehearse your talk with a colleague or colleagues and with students within and beyond your own discipline.
- Primary goals of your talk should be to communicate an idea effectively and in an engaging and interesting way.
- Introduction and conclusion – Think carefully about how best to introduce and to conclude your topic.
- Start with a clear statement of what the idea is, and also think about the best way to wrap up and what note to finish on.
- If it's a heavy topic, find an understated and frank way to get off the ground.
- Be as concise as you can but don't oversimplify.
- Make a list of the evidence you want to use:
    - You will most likely need to cut things that you think are important.
    - Use evidence from research and your own practice.
    - Don't use too much jargon. Explain terminology.
- Our experience has been that reading from notes makes speakers appear less fluent and less engaging. So our advice is – if at all possible - know the content of your talk well enough to be able to speak to the camera without having to use detailed notes. (as a compromise, it can help to use a short list of one word prompts on a nearby flip chart or easy to read surface to help you stay focused as you record your talk).
- Be engaging, accurate, honest, precise, evidence based – but also don't be reluctant to be inspirational and engaging. Bring your own authentic style and energy to the talk.