

Money & Jobs

Business editor: John Walsh Business desk: T: 01 5330877/8, 021 4802387 E: business@examiner.ie

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Your guide to investments, personal finance, tax, and recruitment

Friday, 9.01.2015

Myriam is the keeper of the Gateway

My job: Myriam Cronin

GATEWAY UCC manager, Myriam Cronin, says "supporting job creation, innovation and entrepreneurship in the knowledge-based sector is a key remit" of the business centre. "We actively support start-ups and entrepreneurs, through our state-of-the-art, on-campus facilities, access to a world-class research environment, mentoring, business coaching and support services." To date, Gateway-incubated companies support 140 jobs in 20 start-ups specialising in IT/ICT; food; education; health; energy; medical devices and pharma.

"The centre is fast-becoming a hub of knowledge-transfer activities in the areas of IT, ICT and food/bio/pharma," she says. Prior to UCC, Ms Cronin worked with Enterprise Ireland for 20 years, as a development advisor, implementing regional strategy, addressing barriers to economic development, and liaising with third-level institutions to strengthen links with industry and the research community.

Ms Cronin has been manager of the centre since its establishment, in 2010: it has become a vibrant business incubator measuring 1,200 sq.m, divided into 21 units of high-quality IT office and wet-laboratory accommodation.

One of Gateway's incubation companies is poised to capitalise on global demand for milk, which is expected to hit 350bn litres in 2020. Luxcel Biosciences monitors the growth and viability of cells for food, beverage and pharmaceutical safety.

The company has developed a 'dairy industry game-changing' platform suite of rapid, microbiology testing products, which assess the quality of the milk through the supply chain, from the dairy parlour to the finished product. The optical-sensing technology monitors the ability of bacteria to grow in liquid or powder milk, and is a faster, and more sensitive, testing solution than standard technologies.

More importantly, it detects spoilage in dairy that current technologies are missing. With the global dairy industry entering a long-term boom, driven by demand from emerging markets in China and India, as well as by the abolition of EU milk quotas in 2015, competition within the sector has never been more intense, and the highest quality in the production supply chain has now become a major factor for international competition.

"Luxcel Biosciences is a great example of a company, spun out from



Gateway UCC supports start-up businesses via its state-of-the-art academic and research facilities, says the centre's manager, Myriam Cronin. Picture: Darragh Kane

UCC, with a focus on global markets and with enormous potential to change the sector in which they operate, through creative and collaborative research and development," said Ms Cronin. "The product has huge revenue-generating potential on a global scale, and, as the first test capable of offering same-day results, really is a game-changing development within the dairy industry.

"The company currently employs ten people, but we would clearly expect that to increase. Like so many of our companies at Gateway, they look to horizons well beyond Ireland, and with the potential to generate significant sales, revenue, and employment down the line. Ireland has built a justified, world-wide reputation for the quality of its food, but food safety has now become equally important and this is such a significant addition to the flagship of Ireland internationally," she says.

As a catalyst for entrepreneurship through the development of spin-out companies utilising university-generated intellectual property, Gateway supports include mentoring, access to financial advice, seminars, one-to-one consultancy, workshops, introduction to venture-capital opportunities and business-angels programmes. "Companies work in a uniquely supportive environment, with access to UCC's network of researchers and excellent support, through linkages into academic departments," she says.

The centre also contains hot-desk spaces for entrepreneurs at the pre-start-up stage, providing a stimulating environment to nurture and explore the feasibility of their business opportunity. Gateway's successful spin-outs include Thinksmart Technologies, Solvotrin Therapeutics, Metabolomic Diagnostics and Energywatch, which have all availed of the centre's services

to scale up and develop their businesses. "At the moment, the pre- and start-up companies within Gateway would collectively employ around 80 people — in effect, the size of a medium enterprise. Their products and services are very much a cross section, and include food, food safety, health, ICT, wearable technology and medical devices."

While the Gateway centre assists entrepreneurs with the identification, protection and exploitation of intel-

lectual property, the UCC Technology Transfer Office is the main point of contact for companies seeking partners for collaborative research and advice on licensing and commercial opportunities. Gateway, in association with Enterprise Ireland and the City and County Enterprise Boards, provides access to a panel of mentors and entrepreneurs with advisory services.

"We collaborate with our strategic partners in the business community,

Name: Myriam Cronin
Occupation: Manager, Gateway UCC Business Innovation and Incubation Centre.

Background: Set up in 2010, Gateway provides a commercial support system to campus-based businesses, both at spin-in and spin-out development stages. The centre provides start-ups with a business-mentoring programme, and with access to the university's facilities.

like Enterprise Ireland and Cork Chamber, working constantly towards creating an eco-system to benefit our client companies," says Ms Cronin. "We effectively work with clients from the very early, petri-dish stage of their idea development, right through to the eventual commercialisation of their product or service. Along this process, we keep them informed of upcoming calls for grant applications, provide visiting speakers on topics relevant to their development, and outline what they need to do in terms of submitting proposals to potential venture-capital companies."

Having worked with Enterprise Ireland for two decades, Ms Cronin is well equipped to understand the needs of fledgling companies in their journey from the initial idea stage to the major leap of "jumping off the diving board" into a new, commercial landscape.

"It is about getting a client from having a viable opportunity it can exploit, all the way to getting that product into the global marketplace. All of the companies currently going through Gateway are very optimistic about their prospects in 2015, and I would look to the areas of wave and renewable energy as particular areas where new technologies will likely emerge in the year ahead."

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For full details of any of these jobs go to RecruitIreland.com and enter the job ref. number on the home page.

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JOB of the WEEK

Job: Biopharma giant, BioMarin, which specialises in the development of therapies for chronic and rare genetic conditions, has launched a major recruitment drive.

Duties: It has a range of vacancies at its Ringaskiddy plant in Co Cork, for candidates with skills in QA management, process engineering, maintenance, strategic

buying, biotechnicians, biopharma science, and manufacturing planning, amongst others.

Qualifications: Varies from post to post, but relevant qualifications and previous experience are essential.

Applications: Full details of all the positions are available on www.bmrn.com/careers.

New initiative is designed to create 1,800 craft-based jobs

John Daly

Irish Design 2015, a new initiative convened by the Design & Crafts Council of Ireland, on behalf of the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation, will create 1,800 jobs through sales of Irish design-led products and services. The initiative will generate €10m in design-based exports, and create 200 new design-led business start-ups.

Irish Design 2015, or ID2015, will promote Irish design, create jobs, grow exports and increase competitiveness. As part of ID2015, Dublin has been designated World Design Hub 2015 by the International Association of Designers, providing Ireland with a world platform from which to promote the skills and talents of Irish designers.

"Events and activities, both at home and abroad throughout 2015, will position Ireland at the heart of a design-focused, forward-thinking creative economy," said Karen Hennessy, chief executive of the Design & Crafts Council of Ireland.

"Our international programme aims to highlight the quality of Irish design to audiences around the world, in order to generate export opportunities." ID2015 will involve 300 design events, conferences and exhibitions, facilitating 300 companies in international trade missions, and with an audience of three million at home and abroad.

Highlights include presentations of the work of Irish architects at biennials in London, Chicago and Hong Kong, and the showcasing of Irish designers at

major international events, such as Paris fashion week and the Milan and London design festivals.

Showcase 2015, which will run at the RDS from January 18 to 21, is the first international trade event of the ID2015 programme.

Now in its 39th year as Ireland's largest trade fair, it will attract 5,000 trade buyers from 26 countries. Showcase has been given a visual makeover, built around the idea of nature and creativity.

The new look will infuse visual displays, the daily fashion shows and communications. "Showcase provides buyers with a unique opportunity to meet, and do business with, hundreds of Irish designers and makers over an intensive, four-day period, generating up to €20m in sales orders," says Hennessy.

"The show continues to attract buyers from around the world, whose investment is vital for small- and medium-sized enterprises keen to break into export markets or expand their existing international presence.

"Through developing and hosting a professional, world-class trade show focused on Irish creativity, we continually strive to maximise the potential for increased sales and exports of Irish craft and design, ensuring the long-term development of this vibrant sector".

Exhibitor numbers have increased 10% on 2014, with 460 of Ireland's leading designers, manufacturers and craftsperson set to present their latest products.

The growth in exhibitor numbers is reflected in the new breed of creative start-ups, generating a renewed interest in Irish craft and design.

Since 2010, the Design & Crafts Council of Ireland has seen 775 companies register as client enterprises, an increase of 35%.

Many of these are selling into large retailers on the high street and establishing export markets.

Creative Island remains at the heart of the show, presenting craft products designed and made in Ireland, and featuring 90 commercial designer-makers, who were chosen by an independent jury for their creativity, innovation and craftsmanship.

A new feature for 2015 is a retail shop selling creative works designed to inspire visitors by presenting Irish products in innovative ways.

A retail seminar over the four days of the show will feature industry-speaker presentations, providing retailers with expertise, research and advice. Delivered in association with IEDR, Ireland's domain registry, topics will include e-commerce for retailers, effective use of social media and retail merchandising.

"Showcase is a valuable route to international markets for Irish companies in the design and craft sectors, who have the ambition and capability to win export contracts," says Julie Sinnamon, CEO, Enterprise Ireland.

"The calibre of international buyers is truly impressive and the ambition is to showcase what is new and innovative in Irish design, and, ultimately, to win export orders."