



“Excellence through Collaborative Leadership and Management”

Cluster Co-ordination

Background to the scheme

This scheme aims to assist schools to further develop their leadership capacity. The Department of Education and Skills invites schools to participate in a pilot scheme designed to facilitate schools in **harnessing and optimising internal leadership and management capacity at all levels.**

The scheme will comprise a national programme of projects operating at a local level. Each project will explore approaches to school leadership and management that involves and empowers the leadership teams in the participating schools.

Schools will be invited to engage in **innovative clusters** with a shared vision for school improvement.

For the purposes of this proposal, **a cluster is defined as a collection of between three and six schools** who collaborate in the design, delivery, evaluation and dissemination of the outcomes of these innovative projects.

The pilot, including the application stage, will take place from **November 2018** with a view to planning and implementation of the projects from **February 2019**. The pilot phase will run until **June 2020**.

Clusters will be hosted by Education Centres, who will establish panels of personnel from third level, business and industry to provide advice and support to participating schools. Access to DES support services and to the Centre for School Leadership (CSL) will also be available to school clusters.

Each cluster will appoint a Cluster Co-ordinator who will be the single point of contact for the Education Centre.

The Cluster Co-ordinator will be responsible for managing the ongoing operation of the project.

CSL will assign a Facilitator for each cluster. The Facilitator will collaborate with the cluster Co-ordinator in relation to organising and facilitating meetings of the cluster. The Facilitator will act as a mentor for the Cluster Co-ordinator throughout the course of the project.

Role of Cluster Co-ordinator

The Cluster Co-ordinator plays a key role in enabling the successful implementation of the project.

The Co-ordinator takes responsibility for:

- Managing the development and maintenance of the project schedule, by;
 - Adopting overall responsibility for ensuring adherence to the agreed schedule
 - Ensuring evaluation elements are integral to the project reporting
 - Assigning tasks, which may include but are not limited to:
 - Maintaining clear lines of communication with the Education Centre Director, the Facilitator appointed by CSL and the participating schools in the cluster
 - Identifying and communicating to the Education Centre the project's support and professional learning requirements
 - Developing and submitting agreed reports on project implementation in line with requirements
 - Facilitating communication and collective decision-making within the cluster
 - Organising meetings and events within the cluster
 - Planning for project requirements, including training
 - Ensuring compliance with the terms of the pilot scheme