



18 innovative companies across the island shortlisted for prestigious awards

The search for the most innovative organisations across the island, North and South, is one step closer with the announcement today of the shortlist of 18 organisations selected for The Irish Times InterTradelreland Innovation Awards, now in its fifth year.

The 18 innovative organisations were selected from wide ranging sectors from all over Ireland and Northern Ireland.



The 2014 Judging Panel

The Shortlist

The shortlist features 18 entries from established companies, innovators, start-ups and academia. The shortlisted companies are:

- **Agri Food Category:** Animal Health Ireland (Leitrim), BFree Foods (Dublin) and Keenans (Carlow)
- **Creative Industries Category:** 360 Production (Derry/Londonderry), VKomodo Learning Ltd (Belfast) and Viddyad (Dublin)
- **Bioscience Category:** APC Ltd (Dublin), Equilume (Kildare), Orbsen Therapeutics Ltd (Galway)
- **Energy & The Environment Category:** Airsynergy (Longford) Irish Aviation Authority (Dublin) and Oxyemem (Westmeath)
- **IT & Communications:** Auxilion (Dublin), Gesaky Interactive (Dublin), Shimmer (Dublin)
- **Manufacturing:** Andor Technology (Belfast), Foldeaze Ltd (Down), Restored Hearing Ltd (Sligo)

The Prizes

The winners will be announced at an awards ceremony on Wednesday 9th April 2014 in Dublin. Each category winner will secure a €10,000 media package with The Irish Times and an iPad. They will then compete to win the overall title of 'Innovation of the Year', which awards the winner with a communications and advertising package from The Irish Times, worth €150,000. In addition, a UCD scholarship for an Executive Education programme commencing in 2015 and a state of the art laptop.

Judges

More than 136 detailed entries were reviewed by an initial panel of judges from the world of academia, media and business. The 18 shortlisted entries will present their innovations before a distinguished final panel of judges in Dublin in February. The final judging panel includes:

- **Liam Kavanagh, Managing Director, The Irish Times;**
- **Thomas Hunter McGowan, CEO, InterTradelreland;**
- **Dr. Ivan Coulter, CEO and founder of biotech firm Sigmoid Pharma and previous winner;**
- **Dr. David Dobbin, CBE, Group Chief Executive, United Dairy Farmers;**
- **Dr. Christopher J Horn, co-founder of Iona Technologies, Brian Caulfield, Partner at DFJ Esprit,**
- **Norman Crowley, CEO & Founder, Crowley Carbon Ltd and**
- **Mark Nodder, Group Managing Director, the Wright Group.**

For more information

For more information, visit www.irishtimes.com/innovation. Joint partner of the 2014 Awards is InterTradelreland.

Associate Sponsors include: Teagasc; UCD Michael Smurfit Business Graduate School and Science Foundation Ireland

Innovation support packages for SMEs worth up to £44k / €52k available right now. Interested?

Got a new idea for your business, want to develop new

products or introduce a new process or service - but lack the time, expertise and money to do this? Don't worry - InterTradelreland can help.

Not only can we offer your business **up to £44,250/ €52,800** * to help you do just that, we can also provide you with the necessary expertise through our **FUSION** Programme.



Equine Centre, Kildare

InterTradelreland Innovation Programme - FUSION

If you haven't heard about us before, we are very easy to work with and we have already helped 500 other companies just like yours across the island so you are in good hands. In fact, on average, each company that participates on FUSION generates more than £1million worth of business development value as a result of increased sales, efficiency savings, new product development or process improvements.

So how does it work?

We will match your company with an academic partner that has the specialist expertise you need and help you to find and employ a high calibre science, engineering or technology graduate who will be employed by you to lead your chosen innovation project for 12 or 18 months. We will also be there with you every step of the way to guide you through the project ensuring maximum benefit for you and your business.

Dont just take our word.....

"Through InterTradelreland's FUSION programme we were able to take our project to the next level. Our graduate was a great asset to the business and instrumental in developing the project. Working closely with Queen's University we received academic support and supervision throughout the duration of the programme. We had access to world class forensic and IT facilities in Queen's University which was all made possible by participating in the Fusion programme. The whole process was worthwhile and I would recommend the Fusion programme to any SMEs."

Mark Sherry, Head of Finance and Administration, Irish Equine Centre, Kildare

"With the construction industry being one of the most severely affected sectors in the downturn, we soon realised that it was either 'innovate or evaporate'. In recent years we have been committed to the use of sustainable materials and energy efficient construction processes in all our work, but in the current climate, in order to continue to be affordable to our clients, it was vital that a more cost-effective, eco-friendly building model was developed. We needed extra skilled resource to take this idea forward and the InterTradelreland FUSION programme proved to be the perfect solution."

Leonard Kelly, Director, Kelly Brothers, Warrenpoint

Interested?

Hopefully by now we have got your interest. But you can find out more about InterTradelreland FUSION on our website www.intertradeireland.com/fusion or if you prefer you can call or email us now on:

T: 028 3026 0700 (048 from Ireland)
E: fusion@intertradeireland.com

* Eligibility criteria applies. Full details of support package can be [downloaded here](#).

EY Entrepreneur Of The Year™ Launches The 2014 Search For Ireland's Leading Entrepreneurs

Nominations for the 2014 EY Entrepreneur Of The Year™ programme officially opened recently as EY kicked off their nationwide search for Ireland's leading entrepreneurs.

Over 100 entrepreneurs attended the national launch event at the EY offices on Harcourt Street, Dublin, where they heard about the significant benefits of being part of the programme from the 2013 overall winner, Patrick Joy (Suretank) and 2013 finalist Caroline Keeling (Keelings).



EOY 2014

Known globally as the most prestigious business accolade for entrepreneurs, the EY Entrepreneur Of The Year™ Ireland programme has transformed over the past 16 years into an intensive development programme for the best entrepreneurs across the island of Ireland.

CEO Retreat

As part of the programme, this year's 24 finalists will join a group of 150 entrepreneurs, all previous finalists and winners of EY Entrepreneur Of The Year™, for a week-long CEO Retreat taking place between Seattle and Vancouver. The intensive week will include world-class executive education sessions as well as master classes with renowned entrepreneurs and CEOs of some of the world's biggest multinationals.

The Categories

The awards programme is divided into three categories - Emerging, Industry and International - with 8 finalists chosen in each category by the independent panel of judges.

Chaired by Padraig Ó Céidigh and made up of former EY Entrepreneur Of The Year™ winners, the independent judging panel includes Denis O'Brien, Anne Heraty, Liam Casey, Jerry Kennelly, Terry Clune, Brian Long, Ed Harty, Michael Carey, Pat McDonagh and representatives from InterTradelreland, Enterprise Ireland and Invest Northern Ireland. Open to high-performing entrepreneurs across the island of Ireland from every sector, the programme accepts submissions from entrepreneurs of different growth stages as well as nominations from the general public.

Nominations

Individuals who wish to put themselves forward or nominate an entrepreneur with their consent, can fill out the online nomination form at www.eoy.ie or call the EY Entrepreneur Of The Year™ team for further information on 01 221 2250. The deadline for nominations is Monday 17 March 2014.

Supporters

The EY Entrepreneur Of The Year™ Programme is supported by Enterprise Ireland, InterTradelreland, Invest Northern Ireland, The Irish Times and Newstalk.

NI Water has £130 million ready to spend - now looking for SME suppliers

NI Water has launched its new summary of contracts worth £130 million which are available to cover goods and services required by the company over the next 18 months.

This is an exciting opportunity for new and existing companies across a diverse range of sectors, including the SME sector, to come on board and work with NI Water.



NI Water

As one of Northern Ireland's largest companies there are tremendous opportunities available to tender for large and small contract requirements within NI Water.

"The 'Suppliers Day' is on Thursday 13 March 2014 from 9:30 to 14:30. The event, which is being held at the NI Water Training Centre, Antrim, is designed for suppliers and potential suppliers to learn more about NI Water's procurement process and its requirements over the next 18 months and how to respond to tenders.

InterTradelreland is delighted to be involved with the NI Water 'Suppliers day' and to support

SMEs in attendance with procurement advice and support, particularly in relation to advice on forming consortia and collaborative bids on an all-island basis.

REGISTER NOW!

Those interested in attending the day need to pre-register by completing the registration form available on their [website](#) and emailing it to sourcing@niwater.com

Places are limited and will be allocated on a first come, first served basis.

Venture Capital Conference - SMEs - reserve your place now!

This year's event is shaping up to be just as popular as previous years - so if you haven't yet booked do so now!

SMEs - Learn about the current sources of equity capital (both institutional and the business angel networks) available across the island, share the experience of 4 companies and how they raised funding for their businesses, find out what state supports are available for start-up and growing companies.



Most importantly, where else would you get the opportunity to network with investors and other like minded companies under one roof.

View the full programme below:

Time	Event
9.00am - 10.00am	Registration & Networking
10.00am - 10.05am	Jim Fitzpatrick , Conference Chair
10.05am - 10.10am	Welcome
	Martin Cronin , Chairman, InterTradeIreland
10.10am - 10.25am	Opening Address
10.25am - 11.05am	Patrick Joy , Founder of Suretank & Entrepreneur of the Year 2013
11.05am - 12.20pm	Parallel Sessions
	At registration you will have the option to register for one of the panel sessions below.
	A Early Stage Funding
	This panel is designed for those companies seeking to raise venture capital for the first time, typical round size <€1.25 million.
	B Series A Funding
	This panel is designed for companies who have already raised early stage venture capital and are looking to now raise >€1.5 million.
	C Life Sciences
	This panel is designed for firms in the life sciences or medical devices sector.
12.20pm - 1.00pm	State Supports
1pm - 2.15pm	Networking Lunch (speed networking)
2.15pm - 2.55pm	Been there done that. Four companies experience of raising finance.
2.55pm - 3.25pm	Panel Session
3.25pm - 3.55pm	Speaker TBC
3.55pm - 4.00pm	Closing Remarks
	Brendan Butler , Chair EquityNetwork
4.00pm - 5.00pm	Networking & Refreshments

Register now

Silver Hill Foods, Monaghan, awarded InterTradelreland Exemplar award for innovative 'duck' project

InterTradelreland's all-island technology transfer and innovation programme, FUSION, partners companies north and south with a third-level institution providing them with the specialist expertise of a high calibre graduate working directly in the organisation to deliver a new product or process improvement project.

Through the programme, Monaghan based Silver Hill Foods were partnered with the University of Ulster to help address the problem of waste management.



Silver Hill Foods, Monaghan being presented with their award by Margaret Hearty, InterTradelreland

The Project

Reducing waste and disposal costs created an opportunity for the business to develop new innovative quality products for high end markets using sustainable bi-products from duck farming. This is where InterTradelreland FUSION support came in.

The company employed fashion graduate Karen Toner who helped the company to create innovative design solutions for the high end fashion market, creating natural thermal jackets using Silver Hills pure duck down and combining Irish artist and designer Helen Steele's fine art prints into digital printed designs for the thermal outerwear jackets.

What the support meant to the company

According to Helen Steele, Creative Director of Helen Steele (fashion brand) and Director of Silver Hills: *"Through InterTradelreland's FUSION programme we were able to take our project to the next level. We were selling large quantities of our duck down internationally which was used to manufacture natural thermal jackets,*

Karen's project focussed on competitor and market analysis, designing samples and new product development. The result is that we now use our duck down to make natural thermal jackets locally, Karen was instrumental in developing the project.

The academic support provided by Janet Coulter, Senior Lecturer in Fashion Design, University of Ulster was vital to our project. The use of the University of Ulster's technical equipment and lab was integral to the research of our smart tech fabrics. Ms. Coulter's extensive research and passion for this area of the industry has been both inspirational and extremely helpful. Her supervision on this project helped us to bring our product to market quicker than projected.'

Further Information

For more information on InterTradelreland Technology Transfer and Innovation Programme , FUSION visit www.intertradeireland.com/fusion.

24 Must-Read Blogs For Entrepreneurs

An article from ' Business Insider' website

Starting a company is hard, so you're going to need a lot of advice along the way. There are many entrepreneurs, investors and bloggers who churn out business advice daily, but it's a pain figuring out which sites are worth reading.

We've compiled a list of our favorite sources of small business and tech news for entrepreneurs. Running the gamut from hilarious, to informational, to controversial, to thought-provoking, these blogs are all must-reads for anyone who's running a business.



13th March - Antrim - NI Water - Supplier Day

12th May - Belfast - International Business Women's Conference

Various dates - Go-2-Tender Workshops

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