

Institute of Public Administration

# Strategic Plan 2017-2021

Executive Summary



# Introduction

Welcome to this brochure highlighting the main points from the IPA's Strategic Plan 2017-2021. This plan, which builds on the success and achievements of previous plans, is being published at a time when Ireland is seeing signs of economic recovery. Since its establishment in 1957, the Institute has developed an excellent reputation both nationally and internationally for providing education, training, research, publishing and capacity-building services and support for public sector development and reform.

The most significant challenge for the Institute over the lifetime of the previous strategic plan was managing a difficult budgetary situation. In overall terms the IPA's income reduced from almost €20 million in 2008 to just over €11 million in 2015. However, the Institute has continued to deliver a professional service to its key stakeholders, who have also experienced austerity measures.

The public sector is in transition, affected by many internal and external factors. The IPA offers a unique mix of services, making it the partner of choice for the public sector to achieve this transformation successfully.

New requirements are now arising from developments across the public sector. There is an emphasis on control of spending, the need to do more with less, joined-up government, closer integration of policy formulation and implementation, more flexible public service labour markets, greater use of technology, building and maintaining trust in public institutions, and accountability. There is a need to further develop skills in such areas as governance, leadership,

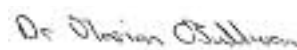
management, communication, project management and human resource management. There is a significant focus on the professionalisation of the public sector.

The IPA is privileged to have a highly talented, professional and committed staff, and a strong body of associates. They are vitally important in delivering on our mission and vision. We are committed to supporting our staff in their professional and personal development so as to allow them to excel in their work and deliver on our strategic priorities and objectives.

The Strategic Plan 2017-2021 sets out the IPA's mission, vision, values, strategic priorities and outcomes to the end of 2021. A copy of the full plan is available at [www.ipa.ie](http://www.ipa.ie). We would like to acknowledge all those involved in contributing, shaping and developing this plan. We look forward to working with the IPA Board, all our staff, students and stakeholders in delivering an exciting future for the Institute.



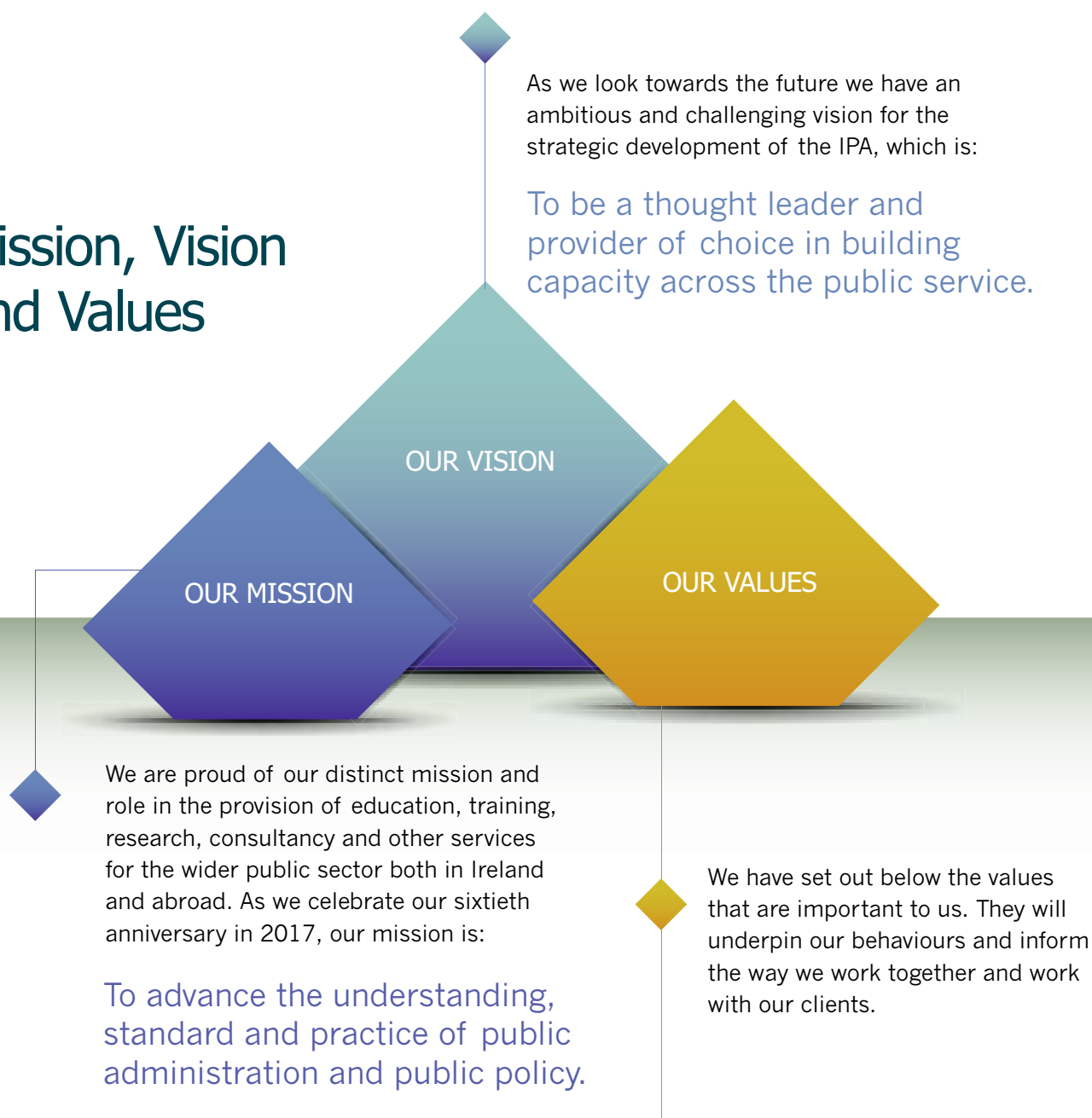
Dr Marian O'Sullivan  
Director General



Mr Martin O'Halloran  
Chairman



## Mission, Vision and Values



- **Integrity:** To be honest, sincere and ethical in our dealings with one another and with clients;
- **Client-centred and responsive:** To act efficiently and effectively in the best interests of the client and in meeting their needs;
- **Openness and accountability:** To act and to take decisions in a transparent manner and be open to scrutiny;
- **Trust and respect:** To ensure we are trustworthy both to clients and to colleagues and those with whom we come in contact;
- **Innovation and learning:** To always strive for new ideas, best solutions and the acquisition and dissemination of new knowledge;
- **Research-informed:** To have due regard to available and evidence-based research in our decision-making and in the services we provide;
- **Practice-led:** To pursue good practice and facilitate practitioner knowledge; insight and experience to be shared and implemented across the public service.

# Strategic Outcomes, Priorities and Objectives

The IPA's mission is to advance the understanding, standard and practice of public administration and public policy. We have identified a number of strategic outcomes which will support our overall purpose. These outcomes will be measured through a range of quantitative and qualitative measures.



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## STRATEGIC PRIORITY

Provide relevant, flexible, practice-led, research-informed services and products aligned with current and emerging needs in the public service



### Objectives

- a) Provide high-quality, cost-effective services and products which respect the needs of clients
- b) Provide flexible and responsive services, accessible across the public service, which facilitate a balance between work, life and learning
- c) Inform discussion, debate and practice on the current and future direction of the public service
- d) Provide opportunity for progression on accredited pathways and for continuous professional development
- e) To develop further a quality assurance (QA) regime to establish, maintain and enhance the quality of our accredited education programmes in line with university requirements



### Indicative actions for our annual business plans

- Align our activities with all public service learning and development models;
- Complete the institutional review process required by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform;
- Conduct service cost analysis, tender analysis and competitor analysis, and review quarterly.
- Adapt our programme and training delivery models to meet emerging needs;
- As needed, form partnerships to bid for and deliver products and services;
- Revise our current portfolio of education, training, advisory and support services in the light of trends and emerging needs.
- Develop public service observatory function;
- Promote IPA publications and *Administration* journal to a wider audience;
- Use IPA forums and networks to promote new thinking and best practice.
- Review operation of IPA-UCD partnership;
- Update our policies and procedures on access, transfer and progression;
- Develop links with professional bodies to enhance routes to professional accreditation of learning.
- Enhance our QA framework and revise existing QA policies and procedures in line with national and European requirements;
- Secure approval for revised QA processes in line with Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) requirements;
- Publish approved QA policies and procedures on IPA website;
- Review effectiveness of the implementation of QA policies and procedures in line with QQI requirements.

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## STRATEGIC PRIORITY

Provide a progressive organisational environment, resourced to deliver quality and excellence



### Objectives

- a) Develop our human resources strategy to target current and future capacity and capability requirements
- b) Support an environment which promotes and embeds our strategy and shared values
- c) Maintain and enhance the IPA as a financially viable organisation
- d) Enhance the client and staff experience



### Indicative actions for our annual business plans

- Agree and implement revised organisation structure to support flexible and responsive delivery of services;
  - Review internal capacity to achieve corporate objectives, including the use of an associate model;
  - Implement staff resourcing, staff development and staff succession plans;
  - Develop strategic human resources plan.
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- Ensure organisation-wide engagement with strategy through allocation of responsibilities/ accountability underpinned by effective performance management;
  - Implement formal communication mechanisms to improve cross-organisation communication, and enable greater understanding and integrated working.
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- Prepare and monitor business plans;
  - Prepare and monitor product income and services costs;
  - Maintain monthly/quarterly reviews of management accounts;
  - Maintain high governance standards reflected in taking action on the gap analysis with 2016 governance code and Comptroller & Auditor General audit.
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- Prepare three-year rolling infrastructure plan;
  - Develop and launch new IT services for staff and clients;
  - Develop IPA longer-term campus plan.

3

## STRATEGIC PRIORITY

Actively promote and position the IPA as a key provider of choice for the wider public service



### Objectives

- a) Develop a marketing and communications strategy
- b) Develop a stakeholder engagement strategy
- c) Increase the strategic visibility and profile of the IPA and its staff



### Indicative actions for our annual business plans

- Target our core market, document our 'value add' and our 'differentiators' from competition, e.g. our products/services and how we deliver them to clients;
- Develop a unified brand and implement consistently across the organisation;
- Develop a communications strategy to support the promotion of IPA activities;
- Agree our marketing channels, e.g. website, social media, print media.
- Coordinate processes by which the IPA currently engages stakeholders, e.g. corporate members, committees, board members, students, alumni;
- Further develop opportunities to provide a safe networking environment for stakeholders to debate and share experience and best practice;
- Establish an IPA alumni network.
- Actively look for speaking, networking and related opportunities to forge new relationships and raise the profile of the IPA;
- Deliver a programme of sectoral events - seminars/conferences;
- Deliver an events programme to mark sixtieth anniversary of the IPA.



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