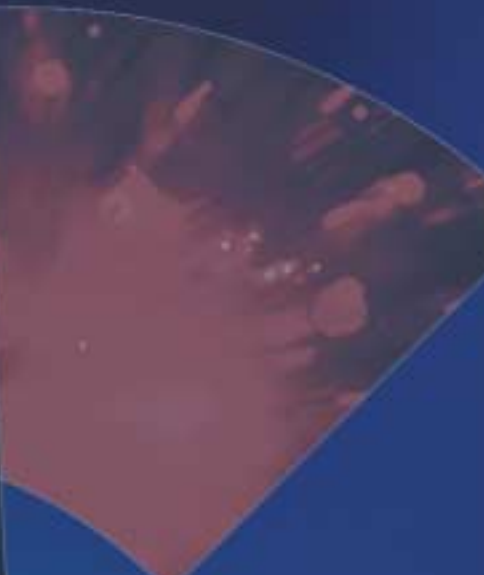


# HEAnet STRATEGIC PLAN 2008 - 2013

*'Lighting the Future'*



*HEAnet is Ireland's  
National Education and  
Research Network,  
providing high quality  
Internet Services to Irish  
Universities, Institutes  
of Technology and the  
research and educational  
community, including  
all Irish primary and  
post-primary schools.*



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Ollscoil na hÉireann, Gaillimh

# 1. Réamhfhocal ón gCathaoirleach

Nuair a bhí an plean straitéiseach seo á fhorbairt, rinneadh comhairliúchán forleathan le páirtithe leasmhara ar fud an phobail a bhfreastalaíonn HEAnet air. Agus an comhairliúchán sin á dhéanamh, bhí fonn ar Bhord agus Feidhmeannas HEAnet a chinntiú go mbíonn na seirbhísí a chuireann HEAnet ar fáil ailínithe go hiomlán le riachtanais na n-institiúidí ardoideachais, na scoileanna agus na bpáirtithe leasmhara eile. Bhí sé riachtanach freisin a chinntiú go mbíonn HEAnet agus a chuid gníomhaíochtaí ailínithe le beartas náisiúnta níos leithne maidir le forbairt sochaí ard-oilte. Go háirithe, is cuspóir príomhúil de chuid na straitéise seo tacaíocht a thabhairt do chuspóirí an Rialtais tríd an infheistíocht atá á déanamh i dtaighde agus forbairt in institiúidí ardoideachais le cláir cosúil leis an gClár um Thaighde in Institiúidí Tríú Leibhéal, Fondúireacht Eolaíochta Éireann, na Comhairlí taighde, an bord um Thaighde Sláinte agus eile.

Mar sheirbhís idirlín chomhtháite do na hinstitiúidí ardoideachais UILE is samhail mhaith é HEAnet de struchtúr is féidir leis éifeachtacht agus éifeachtúlacht níos mó a sheachadadh don chóras ardoideachais iomlán ó acmhainn ar leith. Cuireann a thréithe an-chomhoibríoch, a bhaineann leis an gcóras ar fad, samhail chleachtais agus eagraíochta ar fáil ar gá don chóras ardoideachais é a chur i bhfeidhm ar bhonn níos leithne má tá Éire chun ár spriocanna náisiúnta a bhaint amach agus chun dul in iomaíocht sa mhargadh idirnáisiúnta le haghaidh daoine le tallann.

Mar gheall ar fhorbairt leanúnach thionscadal an líonra scoileanna, tá timpeallacht á cruthú inár scoileanna a chuireann ar chumas leanaí taithí a fháil ar acmhainn iontach an idirlín ó aois óg agus a chuireann ar chumas múinteoirí é a úsáid mar uirlis chumhachtach do nuálaíocht san oideachas. Tá sé sin rithabhachtach, mar má táimid chun sochaí agus geilleagar ard-oilte a chruthú in Éirinn, agus má táimid chun deis a thabhairt dár bpobal uile tairbhe a bhaint as, ní mór tús a chur leis an obair sna blianta is luaithe den oideachas.

Gan amhras, is léir go bhfuilimid ag maireachtáil i ndomhan atá ag athrú go han-tapa. Fiú amháin ó chuireamar tús le hobair chun an straitéis seo a fhorbairt, tá athrú tagtha ar a lán cúrsaí, go háirithe cúrsaí a bhaineann le dálaí eacnamaíochta. Ag tráth cosúil leis seo, seans go bhfaighfí compord trí athdhaingniú agus trí fhilleadh ar sheanchinnteachtaí agus ar shean-bhealaí oibre. Ní bheadh sa chompord sin ach bréag-chompord, áfach, agus ní mhairfeadh sé i bhfad. Bheadh sé níos fearr dúinn a bheith níos tiomanta fós don sprioc maidir le geilleagar ard-oilte, spreagtha ag an nuálaíocht agus bunaithe ar na bunchlocha d'eolas agus caipiteal intleachtúil a chruthú. Caithfidh an uaillmhian agus an cumas araon a bheith ag Éirinn chun níos mó dár dteicneolaíocht nuálaíoch féin a ghiniúint agus a thráchtáil. Beidh treisiú agus forbairt shuntasach na gcumas ard-taighde agus oideachais riachtanach chun é sin a bhaint amach, agus tá HEAnet, a líonra agus a fhoireann oilte agus thiomanta anseo chun cabhrú leis sin.

**Tom Boland,**  
**Uachtarán, An Líonra Oideachais agus Taighde Náisiúnta na hÉireann,**  
**Príomhfheidhmeannach, An tÚdarás um Ard-Oideachas.**

# 1. Chairman's Foreword



**The development of this strategic plan involved extensive consultation with stakeholders throughout the community served by HEAnet. In undertaking that consultation the Board and Executive of**

**HEAnet were determined to ensure that the services that HEAnet provides are fully aligned with the requirements of the higher education institutions, the schools and other stakeholders. It was also essential to ensure that HEAnet and its activities are aligned with broader national policy in the development of a high skilled society. In particular a key objective of this strategy is to support the objectives of the Government in the investment being made in research and development in higher education institutions through programmes such as the Programme for Research in Third Level Institutions, Science Foundation Ireland, the Research Councils, the Health Research Board and others.**

HEAnet, as a single integrated internet service for ALL higher education institutions, is a good model of a structure which can deliver greater

efficiency and effectiveness for the higher education system as a whole from a particular resource. Its highly collaborative and system wide characteristics offer a model of practice and organisation which the higher education system needs to deploy more broadly if Ireland is to achieve our national goals and compete internationally for talent.

The continuing development of the schools network project sees the creation of an environment in our schools where children, from an early age, can experience the wonder of the internet and teachers can use it as a powerful tool for innovation in education. This is crucially important, since if Ireland is to be a high skilled society and economy, and if all our people are to be given the opportunity to benefit from that, then the work must begin in the earliest years of education.

To state an obvious truth, we are living in a fast changing world. Even since work began on developing this strategy so much has changed, especially in economic conditions.

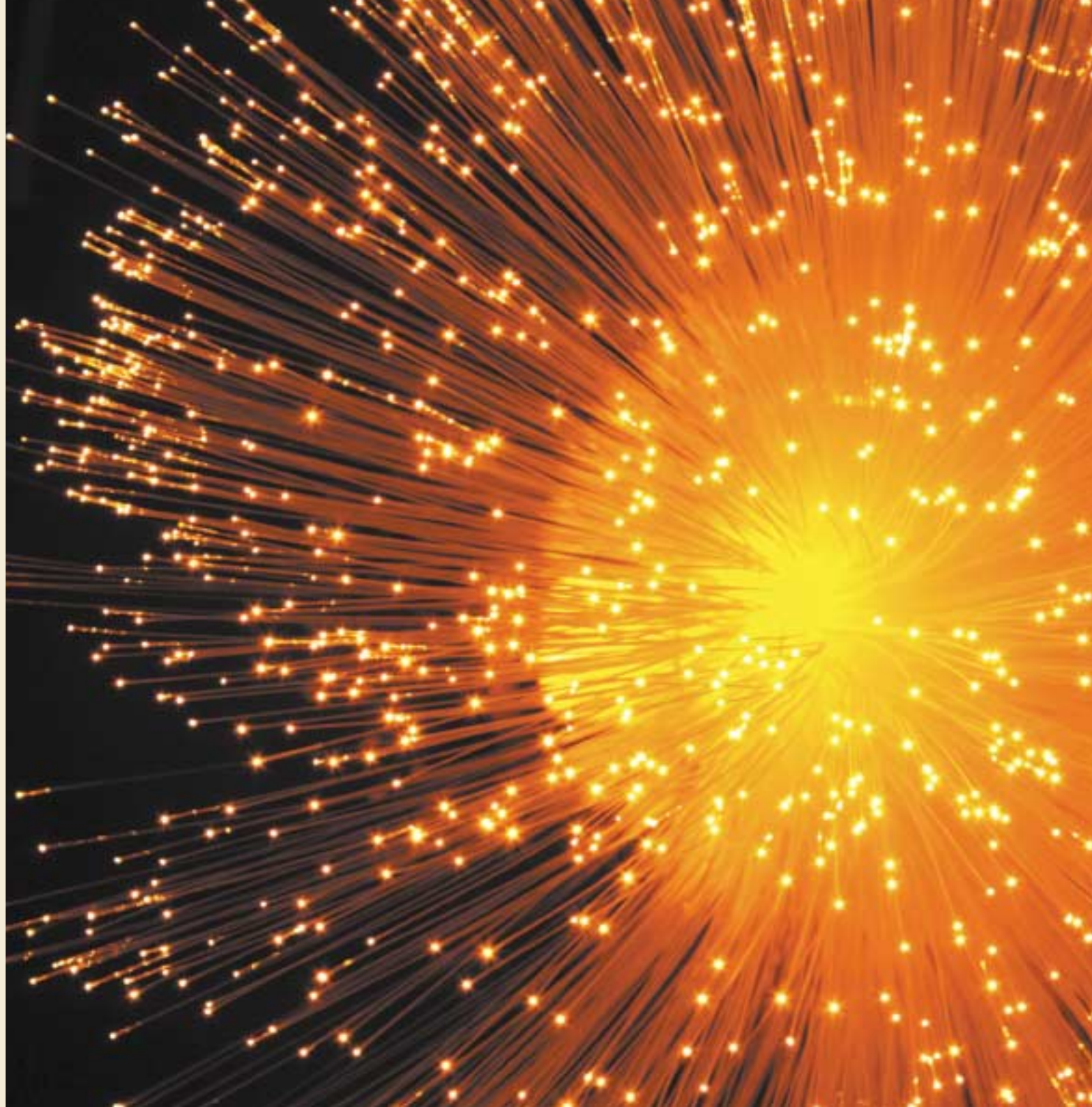
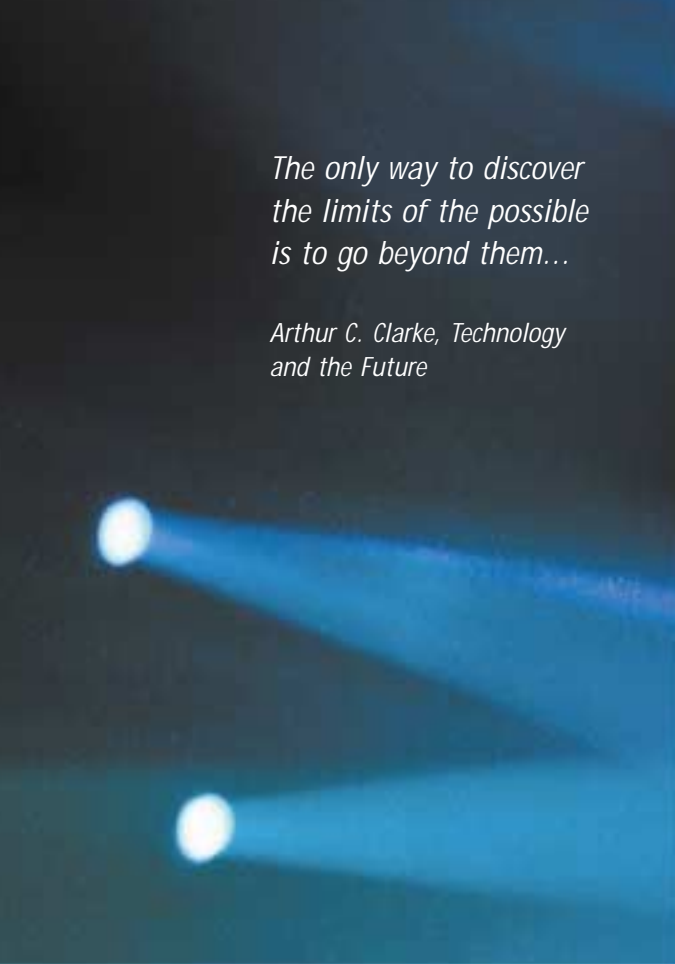
There may be some comfort in such a time to retrench and withdraw into old certainties and ways of working. If we do that, the comfort is false and will be short lived. Better that we redouble our commitment to the goal of an innovation driven, high skilled economy, based on the foundations of knowledge and intellectual capital. Ireland must have both the ambition and the capacity to generate and to commercialise more of our own innovative technology. A significant strengthening and development of advanced research and education capabilities will be central to the achievement of this and HEAnet, its network and its skilled and dedicated staff, are on hand to play our part.

**Tom Boland,  
Chairman, HEAnet Limited,  
Chief Executive, The Higher Education  
Authority**



*The only way to discover  
the limits of the possible  
is to go beyond them...*

*Arthur C. Clarke, Technology  
and the Future*



## 2. Message from the CEO

*“Education is not filling a bucket but lighting a fire”.*

*William Butler Yeats*



**In HEAnet we are proud to be building a fibre optic national infrastructure which will enable us to provide virtually infinite broadband capacity. This Research infrastructure, according**

**to the EU, “lies at the core of Europe’s knowledge triangle of Research, Education and Innovation”, and will play an increasing role in the advancement of knowledge, technology and innovation and their exploitation for Ireland’s benefit.**

Research and Education networking, provided by HEAnet is now established as essential to the lives of researchers, learners, teachers and administrators. We are truly building a joined-up community in Ireland - including all universities, institutes of technology, research organisations and primary and post-primary schools.

Networking can prove itself a proactive friend of the environment. Leading global companies have identified “Collaboration” and the “Green Agenda” as key trends for the future.

Through innovation and its advanced network and infrastructure HEAnet can support these trends and provide real value for money services for its community and funding bodies.

---

*“HEAnet is at the cornerstone of developing Ireland’s knowledge economy”.*

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The network will need to cater for the new generation of digital natives: mobile students who need to access their Virtual Learning Environment - “anytime, anywhere”. Video communication and research data will be the dominant internet traffic as our Strategic Plan matures over the coming years. We must be ready not just with the pipes to carry this traffic, but also with the services to support these applications and future trends.

I can confidently say that we at HEAnet are committed to delivering our contribution to the cyber infrastructure which is the driving engine for the Information Age.

HEAnet will continue to leverage its expertise and position to deliver services, based on economies of scale, which dynamically cater for the changing needs of the education and research sector in Ireland.

The opportunity now exists to exploit this advanced network through collaboration, innovation and delivery of services and we are determined to play our full part in meeting the requirements of education and research in the twenty-first century.

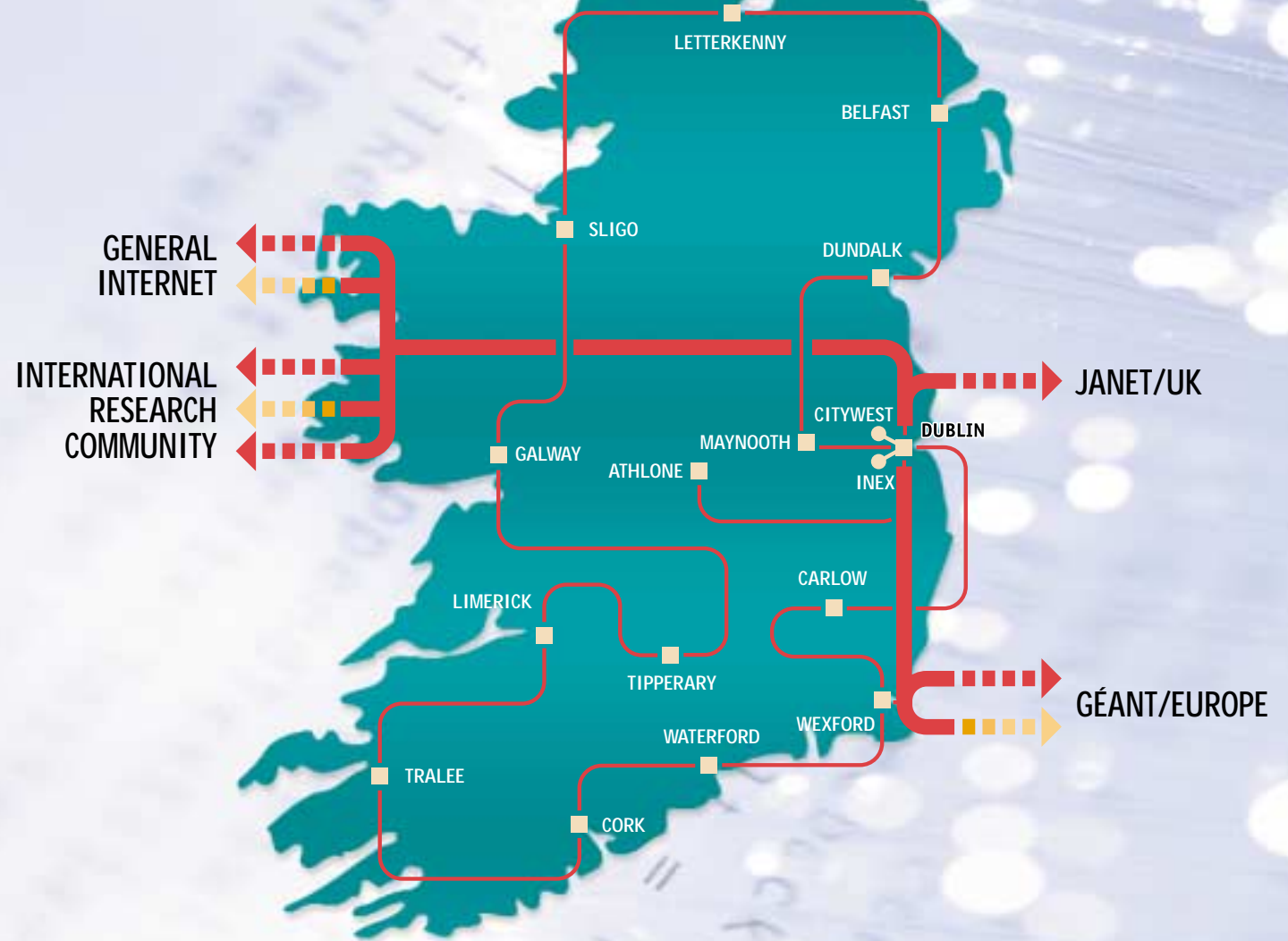
***John Boland***

***Chief Executive, HEAnet Limited***

*The SSTI seeks to...Strengthen and complement the national research infrastructure through linking the research system to centres of excellence internationally and foster partnerships through involvement in international research teams.*

*SSTI 2006-2013*

## HEAnet Backbone Infrastructure



# 3. About HEAnet

**HEAnet was initially established in 1983 by the Higher Education Authority (HEA) and the seven Irish universities to share computer resources. It was incorporated as Ireland's national education and research network in 1997, a not-for-profit limited company, and since then has grown steadily in the scope and quality of its service as well as the range of customers to whom it provides network connectivity.**

Today, the organisation provides high-quality, value-for-money Internet services to Irish universities, institutes of technology and the research/educational community (including Irish primary and post-primary schools).

In addition, it represents Ireland's research and education networking interests on a range of European bodies (including European Commission funded projects).

This is done through the efforts and commitment of its highly talented and dedicated staff.

The company's Board of Directors is drawn from and represents its stakeholders and funders.

This means that their strategic interests and concerns inform organisational objectives and activities which are focused on providing services consistent with the needs of the institutions and individuals who rely on it to facilitate their research and learning.

This learning is facilitated by providing a resilient, high-speed network which provides students and staff in the Irish educational institutions with connectivity to each other and also to other networks in Ireland, Europe, the USA and the rest of the world. While this is HEAnet's core responsibility, its expertise and the trust that has been built with its customers result in them looking to HEAnet for a wide range of network and associated Information & Communications Technology (ICT) advice and support.



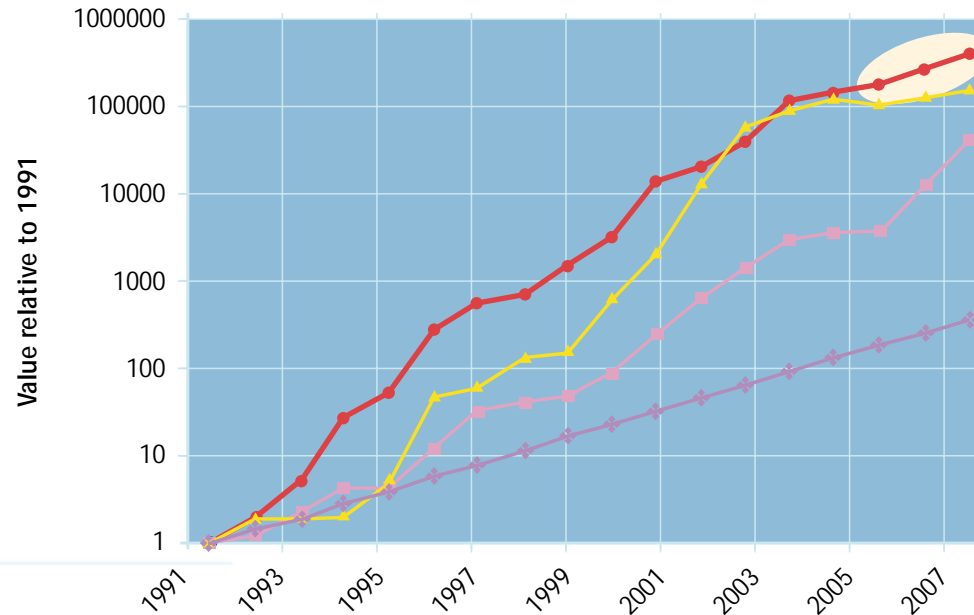
## STAKEHOLDERS

HEAnet has many stakeholders. They include:

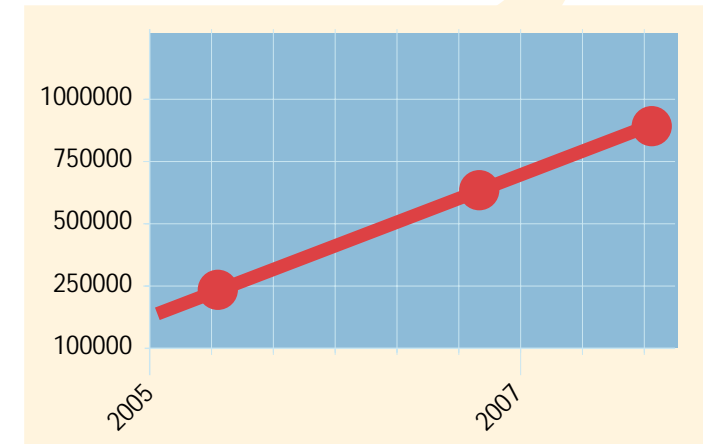
- Higher Education Institutions;
- The Higher Education Authority (the statutory planning and development authority for higher education and research in Ireland);
- Department of Education and Science, and other Government Departments;
- IT and Network Managers in the Universities and Institutes of Technology;
- Students (primary, post-primary, third-level and post-graduate);
- Staff in educational establishments;
- Researchers;
- HEAnet staff;
- Other funding agencies;
- Primary and post-primary sector;
- The Irish research library community;
- International/European National Research & Education Networks (NRENs) Community;
- International students and researchers.

Rate of Growth of Irish Education Network

Logarithmic Scale



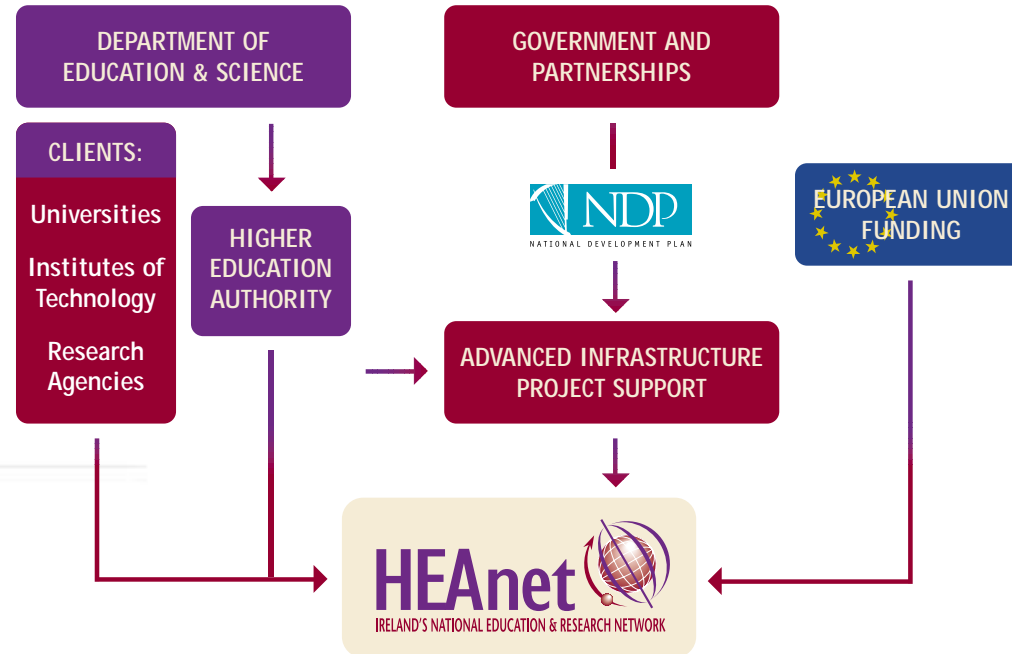
- Data Traffic (Gigabytes per month)
- Client Access Bandwidth (Kbps)
- National and International Bandwidth (Kbps)
- Moore's Law



This cut away of a small part of the overall graph shows more clearly the massive growth in Data traffic over the last few years and is indicative of trends for the future.

## FUNDING

HEAnet's funding comes from Universities; Institutes of Technology; The Higher Education Authority; The Department of Education and Science; other Education and Research organisations in the Republic of Ireland; the National Development Plan (NDP), the European Commission, and through successful tenders and proposals.



*In striving for excellence  
we have two overarching  
goals:*

- *To build up a sustainable system of world class research teams in terms of people and supporting infrastructure;*
- *To double our output of PhDs.*

*SSTI 2006-2013*



## 4. The Environment Within Which HEAnet Operates

The development of a knowledge-based economy is one of the key challenges and opportunities facing Ireland. The factors which have contributed to the country's economic success to date will not be sufficient to sustain recent achievements into the future. The National Development Plan (2007-2013) has a stated aim to place Ireland at the forefront of education in OECD countries. In seeking to address these challenges it strives towards a vision of Ireland in 2013 as being internationally renowned for the excellence of its research and at the leading-edge in generating and using new knowledge for economic and social progress.

While there is a growing acceptance of the importance of the higher education and research agenda as a key factor in the future success of Ireland's economy, it is critical that appropriate network and ICT services continue to be available. This is also the case if educational institutions (and the students and researchers within them) are to collaborate with Irish and international peers so as to stay at the forefront

of their fields. The ability of the HEAnet network to provide the capacity and reliability that its customers require is critical to the success of their learning and research programmes. There are also opportunities based on HEAnet's unique service to students throughout all stages of their education as the organisation provides services to primary and post-primary schools as well as to third-level institutions.

Within this context, the demands upon educational institutions in Ireland are increasing as the number of people participating in third and fourth level education is at an all-time high and is expected to grow further. (The Strategy for Science Technology and Innovation 2006 indicates an intention to double the number of PhDs by 2013). Additionally, the need for inter-institutional collaboration (both at a national and international level) continues to grow. The institutions are faced with the dilemma of catering for these greater demands while operating within limited resources.



*October, 2008: A new high speed telecommunications network, which has resulted in high speed broadband services being brought to the Connemara Gaeltacht, is as a result of a joint initiative undertaken by NUI Galway, HEAnet and Údarás na Gaeltachta.*

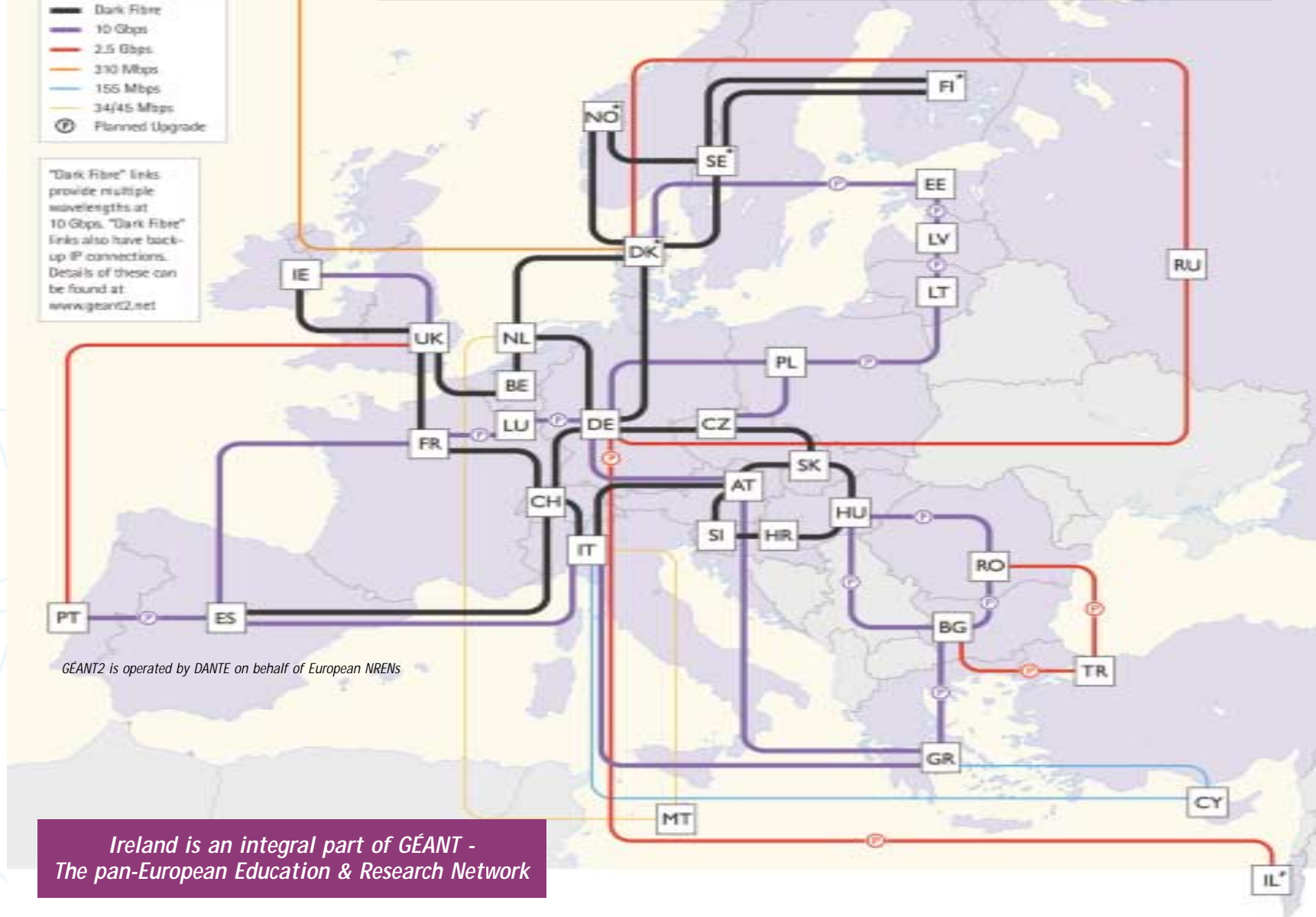
# GEANT2

AT Austria	CZ Czech Republic	FR France	HR Croatia	IS Iceland*	LV Latvia	PL Poland	SE Sweden*
BE Belgium	DE Germany	FI Finland*	HU Hungary	IT Italy	MT Malta	PT Portugal	SI Slovenia
BG Bulgaria	DK Denmark*	GR Greece	IE Ireland	LT Lithuania	NL Netherlands	RO Romania	SK Slovakia
CH Switzerland	EE Estonia	NO Norway*	IL Israel*	LU Luxembourg	NM Norway*	RU Russia	TR Turkey
CY Cyprus							UK United Kingdom

\*Connections between these countries are part of NORDUNET (the Nordic regional network) \*L includes connectivity IP back-up

- Dark Fibre
- 10 Gbps
- 2.5 Gbps
- 330 Mbps
- 155 Mbps
- 34/45 Mbps
- Planned Upgrade

"Dark Fibre" links provide multiple wavelengths at 10 Gbps. "Dark Fibre" links also have back-up IP connections. Details of these can be found at: [www.geant2.net](http://www.geant2.net)



GEANT2 is operated by DANTE on behalf of European NRENs

*Ireland is an integral part of GEANT - The pan-European Education & Research Network*

**HEAnet's contribution becomes increasingly critical as its customers report the following expectations of how the educational landscape will change over the next five years:**

- While the demands placed upon ICT networks will grow, it is expected that resources (both financial and human) will not increase in line with these demands;
- It is anticipated that the volume of innovation and research activities in educational institutions will grow even faster than it has in recent years. This will bring with it a greater demand for mobility, management and storage of data and for facilities vital to interaction between researchers (both nationally and internationally);
- Along with the increase in the amount of data being moved, the data storage needs of the educational institutions will vastly increase;
- As user mobility and the proliferation of portable devices increases, so will the need for greater security and ubiquitous access;

- An expected increase in the number of full- and part-time students partaking in distance learning and life-long learning will broaden the user requirement to access the networks;
- The data-sets that are to be processed, their storage and management requirements and the associated applications will become increasingly large and more complex;
- A need will arise amongst our customers to integrate additional services (such as, video on demand, multi-media, cctv, energy monitoring, etc.) onto the existing network;
- New and more flexible models based on shared services need to be developed;

It is also anticipated that there will be more inter-organisational groups collaborating in their learning and research. This will be prompted by increasing energy costs as well as tighter funding.

Associated with this, it is anticipated that the increase in collaboration will result in students and researchers associating themselves not only with individual educational establishments but more and more with the projects in which they are engaged - which, in turn, will result in even greater levels of collaboration.

Since its inception, HEAnet has been a critical component in the educational infrastructure in Ireland.

It is clear that the delivery of its strategy is a key enabler of the strategies of the educational institutions that are its customers.

The continued importance of its contribution is underlined by the SSTI, the Irish research agenda, the Government's strategy for a knowledge economy and the challenges faced by Irish educational institutions.

*Implementation of SSTI Strategy will move Ireland forward significantly in areas such as the output of PhDs, Gross Expenditure on R&D and Business Expenditure on R&D.*

*NDP 2007-2013*



# 5. The Strategic Development Process

The development and implementation of an effective strategy development process, designed to bring options to the Board for its approval, demanded a focused effort of involvement and consultation with key stakeholders. Management gathered data from those stakeholders and international best practice which were put forward to the Chairman and the Board as options for the organisation's strategy to 2013.

The questions to which answers were sought during the consultation process were:

- What were the successes achieved during the period of the previous strategic plan (2004-2007)?
- What was not achieved during that period? What are the resultant learnings?
- To what extent are the Mission and Vision that guided us through the last four years valid for the next five years?
- What are the current strengths and weaknesses of HEAnet?
- What are the opportunities and threats facing HEAnet over the next five years?
- What is on the landscape for our clients over the next five years? What changes and challenges will they face?
- What are the objectives that should form the pillars of our strategy for the next five years?



*HEAnet Board Strategic Planning Workshop*

*The steps in this process were as follows:*

1. **Internal staff and management workshops;**
2. **Regional workshops (Dublin & Cork) with a range of stakeholders;**
3. **Desk research into the published strategies and plans of other NRENs, Higher Education institutions and best-in-class development;**
4. **One-to-one meetings with Board members;**
5. **Board workshop (including leading international and industry contributions).**

The desk research centred around examination of the relevant strategies of international NRENs and Irish educational institutions<sup>1</sup>. It emerged from this research that, in terms of international benchmarking, HEAnet ranks highly with its international peers in its standards and vision.

The exercise also demonstrated that the organisation's strategy is relevant to and caters for the principle ICT networking needs of the educational institutions it serves.

In order to provide clarity around direction and priorities, it was considered necessary to identify which of the various stakeholders is the organisation's primary customer. Through the process of developing this strategy, this was given considerable thought and was discussed with many of HEAnet's stakeholders.

<sup>1</sup> *NRENs referenced included Canarie Inc., FUnet, SWITCH, SURFnet, JANET (UK). Irish educational institutions referenced included UCD, WIT, GMIT, ITT, DIT.*



The Board has identified the primary customer as being the Irish educational institutions and the primary providers of direction as being HEAnet's funders.

While the end users are the ultimate beneficiaries of the network, it is believed that the best way to cater for their needs is to align the organisation's work with the efforts of the educational institutions to support their learning and research endeavours.

This identification of a primary customer does not exclude other stakeholders from HEAnet's strategy or thinking. Rather it provides a prism through which the needs of all stakeholders can be addressed.

We would like to thank our Board members and other stakeholders who contributed their time, thinking and insights to the strategy development process.



*Pictured above: Larry Hirst, IBM, Mike Norris, HEAnet, Tánaiste and Minister for Enterprise, Trade & Employment, Mary Coughlan T.D., and Professor Luke Drury, DIAS.*



*IBM BlueGene/P Supercomputer*

***Tánaiste Launches Ireland's most powerful Supercomputer.***

*The Tánaiste and Minister for Enterprise, Trade & Employment, Mary Coughlan T.D., formally launched the IBM BlueGene/P Supercomputer; Ireland's most powerful computer, with Larry Hirst, Chairman of IBM EMEA at a ceremony at the Royal Irish Academy, Dublin, 30th October 2008.*

*Knowledge and intellectual capital will provide the foundations for the new innovation economy. This being so, Ireland must have both the ambition and the capacity to generate and to commercialise more of its own technology, domestically.*

*PRTL I 2006*



# 6. Mission and Vision Statements & Corporate Values

“HEAnet and its staff are committed to delivering and supporting advanced network and associated ICT services in furtherance of national and international objectives for Irish education and research.”

*Our vision is to fulfill that mission by focusing on:*

- Delivering networking excellence and value for money;
- Developing and supporting world class services to meet the needs of our community;
- Providing strategic opportunities for global collaboration to Irish education and research;
- Gaining leverage from expertise, scale and position as a national network service for the benefit of our clients and stakeholders;
- Developing our people and recognising their contribution to the on-going success of the organisation;
- Ensuring an appropriate mix of competencies and capabilities essential to deliver on our mission.

## CORPORATE VALUES

In delivering the strategic imperatives outlined in this document, HEAnet promotes adherence to the following corporate values amongst its staff and stakeholders.

### Integrity:

- awareness of obligations arising from the receipt of public funding;
- respecting commitments and being true to one’s word;
- acknowledging mistakes and seeking to solve issues constructively;
- behaving in a consistent manner towards all stakeholders.

### Open & Transparent

- rigorous and transparent tendering for goods and services;
- open communication with others;
- accountability for own actions.

### Collaboration

- encouraging teamwork;
- sharing knowledge and learning;
- working towards the goals of our clients as well as our own.

### Enthusiasm

- demonstration of pride in and dedication to the achievement of goals;
- provision of a working environment which management and staff find stimulating and where they can give of their best;
- self-motivation, initiative and positive energy;
- rewarding innovation and creativity.



## 7. The 5 Strategic Pillars

HEAnet - Delivering and supporting advanced

**NETWORK  
EXCELLENCE**

**CUSTOMER  
ALIGNED**

**COMPE  
& CAPA**

network and associated ICT services

RELIABILITY  
SECURITY

INNOVATION &  
COLLABORATION

SERVICE  
EXCELLENCE

**The five strategic pillars agreed by the Chairman and the Board of Directors which will dictate HEAnet's direction and objectives for the next five years are:**

## 1. NETWORK EXCELLENCE

Central to HEAnet's core function, is the provision of a reliable and robust network. This network will be based on fibre-optic infrastructure, and should provide the most advanced facilities and services in Ireland to meet the needs of our education and academic community.

This network forms a backbone of comprehensive connectivity, excellent communication and enhanced services within the higher education & research community, along with other services including managed connectivity to the Internet and the international education environment for Ireland's 4,000 primary and post-primary schools.

Therefore HEAnet's critical role is:

- to provide a high-speed network through which its customers can access learning and share/store information as quickly and easily as possible;

- to fulfill this through providing a network and ICT infrastructure on which its clients can rely twenty four hours a day, every day of the year;
- to continue to ensure that the network on which its customers rely maintains the highest possible standards of reliability and resilience;
- to support "next generation" teaching, learning and research.

## 2. CUSTOMER ALIGNED

While HEAnet's principal responsibility is to provide the network and associated ICT services which facilitate its clients' learning and research, the organisation will broaden its view beyond the network itself, therefore ensuring that actions and activities are focused on the needs and requirements of its customers.

This entails:

- developing an ever-increasing intimacy with and awareness of the organisation's customers and their situations;

- continuously reviewing the environment in which its customers operate, developing an ever-greater understanding of their objectives and issues, and engendering a close relationship of collaboration and trust with all its customers;
- increasing the value for money provided to customers through a deeper understanding of their strategies, goals and challenges;
- striving to ensure that the quality of the relationship with customers is as highly valued by them as the quality of the network itself;
- maximising the added value that customers derive from HEAnet by increasing stakeholders' awareness of the potential that its service offers.

HEAnet has a reputation amongst its customers for providing expert advice and neutral counsel. As they face increasingly complex technology issues, the need of the educational institutions for a trusted third party becomes more urgent. By aligning itself more closely with its customers, HEAnet will increase the extent to which it is able to fulfill that role where appropriate.



### 3. COMPETENCE AND CAPABILITY

HEAnet is proud to have staff who hold a very high level of competency and capability within their fields. However, as technologies develop and customers' needs change, it is critical that the organisation recognises and acts on the strategic importance of continuously developing its people and organisation.

Therefore, the company will regularly examine and invest in:

- its individual and organisational competence and capability;
- developing and refining its structures and behaviours;
- the skill sets to best meet the strategic imperatives in this plan and fulfill the needs of its customers.

This development of competence and capability will be achieved in collaboration with the expertise within ICT departments of the educational institutions through knowledge sharing and the use of external partnerships.

### 4. INNOVATION AND COLLABORATION

Innovation is a key ingredient in HEAnet's success and that of the educational institutions it serves, as well as a key driver within the national agenda. While its customers focus on the provision of the best possible educational and research facilities over HEAnet's production-quality network, they also rely on HEAnet to proactively bring "leading-edge" network technologies to them.

For that reason, the company must adopt a proactive leadership role in promoting the newest and most advanced thinking and solutions to its customers.

While the provision of a high-quality, reliable network is its core purpose, HEAnet recognises that the nature of technology is changing and that it is not the network itself which enables learning and research but rather the data that moves along it. For that reason, the organisation does not preclude embarking on additional projects from time to time. (A case in point is the provision of a managed network to primary and post-primary schools which commenced in 2006.)

However, the decision to embark on such projects will be taken on a case-by-case basis

and will be based on the extent to which such projects fulfill the following criteria:

- Cost effectiveness/Value for money;
- Promotes collaboration;
- Appropriate scale;
- Innovation;
- Existence of specialist expertise;
- Sustainability.

### 5. SERVICE EXCELLENCE

HEAnet is committed to continuously enhancing the service it provides to its customers. This requires benchmarking and measurement of the services provided against best practice and international peers. To support this, the organisation will put more robust service level agreements (SLA) in place which will facilitate a clear understanding of the nature and quality of service that customers need and will enable measurement of the extent to which those needs are fulfilled.

As part of this pillar of the strategy, emphasis will be placed on:

- enhancing the existing customer relationship management skills within the organisation;
- anticipating and providing solutions to critical customer requirements.

*The large Hadron Collider is the largest and most complex scientific instrument ever built and the highest energy particle accelerator in the world. The accelerator is located 100m underground and runs through both French and Swiss territory.*

*2008 marks the culmination of 20 years of work by physicists, engineers, technicians and support staff from over 80 different countries.*

*CERN (European Organisation for Nuclear Research) copyright, October 2008*



# 8. Success Indicators

Detailed implementation plans (including analytics, metrics and measurement) will form part of the operational plans to be developed and presented to the Board at subsequent Board Meetings.

In order to measure and evaluate the degree to which HEAnet delivers its objectives, benchmarks have been defined against which the organisation will continuously evaluate its performance. At a micro level within HEAnet each function, team and individual has specific objectives and goals identified within the organisation's performance management and development system which contribute to the overall effectiveness of HEAnet.

At an organisational level, performance will be assessed under each of the strategic pillars using the following measures:

## NETWORK EXCELLENCE

The network will be deemed to be reliable if:

- we deliver to the levels of dependability that our customers need;
- we demonstrate an adherence to the service level agreements agreed through SLAs;
- we communicate our levels of service availability.

## CUSTOMER ALIGNED

Feedback from customers is critical to this aspect of the strategy. To ensure HEAnet achieves the levels of customer alignment identified during the strategy review process the following measures are crucial:

- the degree to which we are intimately familiar with our customers' strategies, challenges and needs;
- the degree to which we are able to anticipate their needs and provide solutions and advice which meet those needs in a way which demonstrates a strong understanding of relevant issues and priorities.

The past number of years has seen HEAnet develop an exceptional level of expertise in networking and ICT and this is reflected in the trust and faith that its customers place in it.

*While maintaining and striving to enhance this expertise, HEAnet must now:*

- develop a strong understanding of our customers' business, environment, thinking and challenges so that we can interact with them in ways that are meaningful;
- develop our relationship with our customers so that we are playing a "partner" role as well as a "service provider" role.



## COMPETENCE AND CAPABILITY

HEAnet's success to date has been built on the competencies and capabilities of its people. Continued focus must be measured not only at an individual level within HEAnet but also at the level of the overall organisation.

HEAnet believes that success in this aspect of its strategy is not just measured by the amount of skills, technical knowledge and expertise possessed but rather by the effect created by their usage.

**Therefore, this will be measured by:**

- the extent to which we demonstrate and share with our customers awareness of and familiarity with "leading-edge" technology;
- the frequency with which our customers consult us to contribute to the solution of their issues;
- our ability to respond quickly and effectively to customer concerns and issues.

Through effective leadership, HEAnet will ensure that its small and highly capable staff group continues to have its skills developed and enhanced through:

- effective training and development at an individual level;
- by building an organisation structure capable of maximising their competence and contribution.

## INNOVATION AND COLLABORATION

In an environment where demands and expectations increase at a faster pace than the resources available, innovation is necessary. The degree to which HEAnet brings collaboration and innovation to its customers will be measured by:

- how often we bring new innovations and solutions to them;
- our contribution to assuring that the needs of our customers are represented and protected at European and international level so that Ireland's NREN remains at the leading edge of network services and thinking;
- solutions which are appropriate to their needs and address their issues;
- our commitment to fostering a collaborative relationship with our customers;

- our commitment and ability to collaborate successfully with our international peers.

Innovation and collaboration success will be evaluated using feedback from customers and peers, and by the quality of collaborative projects that are completed.

**On approval of this strategy by the Board:**

- detailed operational plans (including analytics, metrics and measurements) will be developed for each year of the strategy;
- mid-year and annual reports (which will give an account of progress achieved) will be presented to the Board.



## SERVICE EXCELLENCE

The level of service that HEAnet provides to its customers is recognised as being of a very high standard. This is evidenced by statistics such as:

- response times;
- service availability;
- consultancy support and advice.

During the term of this strategic plan, this continues to be a key strategic priority for the organisation. HEAnet's ability to deliver excellent service will be measured using:

- the Service Level Agreements;
- the extent to which our customers demonstrate their faith and trust in our solutions and advice;

- the development of national and regional networking infrastructure;
- the development of new services and enhancements to existing services.

Service Level Agreements are in place in relation to many aspects of our offering to our customers and we intend to broaden our existing SLAs so that more aspects of our service offering can be measured.

*Open Day at the CERN  
Hadron Collider.*

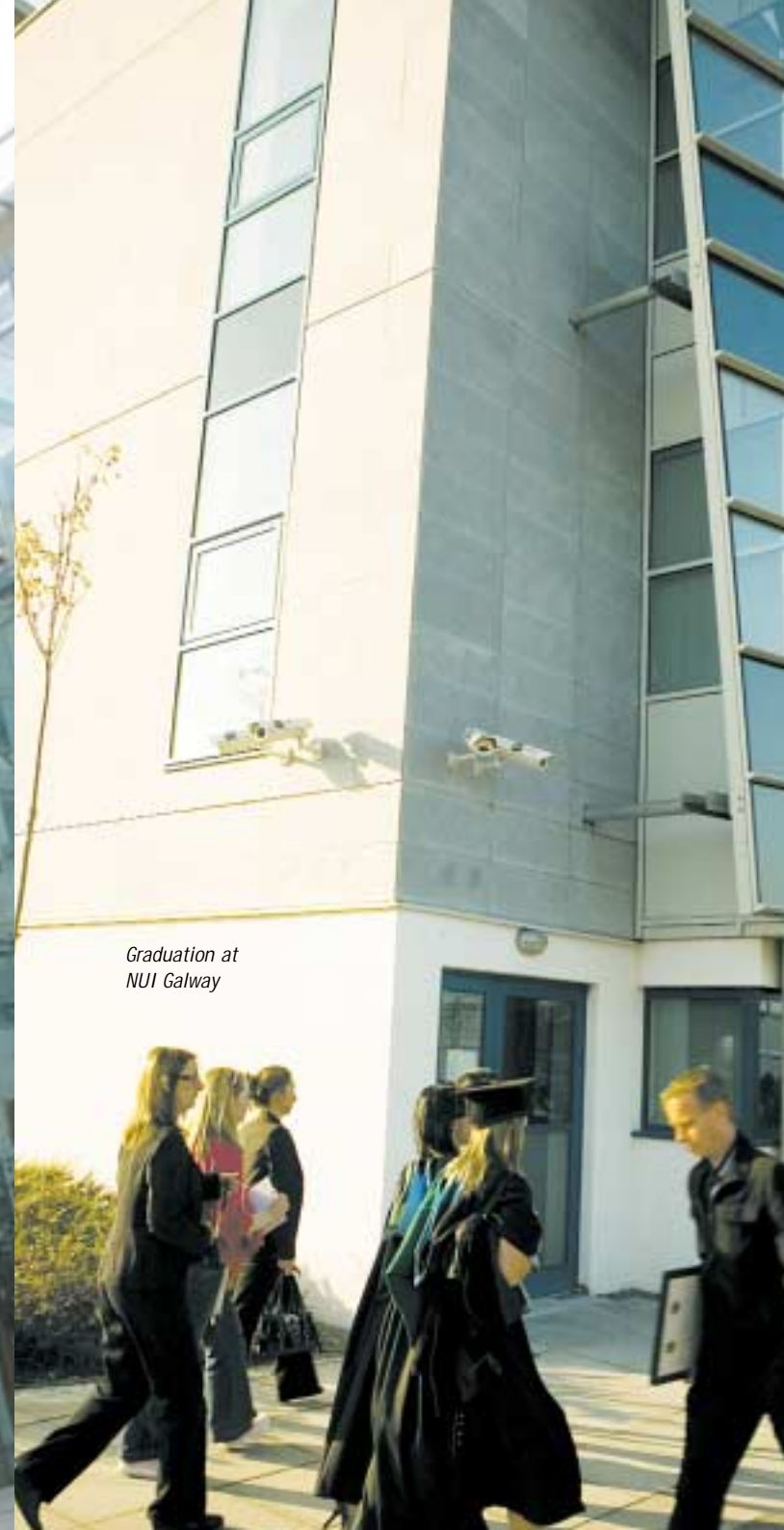


*The development of a knowledge-based economy is one of the key challenges and opportunities facing Ireland.*

*NDP 2007-2013*



*National College of Ireland*



*Graduation at NUI Galway*

# 9. HEAnet Client List

- Athlone Institute of Technology
- Ballyfermot College of Further Education
- Blanchardstown Institute of Technology
- Carlow College
- Carlow Institute of Technology
- Central Applications Office
- City of Dublin VEC
- Cork Institute of Technology
- Dublin City University
- Dublin Institute of Advanced Studies
- Dublin Institute of Technology
- Dundalk Institute of Technology
- Dun Laoghaire Institute of Art, Design & Technology
- Economic & Social Research Institute
- Environmental Protection Agency
- Grangegorman Development Agency
- Galway/Mayo Institute of Technology
- Health Research Board
- Hermes Project/NCTE
- Higher Education Authority
- Higher Education & Training Awards Council
- IE Domain Registry
- Institute of Public Administration
- Institutes of Technology Ireland (IoTI)
- Irish Centre for High End Computing
- Irish Universities Association
- Letterkenny Institute of Technology
- Limerick Institute of Technology
- National Cancer Registry of Ireland
- National College of Art & Design
- National College of Ireland
- National Qualifications Authority of Ireland
- National University of Ireland
- National University of Ireland, Maynooth
- Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland
- Royal Irish Academy
- RIFTFS
- Sligo Institute of Technology
- St. Angela's College, Sligo
- Tallaght Institute of Technology
- Tipperary Institute
- Tralee Institute of Technology
- Trinity College Dublin
- University College Cork
- University College Dublin
- University of Limerick
- Waterford Institute of Technology
- 4,000 primary and post-primary schools, through the Department of Education & Science

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