



UCC INNOVATES

IMPACT FOR OUR SOCIETY

eNewsletter | April 2023



UCC

Coláiste na hOllscoile Corcaigh
University College Cork, Ireland

Nuálaíocht Innovation

Inspiring Women Entrepreneurs at UCC

**Four trailblazing spin-out
company prospects secure
€3.27m EI funding**

SPRINT Awards

**Ireland's first digital
badge in Innovation and
Intellectual Property**

**SpinOut Spotlight:
ProVascTec**

**Digital Humanities meets
Coastal Communities: the
Port Places App**

**UCC Consulting
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**HHI supporting local
companies to develop their
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150 Years of Levi's 501 Jeans

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Welcome to the latest edition of UCC Innovates



Welcome to the fifth edition of UCC Innovates newsletter. As the flowers are starting to bloom on the UCC campus and the days are brightening, we look forward to the new opportunities that this year will bring.

Following a busy start to 2023, this edition of the UCC Innovates newsletter highlights the four trailblazing UCC start-up prospects that have secured €3.27m Enterprise Ireland funding. We also showcase one of UCC's most recent spin-out companies ProVascTec, founded by Professor Noel Caplice. We look back on our Inspiring Women Entrepreneurs event in January, and more recently - our seventh annual SPRINT Awards where we saw four women entrepreneurs take the top accolades.

I hope you enjoy this edition. As always, please feel free to get in touch with UCC Innovation at uccinnovation@ucc.ie

Dr Sally Cudmore
Director of Innovation at UCC
s.cudmore@ucc.ie



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Inspiring Women Entrepreneurs at UCC

At the beginning of January over 100 people attended an event in UCC to inspire potential female entrepreneurs towards starting a business.

Created by women for women, the Inspiring Women Entrepreneurs event focused on sharing stories that inspired connection and a journey towards a career in entrepreneurship. The event addressed how the new 'Inspiring Women Entrepreneurs' initiative, run by Going for Growth and supported by Enterprise Ireland and KPMG, supports women who identify themselves as early-stage entrepreneurs and want to follow through on their ambitions to establish businesses that are innovative, scalable and focused on export markets.

A panel of three successful female entrepreneurs - Andrea Doolan, CEO & co-founder of Atlantia Clinical Trials, Dr Anne

Cusack, co-founder and former CEO of Critical Healthcare, and Dr Barbara Ann Murphy, Founder of Equilume - shared stories of their entrepreneurial journeys from start-up to exit, and all the milestones in-between.

Following the panel discussion and an insightful Q&A session, there was an opportunity for networking, providing an opportunity for attendees to connect with one another, to share ideas and to explore the entrepreneurial ecosystem in Cork.

Speaking at the event, Dr Sally Cudmore, Director of Innovation at UCC, said: "We need more women in the entrepreneurial ecosystem in Ireland to bring different perspectives and creativity, and boost the overall level of innovation. Women are excellent at seeing problems and

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Pictured far left (l-r): Dr Barbara Anne Murphy, Founder of Equilume Ltd.; Dr Sally Cudmore, Director of Innovation at UCC; Andrea Doolan, CEO & Co-founder of Atlantia Clinical Trials; and Dr Anne Cusack, Co-founder and former CEO of Critical Healthcare.

Pictured left: Dr Anne Cusack, Co-founder and former CEO of Critical Healthcare with Dr Barbara Anne Murphy.

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finding creative solutions. Through hearing inspirational stories from successful female role models, women are more likely to be inspired to go after their goals and pursue their entrepreneurial dreams.”

Paula Fitzsimons, Founder of Fitzsimons Consulting and co-host of the event, said: “The objective of this new and exciting initiative is to increase the number of female-led innovative businesses of scale, focused on export markets. Through the **Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM)** research, we know that more women in Ireland are aspiring to start new businesses and that the rate of early-stage female entrepreneurs that aspire for significant growth is also increasing. Building on this fertile ground, we want to introduce the possibility of an entrepreneurial career to



Pictured above (l-r): Dr Barbara Anne Murphy, Founder of Equilume Ltd.; Andrea Doolan, CEO & Co-founder of Atlantia Clinical Trials; and Dr Anne Cusack, Co-founder and former CEO of Critical Healthcare.

particular groups of women that may not have considered it previously and where we believe untapped, entrepreneurial potential lies.”

“Key to the initiative is the panel of Inspiring Women Entrepreneurs, a group of successful businesswomen selected to mirror by their achievements the entrepreneurial ambition we are seeking to inspire. All are volunteers.”

Such was the success of the Inspiring Women Entrepreneurs event, that UCC Innovation aims to plan similar future events. To learn more about Inspiring Women Entrepreneurs and the suite of initiatives available to aspiring entrepreneurs, visit: inspiringwomenentrepreneurs.com/





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Four trailblazing spin-out company prospects secure €3.27m Enterprise Ireland funding

Four women founders at UCC have received funding to translate research into innovative companies that will benefit patients globally. The spin-out prospects will drive advances in maternal and neonatal care, breast cancer diagnosis, and palliative care.

Sarusha Pillay (pHetalSafe), Dr Justina Ugwah (CLISTEProbe), Dr Alison O'Shea (Neurobell) and Professor Ciara Heavin (CommPAL) have collectively received grants totalling €3.27m from Enterprise Ireland's Commercialisation Fund Programme, which will support technology development and accelerate the launch of the four companies from UCC.

The announcement comes as **new data** reports women-led start-ups are experiencing record levels of funding, more than double the amount raised in 2021 from 2020, but it is still only at 15% of the total investment.

Dr Sally Cudmore, Director of UCC Innovation, said: "Entrepreneurship has a crucial role to play in Ireland's economic growth. Yet women entrepreneurs often face different gendered challenges, such as unconscious biases, lack of investment funding and lack of women role models or mentors. But things are changing and in Ireland the rate of women entrepreneurs is steadily increasing, with women entrepreneurship levels now above the EU average."



Pictured above (l-r): Sarusha Pillay, Commercial Lead at pHetalSafe; Dr Alison O'Shea, Co-founder & Head of AI at Neurobell; and Dr Justina Ugwah, Commercial & Project Lead at CLISTEPROBE.

"At UCC, we believe that promoting and supporting women's entrepreneurship will accelerate economic growth and societal benefit for all. We are delighted to celebrate the success of these four women trailblazers, who are developing technology that will make a meaningful impact on patients' lives and who will be role models to budding entrepreneurs."

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THE FUNDED PROJECTS

Sarusha Pillay - pHetalSafe

€1.35m was awarded to the pHetalSafe team, a collaboration between the Tyndall National Institute and INFANT Research Centre in UCC, together with the Cork University Maternity Hospital.

pHetalSafe is designed to improve fetal monitoring during labour for safer childbirth. It aims to reduce or remove the need for unnecessary Caesarean sections by providing better information on the signs of fetal distress.

Sarusha will assume the company CEO role while co-founders, Dr Fergus McCarthy and Ray Burke will take up the clinical lead and technical lead roles. Dr Shree Krishnamoorthy, post-doctoral researcher at Tyndall National Institute, is developing the technology behind pHetalSafe, providing the necessary resources to drive the project forward.

Dr Justina Ugwah - CLISTEProbe

CLISTEProbe provides real-time diagnostic data to clinicians to make informed decisions during biopsy sampling in breast tissue by identifying benign and cancerous tissue. By providing an early tissue assessment

at time of biopsy, it will ensure women receive immediate diagnostic feedback.

In 2020, 2.3 million women were diagnosed with breast cancer and there were 685,000 deaths globally. CLISTEProbe was awarded €753K by Enterprise Ireland to continue its technical and commercial development.

Joining Dr Eric Moore and Dr Yineng Wang at the Tyndall National Institute, Justina, commercial lead, is establishing a spin-out company to commercialise this technology which has the potential to play a major role in the improvement of women's health.

Dr Alison O'Shea - Neurobell

Out of 140 million births globally per year, 1 in 7 are transferred to ICU and 1 in 50 suffer brain injury. Neurobell is developing an AI-powered neonatal brain monitor to detect brain seizures in babies after birth. Neurobell's technology will allow for routine monitoring of babies across all hospital settings without needing specialised expertise.

Led by Dr Mark O'Sullivan, commercial lead, and Alison as the head of AI, Neurobell was awarded €758K by Enterprise Ireland to complete the

Quality Management System for the device and support clinical studies.

Professor Ciara Heavin - CommPAL

CommPAL is an AI solution that supports the efficient and fair allocation of specialist palliative and elderly care to the community to get the right care, to the right patient, at the right time.

By 2050, the global over-65s population will double to 1.5 billion and as people live longer, all countries are facing a growing demand for palliative and elderly care.

Ciara was awarded €410k from Enterprise Ireland to build out the CommPAL software platform. The project has partnered with the Marymount Hospice in Cork, which will be one of the first palliative care hospitals to pilot the new technology.





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SPRINT AWARDS



A new technology to enhance performance in electric vehicles, a new approach to green packaging for food and a supplement to improve maternal health were among the award-winning projects at the SPRINT Awards 2023, which took place on 22nd March 2023. Women researchers were awarded the top accolades in all categories at the annual awards.

The awards celebrate innovative technologies led by early-stage start-up companies on the SPRINT accelerator programme. In the 2022 - 2023 cohort, 50% of participants are women founders which represents the largest group of women founders in the programme to date.

Since the inception of the GatewayUCC incubation facility in 2011, Gateway supported companies have raised in excess of €50 million of public and private investment and supported over 75 start-up and prestart-up companies based on IP from the university. These IP based companies have contributed more than €25 million a year in salaries to the local economy.

Professor John O'Halloran, UCC President; Shemas Eivers, Angel Investor & Serial Founder; Professor John Cryan, UCC Vice President for Research & Innovation and Dr Sally Cudmore, Director of UCC Innovation were among those speaking at the event. In addition to the SPRINT awards, the event also included a showcase and live pitching by five technology companies emerging from UCC to an audience of prospective investors.



At the 7th GatewayUCC SPRINT Awards: Winner of the One To Watch Award, Dr Julie O'Sullivan, APC Microbiome Ireland; Winner of the Critical Impact Award, Dr Siobhain O'Mahony, APC Microbiome Ireland; Winner of the Disruptive Technology Award, Dr Brenda Long, School of Chemistry, UCC ERI; Winner of the Sustainability Award, Dr Shivani Pathania, Teagasc.

Head of GatewayUCC and Director of SPRINT Accelerator Programme, Myriam Cronin said: "Once again we gather to celebrate the achievements of our researchers from across the University who have begun their start up journey on the SPRINT Accelerator programme, bringing the total number of participants to 80."

"Statistically, 80% of these participants continue on the pathway to attract funding from Enterprise Ireland and investors, bringing their new ventures to market. We are delighted to have the largest intake of women founders in the programme's history this year."

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The winners of the 2023 GatewayUCC
Sprint Awards were:

SPRINT Clinical Impact Award 2023 - Dr Siobhain O'Mahony, APC Microbiome Ireland and Dept of Anatomy and Neuroscience

Dr Siobhain O'Mahony's project
FemmeBiome will support a mothers'
well-being during pregnancy and
postpartum to reduce the burden
of stress on her body and mind and
improve overall health for mother and
baby. FemmeBiome's oral supplement
will harness the signalling pathways of
the microbiome-gut-brain axis, which
Dr O'Mahony has identified as playing a
key role in maintaining well-being and
physical health.

SPRINT Disruptive Technology Award 2023 - Dr Brenda Long, UCC School of Chemistry, Environmental Research Institute & Tyndall National Institute

To counteract the issues of fuel costs,
fuel security and the damage that
fossil fuels create in the environment,
it is imperative to leave oil and coal
in the ground and transition to clean
and renewable energy sources. An
alternative option is to use fuel cells,
powered by hydrogen. Dr Brenda
Long has developed a new catalytic
technology which will enable a 32%

improvement in performance of electric
vehicles. This new technology has
the potential to change the fuel cell
landscape offering a cheaper, cleaner
alternative to battery Electric Vehicles.

SPRINT Sustainability Award 2023 - Dr Shivani Pathania, Teagasc

All food businesses face multiple
challenges such as food waste
reduction, operational efficiency, and
production automation. Additionally,
68% of SMEs are working towards
reducing packaging use. Dr Shivani
Pathania's technology offers a
solution that addresses these issues
and supports the United Nations
Sustainability Development Goal 12 -
ensure sustainable consumption and
production patterns. The clean green
packaging technology introduces a
modified atmosphere into packaged
foods, preserving and extending the
shelf life of the food products, without
the use of plastic film/sleeve.

SPRINT One to Watch Award 2023 - Dr Julie O'Sullivan, APC Microbiome Ireland

1 in 5 children and 1 in 10 adults will
get atopic dermatitis (AD). AD is the
most common chronic inflammatory
skin disease, with a lifetime prevalence

up to 20% and substantial effects on
quality of life. Led by Dr Julie O'Sullivan,
SkinCoat's technology treats AD, with
potential to alleviate antimicrobial
resistance. SkinCoat's technology
can alleviate the symptoms of skin
conditions, like AD, for patients who are
seeking an alternative to conventional
treatments such as antibiotics, using
antimicrobial peptides that are mined
from the human skin microbiota.

The next SPRINT programme will start
in May 2023. More information and how
to sign up available [HERE](#).



Pictured above: Shemas Eivers, Angel Investor,
Serial Founder and Head of Boole Investment
Group; Dr Sally Cudmore, Director of Innovation,
UCC; John Cryan, Vice President for Innovation
and Research; with the winners of the 7th
GatewayUCC SPRINT Awards.



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UCC Innovation launches Ireland's first digital badge in Innovation and Intellectual Property

UCC has launched a new digital badge in Innovation and Intellectual Property for Scientists and Engineers.

This is a short course designed to support UCC scientists and engineers in learning about how to protect and commercialise their research and innovations. It is the first digital badge in Ireland on this topic and will be delivered by UCC Innovation in collaboration with the College of Science, Engineering and Food Sciences.

It will focus on key aspects of Innovation and IP Management - introduction to good IP management, the different forms of IP, IP protections such as patenting, and commercialisation activities such as licensing and creating spinout companies.

The course will begin on Wednesday, 5 April and run for 4 consecutive weeks. It is hoped that the course will run bi-annually, with enrolment opportunities for a spring and winter cohort.

The course was developed by Dr Karen McCarthy, UCC Innovation Commercialisation Case Manager, in collaboration with Dr Gerald McGlacken, Vice Dean for Research and



Innovation, SEFS, and Dr Susan Joyce, School of Biochemistry and Cell Biology, SEFS.

Awareness and experience with innovation and IP management is an essential skill for researchers, both in the academic and commercial environment. The goal of the digital badge in Innovation and IP is to empower and educate researchers to be more informed about the opportunities around IP.

Speaking at the launch, Professor John Cryan, Vice President for Research & Innovation at University College Cork said: "I am delighted to see the launch of the Digital Badge in Innovation and IP, the first of its kind in Ireland. The course will significantly add to the skills of researchers in UCC, informing them about opportunities around commercialising IP. As our UCC Futures programme continues to drive research in the University, and the digital badge in Innovation and IP will enhance researcher knowledge of commercialisation opportunities and create awareness on what their research can offer in this area."

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Professor Sarah Culloty, Head, College of Science, Engineering and Food Science said: "An understanding of the importance of intellectual property is an increasingly significant aspect of academic research. This programme will equip our researchers with the skills necessary to transfer their knowledge and ideas into commercially viable solutions that can address our social, economic and environmental challenges".

Dr Sally Cudmore, Director of Innovation at UCC, said: "IP refers to creations of the mind, such as inventions, literary and artistic works, software code, new product designs, brand names, symbols etc. IP may have significant commercial and/or societal value which can benefit the national economy, UCC and the inventors. This digital badge course will help researchers identify IP in their research, describe the ways to protect and commercialise IP and the UCC supports available. It is a vital skill set for any scientist or engineer to have on their CV for a broad range of future careers from academia to industry."

If you would like to find out more about future enrolment opportunities for this Digital Badge, please email innovationdigitalbadge@ucc.ie



Pictured above (l-r): Dr Susan Joyce, Lecturer and Funded Investigator at College of SEFS UCC; Dr Gerard McGlacken, Vice-Dean of Research and Innovation at College of SEFS UCC; Dr Karen McCarthy, UCC Innovation Commercialisation Case Manager; and Dr Sally Cudmore, Director of Innovation at UCC.



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SpinOut Spotlight: **ProVascTec**



UCC Innovation maximises the impact from UCC research through licensing technologies. It also nurtures the establishment of new ventures through its accelerator programmes and incubation facilities. One such new venture is UCC's latest spin-out **ProVascTec** - a cell-therapy delivery device for intravascular placement upstream of blood vessel obstruction. Professor Noel Caplice, Cardiologist, CSO & Co-Founder of ProVascTec, explains how this technology could potentially revolutionise the treatment of Peripheral Artery Disease (PAD) and Coronary Artery Disease (CAD), saving patients' limbs and lives.

Peripheral Artery Disease and Coronary Artery Disease, leading to blood vessel obstruction, are some of the most prevalent diseases in society today. There are 260 million PAD patients globally, with 40% of these developing Chronic Limb Ischemia (CLI), where blockages in an artery can lead to loss of limbs. During Professor Noel Caplice's time as Consultant Cardiologist at Mayo Clinic, he noticed that in many cases of PAD and CAD, the conventional surgical interventions aimed at bypassing the blockages were unsuitable: "One of the issues was that there were new therapies coming on board but all were very inefficient. We realised in our lab that these therapies wouldn't work because you couldn't concentrate the solution at the site where you wanted it - if you squirted it down the artery it went everywhere, and you had no control. So that's what the first need was - how could one concentrate a product locally at the site where the artery is blocked?"



Professor Noel Caplice, CSO & Co-Founder of ProVascTec



Dr Holger Müller, CFA CEO & Co-Founder of ProVascTec

As well as the inability to concentrate the solution at the required location, Professor Caplice also identified other roadblocks to treating PAD in patients, including poor condition of the patient's blood vessels and co-existing diseases. These issues combined led Professor Caplice and his team to realising that there was a market crying out for a therapeutic approach to PAD and CAD treatment.

Working for over a decade on the technology, the ProVascTec team initially developed a device which they tested in an animal model on which they carried out a micro bypass: "We worked to show proof of concept that if we made a device

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which would retain millions of cells, that this device could be placed at the point of obstruction and retain millions of cells locally. You didn't require open surgery - the cells did the work for you. This was in 2014 and since then, we have been refining the device design, its materials and the type of cell that we use in the technology."

In 2014, the ProVascTec team knew that their technology was capable of making significant advances in the treatment of PAD and CAD. However, the team were also acutely aware that they faced a challenge in developing their spin-out company - there was no such therapy in the market at the time and they faced a number of challenges. Professor Caplice cites persistence and having the right team as two of the most important ways to navigate through the spin-out process: "It was about persisting, but also about getting the right people. These people don't grow on trees. When considering somebody who is going to spin-out with you as a business partner, you need an individual who is well versed in the science of the technology and understands the clinical aspect, but they also need to be attuned to the business side of the technology. Ultimately, we realised

this and we went through many CEO interviews to obtain the right person. I have to say that we have the perfect find after three years of searching."

That 'perfect find' was Dr Holger Müller, CFA CEO & Co-Founder of ProVascTec, a trained scientist, turned innovation manager. He has been instrumental in transitioning several innovations along the development stages and launching products into international markets. Dr Müller's motivation to lead the company was as simple as wanting to bring a technology to market that could revolutionise treatment of PAD: *"Developing a novel treatment for patients who might otherwise face an amputation of all or part of their limb is a true motivator to make this technology available."*

With scaling on the horizon, the ProVascTec team will be based out of UCC's Gateway Innovation & Incubation Hub. Professor Caplice notes UCC Innovation's support throughout the spin-out process as being integral to the success of the spin-out journey so far. Having initial access to, and interactions with, investors gave the ProVascTec team the confidence that when they did undertake the spin-out journey, there

would be investment opportunities. Furthermore, having worked with many spin-out companies in the past, UCC Innovation understood the challenges faced by entrepreneurs like Professor Caplice and how to navigate the journey.

"I think the key is that UCC Innovation understood that ProVascTec's challenge in spinning out was great and that we were not going to find a quick solution. But the team stuck with me, reminding me that we needed to take our time and pick the right CEO. UCC Innovation were there with me all the way. I really appreciate that".

Professor Caplice is committed to establishing ProVascTec's HQ in Cork. As a UCC graduate working in the USA, one of his goals was always to return to the city. With an ever-growing pharma and med-tech hub on his doorstep and a strong pool of skilled and diverse talent, Professor Caplice feels that Cork has all the capabilities to drive ProVascTec's technology forward and make it a successful spin-out.

"Why not Cork?", he exclaims.

For more information on ProVascTec, visit: <https://provasctec.com/>



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Successful completion of Enterprise Ireland Managed Consultancy Pilot - UCC Consulting

In 2019, UCC Innovation secured €520K to participate in the Enterprise Ireland/Knowledge Transfer Ireland Managed Consultancy Pilot. The objective of the pilot funding was to establish a managed consultancy unit at UCC to provide dedicated supports and governance to consultancy opportunities.

Thus UCC Consulting was established to legitimise consultancy activity, support academics to provide their expertise to the external community, thereby embedding consultancy as a core UCC Innovation support.

Throughout the pilot, there were 198 consultancy opportunities managed, with work carried out for a variety of entities across the private, public and voluntary sectors. 110 consultancy agreements were supported and successfully negotiated, with an estimated €1.3m in total contract value generated, providing diversified income streams to Schools, Departments and Colleges within UCC.

UCC Innovation's participation in the Enterprise Ireland/Knowledge Transfer Ireland Managed Consultancy

Pilot delivered on the aim of the university's Strategic Plan 2017-2022 to become a 'provider of choice of consultancy services'. The team has supported consultancy engagements through building relationships with major multinational companies, SMEs, and government departments. These organisations have benefited greatly from the university's expertise. Furthermore, the pilot has increased awareness of the existence of this expertise with the outside community, facilitating greater dialogue and impact. As a result, there has been an uptake in further consultancy undertakings, sustained research agreement and new student-led partnerships.

UCC Consulting has established SOPs with other internal support departments (e.g. legal, research, and finance offices) to facilitate speedy contracts. The unit has been a key driver to changing the 'consultancy culture' at UCC by bringing greater awareness, knowledge, ability and supports to engage in consultancy activity for the academic community. The unit has secured the support of the University's President and the VP



Pictured above (l-r): Rachel O'Leary and Ruth Hargrove, UCC Consulting.

for Research & Innovation to broaden its remit and develop into a Business Engagement Unit.

Some of the University's projects that were supported by UCC Consulting can be found on our website at www.ucc.ie/en/uccconsulting/casestudies/

Please contact Rachel O'Leary and Ruth Hargrove, UCC Consulting at consulting@ucc.ie for support with consultancy undertakings or further information about Business Engagement.

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Teletherapy raises €700k in Pre-Seed Funding

UCC and IGNITE alumna Clare Meskill, CEO & co-founder of speech therapy technology company Teletherapy, has raised €700k in pre-seed funding from private investors and Enterprise Ireland. Clare completed her BSc Speech and Language Therapy and her MSc Medicine and Health at University College Cork. Read the full story [HERE](#).



Above: Clare Meskill and Dave Calnan. Co-founders of Teletherapy.

LegitFit wins Cork Chamber Emerging Award 2023

LegitFit, founded by UCC graduate Ryan O'Neill and his co-founders Gearoid Collins and Ian O'Sullivan, was named Cork Chamber Emerging Company of the Year 2023 at the recent Cork Chamber's Awards. The company, which was launched on IGNITE in 2019, aims to create a seamless management software platform for gyms & fitness/wellness providers. The company has recently raised €1,000,000 in seed funding to help kick start their expansion into the UK market, with their plan to double its customer base over 2023. Read more [HERE](#).



Above: Founders Ian O'Sullivan, Gearoid Collins and Ryan O'Neill.

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IGNITE News

IDEAS FOR IMPACT Spring 2023 Hackathon

On Friday 24 February, the 3rd **IDEAS FOR IMPACT** event took place in the Digital Arts & Humanities Innovation Space, 4th Floor Food Science & Technology Building, UCC. Ideas for Impact is a 12-hour hackathon designed to find new ideas to solve the world's biggest problems. The theme for this Spring event was "INNOVATING HEALTHCARE" and it was all about finding innovative ways to overcome challenges faced by healthcare providers. Run over 12 hours, 20+ national and international students from a variety of disciplines, level of studies and across the four UCC colleges had to develop an innovative idea that can positively impact the healthcare sector in Ireland. Over the course of the day, there were several sessions on design thinking, business model development, team working and pitching skills, and there were expert mentors on hand to help throughout the day. IDEAS FOR IMPACT, was run by IGNITE and Strategic Design @ UCC. Read all about it [HERE](#).

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Above: Group photo from the Spring 2023 event.



Above: Photo of the winning teams, the facilitators, mentors and judges.



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IGNITE News

IGNITE are looking for start-up founders to join the next programme

IGNITE, the full-time start-up incubation programme at UCC, is looking for start-up founders to join the next programmes commencing in July and October. The programme is open to recent graduates in any discipline, from any education Institution in Ireland, who have the passion and ambition to work full-time on a start-up idea that has potential for economic, environmental or social impact.

IGNITE includes essential workshops and seminars, entrepreneur guest speakers, mentoring with experienced entrepreneurs and business owners, funding and workspace offered on a flexible basis so founders get the skills and knowledge, advice and guidance they need when they need it.

Register to find out more [HERE](#).



ignite Start-ups

NOW HIRING

IGNITE Start-ups are Hiring!

IGNITE start-up companies, including Recruitroo, LegitFit, Addaptiv and Trustap, are hiring in IT, engineering, marketing, management & design with over 14 roles available. For more information, click [HERE](#).



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Digital Humanities meets Coastal Communities: the Port Places App



Professor Claire Connolly, Dr Danielle O'Donovan and Dr James Louis Smith

The **Port Places app** was created as part of Ports, Past and Present, a European Regional Development project funded by the Ireland Wales Cooperation Programme, led from UCC's School of English and Digital Humanities in partnership with Aberystwyth University, the University of Wales Trinity St David and Wexford County Council.

The app is designed to:

- Bring the heritage and creativity of ports alive through walking tours and multimedia stories;
- Enliven users' crossings of the Irish Sea through learning about the history of their journey, past and present;
- Encourage users to explore the port regions by linking port life to unexpected cultural attractions and sites of natural beauty;
- Connect Ireland and Wales over the sea, making tangible the many ties that bind across centuries.

The Port Places app, available on **iOS** and **Android** smartphones, focuses on the five active ferry ports in the Irish Sea Basin: Dublin Port and Rosslare Harbour in Ireland and Holyhead, Fishguard and Pembroke Dock in Wales. The material

in the app was created by and sourced from members of port communities, creative practitioners, and academic researchers. It is a simple, responsive and engaging open-source way to explore port cultures.



Above: Pembroke Dock Heritage Centre guide Martin Cavaney taking a group of walkers down the street along the route of 'Pembroke Dock Heritage Trail' experience for the Port Places App.

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As an app that has emerged from scholarly and community collaboration rather than the procurement of contractor services, Port Places is guided by good practice in research app development: it is an open-source collaborative project that is not dependent on a specialist service or vulnerable to ongoing maintenance fees with limited sustainability. As part of Ports, Past and Present, Dr James Louis Smith, postdoctoral researcher in UCC, worked with Professor Deborah Sutton (Lancaster) to expand the features, framework and availability of the Safarnama cultural heritage app project, developed at **Lancaster University**, and to provide the resources for future innovations and sustainable funding.

The app demonstrates the value of digital engagement with heritage as a regional development resource that promotes tourism and fosters community good. Recent app walks in Dublin Port, Holyhead and Pembroke Dock have revealed the value to combining app-led exploration of place with traditional guided tours.

Ports, Past and Present is funded by the European Regional Development Fund via the Ireland Wales Programme.

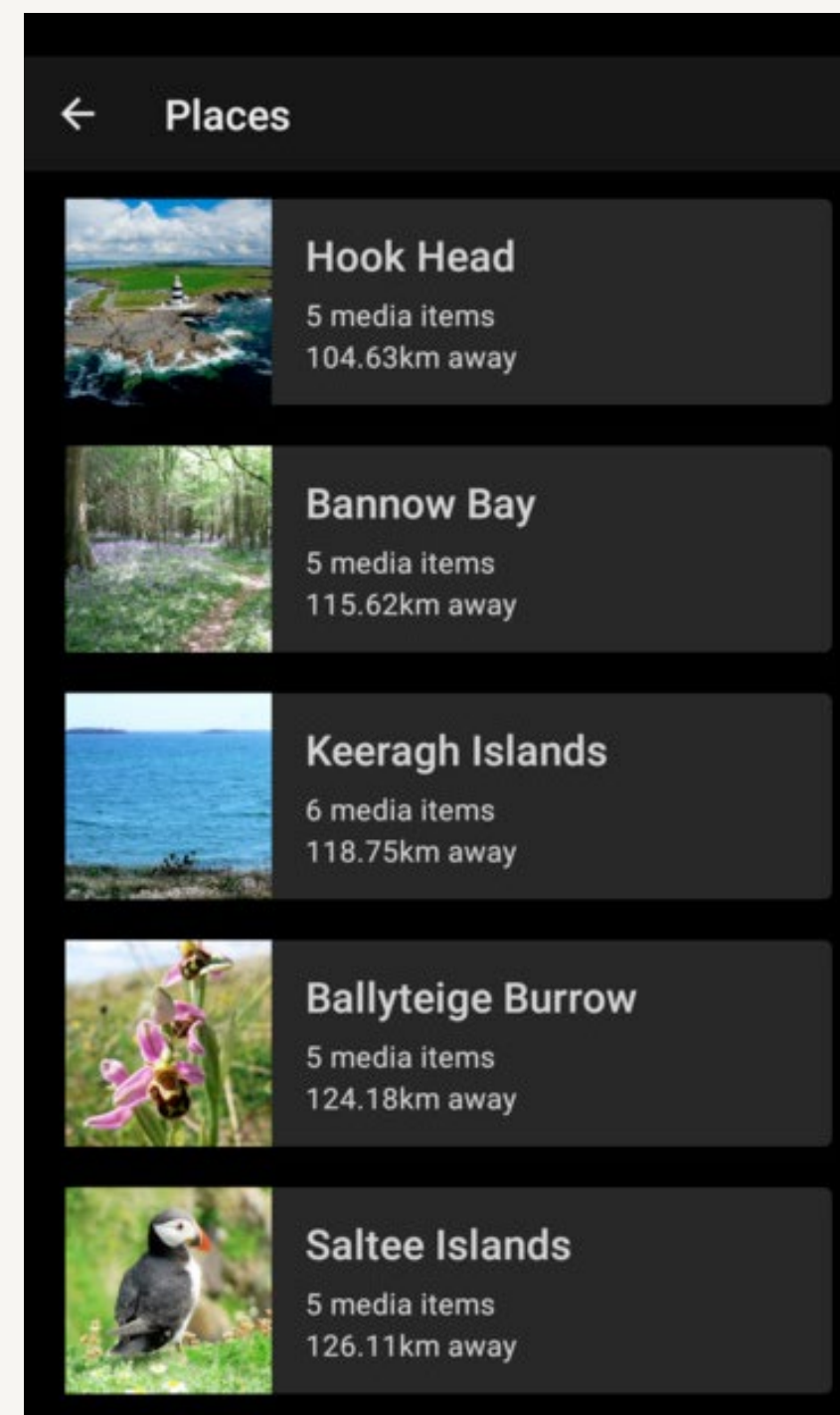
For more information:

Ports, Past and Present Website: portspastpresent.eu

Port Places App: tinyurl.com/PortPlaces

Exhibition of Content: tinyurl.com/PortPlacesExhibition

Opposite: A list of locations in the South Wexford Coast experience for the Port Places App, taken from the 'South Wexford Coast' app experience.





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UCC CONSULTING CASE STUDY

ANALYSIS OF IRISH ELECTRICITY & GAS DEMAND DRIVERS COMMISSIONED BY FRIENDS OF THE EARTH

In March 2021, the Irish government published a Climate Act committing Ireland to net zero carbon emissions by 2050. Net zero refers to the balance between the amount of greenhouse gas produced, and the amount removed from the atmosphere.

Friends of the Earth Ireland, a not-for-profit organisation, is part of the world's largest grassroots environmental network. One of its main goals is to drive policy change to ensure social and climate justice. Friends of the Earth commissioned a study from UCC expert, Professor Hannah Daly, Professor in Sustainable Energy and Energy Systems Modelling at MaREI.

The report required an analysis of Irish electricity and gas demand drivers, and the resulting obstacles in the context of reaching a zero-carbon electricity system in line with 2030 & 2050 commitments. This work required the application of Professor Daly's existing expertise and was supported by UCC Consulting.

This report titled **'Irish electricity and gas demand to 2050 in the context of climate commitments'** addresses major challenges regarding gas and electricity supply and demand in relation to the Government's ongoing energy security review. The report highlighted that natural gas must be rapidly phased out of Ireland's energy system, along with peat, coal and oil. Analysis within the report shows that gas demand for electricity generation must more than halve this decade and fall by 90% by 2040 relative to 2020.

Professor Daly made a number of recommendations in the report, with the chief recommendation being that *"To meet the national Carbon Budget Programme, as set out in the 2021 Climate Law, and long-term objective of a carbon-neutral economy by 2050 at the latest, cost optimal pathways for the Irish energy system require demand for natural gas to fall by 40% this decade and a further 80% in the 2030s."*

The report was published in December 2022 at a launch in Leinster House

attended by TDs and Senators and was widely covered by the media. The full report may be found [HERE](#).

The wide media coverage of this report has raised the profile of UCC, MaREI and Professor Daly, along with bringing their academic research to a public audience, in an area of critical importance to the future of society.

If you are interested in availing of UCC Consulting's services, please contact Rachel O'Leary or Ruth Hargrove, UCC Consulting at consulting@ucc.ie



Above: Professor Hannah Daly.



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MISTRAL Project Wins Half a Million Euro in SFI-Defence Organisation Innovation Challenge

The MISTRAL Project Team, consisting of Tyndall National Institute, the Irish Defence Forces and A-techSYN, has won half a million euro in the SFI-Defence Organisation Innovation Challenge. Winners of the challenge were announced by Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Defence Micheál Martin TD, and the Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science, Simon Harris TD.

The MISTRAL project, led by Professor Holger Claussen of Tyndall National Institute at Trinity College Dublin, builds on the team's previous DTIF Guard surveillance drone project in 2021, bringing its total research income with the Irish Defence forces to €7 million.

Tyndall's Mistral Project enabled the research team to work closely with Captain Ken Lyons

from the Communications & Information Services Corps, and the Irish drone manufacturer A-techSYN. The MISTRAL Project proposed a new system for using drones to relay radio signals. The team showed that a small number of high-flying drones could ensure safe communications for Defence Forces operating in remote areas, including those on peacekeeping duties overseas.

Speaking about the project, Professor Holger Claussen said: "Real-time access to information is one of the greatest force multipliers for the defence forces, and is vital for peacekeeping, emergency, or disaster response missions such as the earthquake disaster in Turkey and Syria. The MISTRAL project significantly improves communication capabilities through AI driven relay drones that automatically optimizes their location to



maximize radio coverage for ground users. We have demonstrated that even with a single drone we can increase the VHF radio coverage area by 625 times compared to ground, based communication.

When the Mistral technology is fully developed, it can be used immediately after natural disasters similar to the Turkey and Syria earthquake, enabling quick communications, at a greater reach. This ensures emergency response, logistics, recovery, health and civil defence aids can activate rapidly, so the immediate impact on human lives is evident in these situations."

The Department of Defence and the Defence Forces make up the Irish Defence Organisation. In 2021, they selected five challenges that needed solutions as well as leaving an open category for research teams to propose new ideas. The Innovation Challenge pioneered a new way of working, connecting research teams with members of the Defence Forces to embed with them and develop solutions to the challenges.



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Health Innovation Hub Ireland, headquartered in UCC, is supporting local companies to develop their HealthTech products

Health Innovation Hub Ireland, a national initiative supported by the Department of Enterprise Trade and Employment, Department of Health, Enterprise Ireland and the HSE is led-by UCC with a partner hub in MTU. The goal of HIHI is to support Ireland's health technology industry by connecting innovators with healthcare to drive the development of products through HIHI's unique innovation pathway. HIHI supports innovations at idea stage, pre-commercial prototype stage and market ready products. HIHI supports companies based anywhere in Ireland but we are particularly proud of the work we've done to support local Cork-based industry. Here is snapshot of some recent successes:

Health Innovation Hub Ireland supports Cork-based Gasgon Medical with clinical feedback of AirVault - a novel device to limit the impact of air bubbles in infusion therapy lines



Cork-based **Gasgon Medical** has developed a novel closed-system air trap, the **AirVault**. As a single-use device, AirVault is designed to provide a safe, easy and effective technology to prevent the impact of Air-in-Line, a common disruptor of infusion therapy, which will result in improved safety for patients and healthcare staff. Gasgon Medical approached HIHI to get feedback on its AirVault medical device from clinical experts to ensure it will meet the needs of healthcare professionals and their patients.

Through its clinical network, HIHI identified suitable clinicians to attend five focus groups in three different hospitals in Cork and Dublin. HIHI facilitated the focus groups, advised on the key questions which were addressed by over 35 experts in nurse practice

development, nursing management, infection control, oncology, pharmacy, quality risk management and biomedical engineering.

The company received valuable feedback and suggestions, which assisted them in the final design of the AirVault. The clinical feedback also highlighted other use-cases for this technology which HIHI is currently helping the company to explore. Now with a design freeze, Gasgon is beginning a multi-centre study designed to capture clinical evidence and contribute towards CE mark and FDA accreditation.

Read the full case study [HERE](#).

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HIHI supports Cork sisters to pilot innovative sustainable PPE in healthcare



Above: At the South Infirmary Victoria University Hospital wearing the HaPPE apron are Charlotte Bennett, phlebotomist; Elaine Byrd, phlebotomist; and Niamh Allen, Health Innovation Hub Ireland clinical liaison and HSE clinical nurse manager.

Cork sisters, Dr Mary O’Riordan and Lisa O’Riordan, have developed the HaPPE Apron - a more sustainable alternative to traditional personal protective equipment (PPE) in a bid to help cut carbon emissions from healthcare.

The “green” PPE apron is made from a proprietary resin that is composed of compostable bioplastics. It matches the safety parameters of current, medical Low-Density Polyethylene (LDPE) single-use aprons, is CE approved and suitable for use in healthcare. Overall, the apron has a carbon footprint 75 per cent lower than a standard PPE apron, with no waste in the manufacturing process and using sustainable energy sources for production.

HIHI, working with the South Infirmary Victoria University Hospital (SIVUH) in Cork, piloted the HaPPE Apron whereby 7,000 aprons were tested for wearability,

acceptability, sustainability and durability, across the elective orthopaedic ward, the orthopaedic rehab ward and in hospital kitchens.

“To see our compostable apron being used by frontline staff in the South Infirmary Victoria University Hospital and to get such support from the HIHI team was invaluable to us. It is through collaboration like this that we bring practical solutions to our health system,” the co-founders said.

“Worldwide, the healthcare sector is responsible for as much as 4.6% of total greenhouse gas emissions. If Ireland is to make an impact, we need to look at innovative products that reduce carbon emissions while maintaining safety, UCC has a strong sustainability agenda and we are delighted to support sustainable healthcare products” said Dr Tanya Mulcahy, Director of HIHI.

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UCC based Start-up Teletherapy begins Health Innovation Hub Ireland pilot with the HSE



Founded in 2020 by Clare Meskill, Teletherapy has developed a platform to better connect speech and language therapists with patients that have Parkinson's disease.

The platform enables speech therapists to prescribe exercises for clients, which can then be completed at home through an app on their phone or tablet. This product is designed to save time for speech therapists and reduce waitlists for patients.

Through Health Innovation Hub Ireland, Teletherapy is piloting their platform

within the HSE to gather feedback from patients, carers and speech therapists.

“Clare Meskill is a UCC graduate (College of Medicine and Health) and a UCC IGNITE alumna, Teletherapy has offices in UCC Gateway and it's great that Health Innovation Hub Ireland is in a position to support the company development. Teletherapy is improving the quality of life for Parkinson's patients and we are delighted to be able to help” Dr Tanya Mulcahy, Director Health Innovation Hub Ireland.

Cork's Orthopaedic Medical Device Company OrthoXel supported by HIHI to address MDR compliance

Cork-based OrthoXel approached HIHI to assist it in carrying out the human factor usability testing of the completion of its Implant Card in compliance with the MDR. EU MDR compliance is accomplished by demonstrating conformity with all relevant aspects of the Medical Device Regulation (EU) 2017/745. HIHI first identified that orthopaedic theatre nurses are the healthcare professionals responsible for completing the Implant Card in this case. Through its clinical network and the HSE clinical staff assigned to HIHI, HIHI identified orthopaedic theatre nurses and facilitated two rounds of ergonomic usability testing. HIHI provided clinical liaison and project management expertise throughout the project to ensure that this testing was carried out in line with OrthoXel's tight timeline.

OrthoXel is a specialist orthopaedic trauma company, which uses innovative engineering design to evolve the next generation fracture fixation devices. Its innovative orthopaedic trauma devices are inspired by surgeons and are focused on delivering superior patient outcomes. OrthoXel's products include the Apex Tibial Nailing System and the Apex Femoral Nailing System, both of which are CE marked and FDA cleared.

Read the full case study [HERE](#).





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Commercialisation Workshop for the IPIC Sparkle Postdoc Team

Dr Anthony Morrissey, Case Manager at UCC Innovation and Dr David McGovern, Senior Business Development Manager at the SFI research centre, Irish Photonic Integration Centre (IPIC), facilitated a workshop in February at Tyndall National Institute entitled "What is Commercialisation?" The event was attended by IPIC-hosted SPARKLE participants from Tyndall, UCC, DCU, University of Galway, and TCD.

SPARKLE is an innovative, intersectoral, career development fellowship programme with the aim of training Europe's future photonics research leaders in order to equip them with the skills to compete at the highest international levels, and to ensure that Ireland and Europe remain at the forefront in photonics technology development and exploitation. It is co-funded by the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions programme (EU) and Science Foundation Ireland (SFI). As part of the SPARKLE Steering Committee, Anthony and David worked

with IPIC Centre Manager Dr Patrick Morrissey and SPARKLE Programme Manager Elisabeth Wintersteller to develop components of the training to the 27 SPARKLE participants who have been recruited internationally.

Each participant received a comprehensive training plan, tailored to the career path that they wish to pursue. For individuals interested in an academic career, their training includes the identification of opportunities for future research, and information on how to build grant applications to enable them to initiate their own research programme, with an eye to commercialisation, upon completion of the fellowship. For participants focused on a career in industry, their training will focus on translational skills, such as innovation and commercialisation, and they will be introduced to a wide network of industry partners to explore those that best match their ambitions.

The "What is Commercialisation?" workshop was the latest in the series of workshop events. The workshop covered all aspects of research commercialisation and mapped it onto the various Irish government and EU policies and strategic plans for research and innovation, and to the UCC Strategic Plan. Topics included the various types of IP (patents, copyright, designs, trademarks, know-how and trade secret) and the SPARKLE participants were taken through UCC Innovation's processes for drafting, filing and managing patent applications.

The commercialisation workshop is one of the most popular events in the annual SPARKLE training calendar. Hearing real-world examples of IP infringement cases is cited as many participants' favourite aspect of the event. If your Centre, School, Department or College would like UCC Innovation to organise a similar event, please contact A.Morrissey@ucc.ie

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EU KNOWLEDGE VALORISATION WEEK

The third EU Knowledge Valorisation Week takes place on-line on the mornings of 25th - 28th April 2023. The events taking place throughout the week will showcase examples of how to best put the **EU Guiding Principles for Knowledge Valorisation** into practice - a new pan-European initiative to find more effective ways of turning research and innovation results into solutions.

During the week, attendees will have the opportunity to engage in forums and peer learning, exchange experiences, and to discover novel approaches to intellectual assets management. Attendees will also learn about how the brand-new European Codes of Practice on intellectual assets management and standardisation can enhance their work.

The week will feature themed days devoted to sustainability, management of intellectual assets and industry-science cooperation. For the first time in the event's history, participants will be able to avail of hands-on training

for researchers, young innovators and anybody interested to develop their skills in intellectual assets management, thereby contributing to the **European Year of Skills** mission.

The three thematic days of the week will focus on valorisation for sustainability, management of intellectual assets and industry-academia cooperation.

Speakers at the event will include representatives from the European Patent Office, the European Commission, the European University Association and Enterprise Ireland.

To register for the event, or to find out more information, please visit this **LINK**.



25-28 April 2023

**RESEARCH & INNOVATION
EU KNOWLEDGE
VALORISATION
WEEK**

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#valorisation

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150 YEARS OF LEVI'S 501 JEANS

Dr David Corkery

On the 20th of May 1873, the US Patent Office granted a patent application for “an improvement in fastening pocket openings”. The invention consisted of a metal rivet at each edge of the pocket of a pantaloons to prevent the seam of the pants from ripping. The inventor was Jacob Davis, a tailor from Reno NV, who found the new design to be very successful but lacked the resources to develop a full-scale manufacturing operation. He spoke with the supplier of his material, the youngest son of a German immigrant, who had left New York 20 years previously to come to San Francisco following the gold rush with his dry goods business. That man was Levi Strauss. Together they took out the patent on the riveting process, and so the Levi's 501 was born.

The major contributor to the original success of the Levi's 501 was its use by miners and land labourers in California. These highly durable “jeans” developed a formidable reputation for surviving the rigours of the work of a gold digger. Because many labourers did not speak English, they devised the logo of two horses pulling the legs of the jeans so that everyone would know they were buying Levi's jeans long after the patent expired. The 501 refers to the lot number from the warehouse.

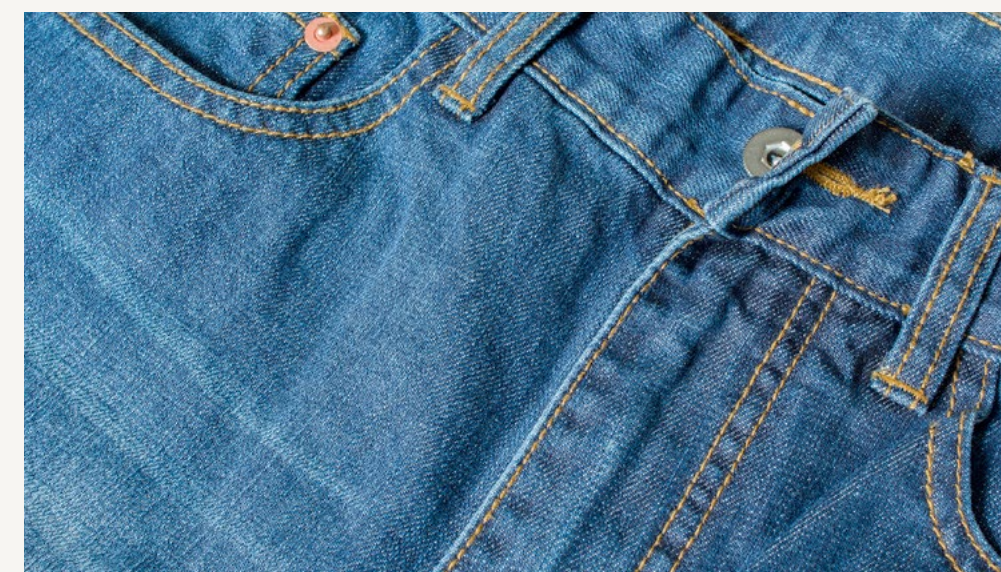
Brought by US soldiers across the world during the second World War, the durability of the jeans proved such that over time they became popular with motorcyclists and motorcycle

clubs. That's why Marlon Brando turns up in his 501s in 'The Wild One' launching denim jeans as the symbol of rebellion. This was followed by James Dean and his 501s in 'Rebel Without a Cause' and more recently, Bruce Springsteen's 501s on the cover of his album, 'Born in the USA'.

So think about it, all those jeans, made possible by a patent granted 150 years ago.

Sources for this piece were from History Hit's Patented podcast, Levi Strauss website and Gerben Intellectual Property.

The Levi's 501 “laundrette ad” can viewed [HERE](#).





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Ireland's first digital
badge in Innovation and
Intellectual Property

SpinOut Spotlight: ProVascTec

Digital Humanities meets
Coastal Communities: the
Port Places App

UCC Consulting Case Study

HHI supporting local
companies to develop their
HealthTech products

150 Years of Levi's 501 Jeans

Other News



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