



# NovaUCD Newsletter



The Innovation and Technology Transfer Centre

April 2009

Dear Colleagues and Friends

Welcome to the first issue of the NovaUCD Newsletter for 2009 in which we review activities and events which took place during the first quarter of 2009.

The key news story was the announcement of plans to establish an Innovation Alliance between University College Dublin and Trinity College Dublin. The Alliance will work to develop a world-class ecosystem for innovation that will drive enterprise development and the creation of sustainable high-value jobs as part of the development of a Smart Economy.

NovaUCD hosted two international experts in entrepreneurship and innovation. Saeed Amidi, President and CEO, Plug and Play Tech Center, delivered a seminar on his experience in supporting start-ups in Silicon Valley. Professor Erkkö Autio, Imperial College London delivered the inaugural InterTradeIreland Innovation Lecture at UCD entitled *How to Build Momentum for Innovation*.

NovaUCD has launched a new €10k entrepreneurship competition, called SUSSED!. The aim is to transform business ideas from students and early-stage researchers at UCD into business plans and commercial enterprises. The deadline for the submission of application forms and business plans is 15<sup>th</sup> May.

The 14<sup>th</sup> NovaUCD Campus Company Development Programme commenced in March. Sixteen new ventures involving 35 researchers are taking part. Participants on this year's programme are commercialising research undertaken in disciplines such as Agriculture, Bioinformatics, Computer Science, Education, Engineering, Physics and Veterinary Medicine.

The 12<sup>th</sup> NovaUCD 'Entrepreneurs Live!' seminar series which is supported by the Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County Enterprise Board has been completed. A special seminar was delivered by Sean Gallagher, as part of the NovaUCD Open Day which took place during the very successful Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown Enterprise Week.

In this issue we also report on other recent developments for Asimil8, Duolog Technologies, Evolution and Q-Validus.

I would welcome any comments or feedback on this issue. Please contact Micéal Whelan on t: 01-716 3712 or e: [miceal.whelan@ucd.ie](mailto:miceal.whelan@ucd.ie).

Dr Pat Frain, Director

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## UCD – TCD Innovation Alliance

University College Dublin (UCD) and Trinity College Dublin (TCD) have jointly unveiled a visionary job creation plan as part of the national recovery initiative built around the development the Smart Economy.

The UCD/TCD Innovation Alliance is a radical partnership which will work with the education sector, the State and its agencies along with the business and venture capital communities to develop a world-class ecosystem for innovation that will drive enterprise development and the creation of sustainable high-value jobs.

By forming the Innovation Alliance both universities recognise the need to evolve and play a powerful role within this ecosystem. Evidence shows that during recession, innovation thrives and new realities bring new opportunities.

The Innovation Alliance has two major components:

- The UCD/TCD Joint Venture in Enterprise Development will build on the universities' existing technology transfer operations and enterprise facilities which at UCD are carried out by NovaUCD. It will include new facilities for pre-competitive research and design, prototyping and process innovation, to help harness and commercialise new ideas, knowledge and inventions. It will also prioritise the establishment of a wider support framework of educational, legal, financial, technical, management and marketing capabilities and support needed to set good new business ideas on their way.
- The new 4<sup>th</sup> level UCD/TCD Innovation Academy will begin the process of defining and mainstreaming innovation as the 3<sup>rd</sup> arm of the university mission alongside education and research. It will straddle the existing campuses, building on areas of combined strength and individual distinctiveness in the two universities. It will focus particularly on 4<sup>th</sup> level PhD training, positioning innovation centre-stage in their courses, facilitating student mobility between campuses, and ensuring that the breadth and depth of expertise and resources at UCD and TCD are available to Ireland's future entrepreneurs.

The Alliance envisages building a world-class enterprise corridor between TCD and UCD that will be home for up to 300 new enterprises

with advanced technology centres to support indigenous industry. It will be a prototype for a national ecosystem to establish Ireland as an international hub for innovation. It will be similar in concept to the IFSC but focused on the creation and scaling up of indigenous knowledge and technology-intensive enterprises and the attraction of multinational employers that will become the cornerstone for the knowledge economy.

A key objective of the Alliance will be to ensure that the State's investment in science, technology and innovation is used efficiently and with maximum impact on enterprise development and job creation.

NovaUCD as the Innovation and Technology Transfer Centre at UCD will be at the forefront in establishing this new Innovation Alliance.

## Plug and Play Tech Center Visit to NovaUCD

Saeed Amidi, President and CEO, Plug and Play Tech Center, one of the biggest technology centres in Silicon Valley, visited NovaUCD in January to deliver a keynote seminar.

His seminar focused on global acceleration opportunities for high-tech start-up companies and provided an overview of the current funding situation in the Valley. In addition to delivering his key note seminar Saeed met with members of NovaUCD's community of entrepreneurs.



Saeed Amidi, President and CEO, Plug and Play Tech Center

Located in multiple campuses (Palo Alto, Sunnyvale and Redwood City) in the heart of Silicon Valley, the Plug and Play Tech Center is a community of over 200 technology start-up companies. Since its inception in January



2006 the center has helped the startups raise in excess of \$400 million in venture funding. The start-up companies have created a cumulative value of \$2 billion.

Entrepreneur-centered with strong relationships with the most influential venture capital firms of Silicon Valley and Ivy League universities, the Plug Play Tech Center has become the ultimate place to launch and grow promising new technologies.

Over the years, its management team has assembled a world-class network of serial entrepreneurs, strategic investors, and industry leaders who actively assist its portfolio as entrepreneur partners and advisors. The Plug and Play Tech Center partners with entrepreneurs and leverages the resources of its strong network to build successful companies. It provides access to the resources and infrastructure essential to building rapidly growing and profitable enterprises.



Professor Mark Keane, UCD Vice-President for Innovation, Saeed Amidi, Dr Pat Frain, Director, NovaUCD

Saeed Amidi is himself a serial entrepreneur and a seasoned executive with over 20 years of experience in founding, operating, and growing successful companies. He has been a technology investor since 1996 and he co-founded a seed and early-stage investment firm focused on investing in emerging growth companies in 2000.

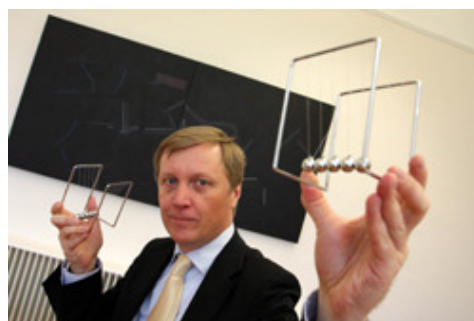
He has been closely involved with more than twenty new emerging growth companies, 2 of which became public companies (PayPal (acquired by eBay) and Preview Systems). His investments include DoveBid, Crosslayer Networks, Paypal, Affinity Engines, Gabbly and Sigma Quest.

**A podcast** of Saeed Amidi's seminar is available to download via [www.ucd.ie/nova/podcasts](http://www.ucd.ie/nova/podcasts).

## Inaugural InterTradeIreland Innovation Lecture at UCD

Companies must take a twin approach to innovation to survive and grow in the current economic climate. That was the message from renowned innovation expert Professor Erkkö Autio who delivered the inaugural InterTradeIreland Innovation Lecture at UCD.

His lecture entitled *How to Build Momentum for Innovation* was organised by NovaUCD and took place in a packed William Jefferson Clinton Auditorium.



Professor Erkkö Autio

According to Finnish-born Professor Autio, Chair of Technology Transfer and Entrepreneurship at Imperial College London, as the global economic momentum has faded, firms can no longer 'ride the waves' created by others. They need to build their own momentum for innovation. In addition to identifying market needs and adapting their products or services to meet those needs, firms must also find ways of prompting the market to lock-in to their innovations ahead of others. If this successful two-way adaptation is achieved, spectacular growth may follow, even in challenging times.



Dr Pat Frain, Professor Erkkö Autio, UCD's Professor Petra Ahrweiler, who chaired the lecture, Aidan Gough, Director, Strategy and Policy, InterTradeIreland and Professor Mark Keane



While visiting NovaUCD Professor Autio also facilitated a workshop for technology transfer professionals entitled *Issues Facing Technology Transfer Offices within the University Environment*. He also delivered a Master Class for SMEs entitled *How to Build and Sustain Momentum for Rapid International Growth* which focused on issues relating to early and proactive internationalisation.

Professor Autio has held academic research and teaching positions at London Business School, CERN, Helsinki University of Technology, University of Sussex, and the Asian Institute of Technology (Thailand). He has served in the Boards of Directors in several companies, notably in ICT sectors.

He has advised and consulted widely in the areas of venturing, innovation, mobile ecommerce, and technology and innovation policy, for private and public organisations alike. Since 1980's, he has gathered hands-on research experience from dynamic high-tech start-ups in Silicon Valley, Cambridge (UK), several European countries, and in South-East Asia.

During his tenure at London Business School, he helped launch the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) initiative. He still has an active co-ordination role in this high-profile initiative that currently spans nearly 50 countries, including Ireland.

The innovation lecture and other events were delivered as part of the InterTradeIreland All-island Innovation Programme.

This Programme, a partnership between InterTradeIreland, Queen's University Belfast, NovaUCD and NUI Galway, aims to promote and encourage innovation across the island of Ireland. The Programme enables international expertise and best practice innovation to be shared with business leaders, students, academics, knowledge transfer professionals and policy makers across Ireland via innovation lectures, seminars and master classes.

**A podcast** of Professor Autio's innovation lecture is available to download via [www.ucd.ie/nova/podcasts](http://www.ucd.ie/nova/podcasts).

## Protection and Commercialisation of Intellectual Property

NovaUCD is responsible for the implementation of UCD's policies relating to the commercialisation of intellectual property and for the management of the intellectual property arising from UCD's research programmes.

A key priority of NovaUCD is to work with UCD researchers in identifying, protecting and commercialising the intellectual property arising from their research programmes and to take innovative ideas from proof-of-principle to full commercial success.

### UCD 2008 Invention Disclosures and Patent Filings

Fifty-three invention disclosures were disclosed by UCD researchers to NovaUCD during 2008. In 2008 UCD filed a total of 38 patent applications. This figure included 25 priority patent applications across all areas of life sciences, engineering and information and communication technology, 6 PCT and 7 national/regional patent applications.



UCD patents filed during 2008 include:

*A DNA-based test for association with elite sprinting performance in thoroughbred racehorses*, Dr Emmeline Hill, UCD School of Agriculture, Food Science and Veterinary Medicine. An Irish and US priority patent application.

*A DNA-based test for association with elite racing performance in thoroughbred racehorses*, Dr Emmeline Hill, UCD School of Agriculture, Food Science and Veterinary Medicine. An Irish and US priority patent application.





*A macrocyclic derivative and assemblies formed therefrom*, Dr Rafe Darcy, UCD School of Chemistry and Chemical Biology. A UK priority patent application.

*A method and apparatus for blind source separation*, Dr Scott Rickard, UCD School of Electrical, Electronic and Mechanical Engineering. A European and US national patent application.

*A modified promoter sequence*, Professor Therese Kinsella, UCD School of Biomolecular and Biomedical Science. A UK priority patent application.

*A process for cleaning a membrane supported biofilm reactor*, Dr Eoin Casey, UCD School of Chemical and Bioprocess Engineering. A European priority patent application.

*A searching system and method*, Professor Barry Smyth, UCD School of Computer Science and Informatics. An Irish priority and US provisional patent application.

*Alpha-glycosyl thiols and Alpha-S-linked Glycolipids*, Dr Xiangming Zhu, UCD School of Chemistry and Chemical Biology. A US priority patent application.

*Amyloid and amyloid-like structures*, Dr Suzi Jarvis, UCD Conway Institute of Biomolecular and Biomedical Research. A European priority patent application.

*An isolated population of amniotic fluid cells*, Dr David McLaughlin, UCD School of Biomolecular and Biomedical Science. A European priority patent application.

*A system level power evaluation method*, Dr Damian Dalton, UCD School of Computer Science and Informatics. An Irish long term and PCT patent application.

*An encoding scheme and a decoding scheme using a series of LDPC codes based on finite inversive spaces*, Dr Mark Flanagan, UCD School of Electrical, Electronic and Mechanical Engineering and Dr Marcus Greferath, UCD School of Mathematical Science. A PCT patent application.

*An isolated population of amniotic fluid cells*, Dr David McLaughlin, UCD School of Biomolecular and Biomedical Science. A European priority and US provisional patent application.

*Automated building outline detection*, Dr Hamish Carr, UCD School of Computer Science and Informatics. An Irish priority patent application.

*Captodiamine*, Professor Ciaran Regan, UCD School of Biomolecular and Biomedical Science. An Irish priority patent application.

*Cluster aggregation point for load balancing in a sensor network*, Gregory O'Hare and colleagues, UCD School of Computer Science and Informatics. A PCT patent application.

*Cognition TxP* (alternatively transcribed genes associated with memory consolidation), Professor Ciaran Regan, UCD School of Biomolecular and Biomedical Science. A US priority patent application.

*Compositions and methods for the control of mammary cell number*, Dr Annette Byrne, UCD Conway Institute of Biomolecular and Biomedical Research. A US national patent application.

*Heat-expanded food products*, Professor Dolores O'Riordan, UCD School of Agriculture, Food Science and Veterinary Medicine. A PCT patent application.

*High power EUV lamp systems*, Professor Padraig Dunne, UCD School of Physics. A European, US national and Japan patent application.

*Information retrieval*, Dr Neil Hurley, UCD School of Computer Science and Informatics. An Irish and US priority patent application.

*Integrated drilling, chamfering and deburring tool*, Professor Gerry Byrne and Eamonn Ahearne, UCD School of Electrical, Electronic and Mechanical Engineering. An Irish priority patent application.

*Method and apparatus for control of large scale sensor networks*, Dr Raja Jurdak, UCD School of Computer Science and Informatics. An Irish priority patent application.

*Method and system for monitoring sleep*, Professor Conor Heneghan, UCD School of Electrical, Electronic and Mechanical Engineering. A PCT patent application.

*Method and system for providing mobility support in mesh networks*, Dr Liam Murphy, UCD School of Computer Science and



Informatics. An Irish priority patent application.

*Method of coating a thin liquid metal film onto a Solid Substrate*, Dr Fergal O'Reilly, UCD School of Physics. An Irish priority patent application.

*Method for performing magnetic resonance measurements and apparatus for executing said method*, Dr Marcus Greferath, UCD School of Mathematical Science. A European priority patent application.

*Method for producing polyhydroalkanoate (PET to PHA)*, Dr Kevin O'Connor, UCD School of Biomolecular and Biomedical Science. An Irish and UK priority patent application.

*Meparfynol*, Professor Ciaran Regan, UCD School of Biomolecular and Biomedical Science. An Irish priority patent application.

*Microwave plasma sintering*, Dr Denis Dowling, UCD School of Electrical, Electronic and Mechanical Engineering. An Irish priority patent application.

*Nitrosylated Conjugated Linoleic Acids*, Dr Orina Belton, UCD Conway Institute and Professor Des Fitzgerald and colleagues from RCSI. A UK priority patent application.

*Pseudomonas putida styrene monooxygenase variants*, Dr Kevin O'Connor, UCD School of Biomolecular and Biomedical Science. A UK priority patent application.

*Schizo TxP* (alternatively transcribed genes associated with Schizophrenia), Professor Ciaran Regan, UCD School of Biomolecular and Biomedical Science. A US priority patent application.

*The conversion of a mixture BTEX compounds by defined mixed cultures to medium chain length polyhydroalkanoate*, Dr Kevin O'Connor, UCD School of Biomolecular and Biomedical Science. A UK priority patent application.

**Contact:** For further information contact Dr Ciaran O'Beirne, Manager, Technology Transfer, t: 01-716 3713, e: [ciaran.obeirne@ucd.ie](mailto:ciaran.obeirne@ucd.ie).

## SUSSED ! Entrepreneurship Competition

NovaUCD has launched a new entrepreneurship competition to transform business ideas from students and early-stage researchers at UCD into business plans and commercial enterprises.

Forty-five expressions of interests in the competition were registered with NovaUCD by the closing date in early April.



Winning entries in the team-based SUSSED! Competition will share a €10,000 prize fund, receive 6-months free incubation space in NovaUCD and obtain professional support in forming their new ventures.

The overall winner will also represent UCD in the Europe-wide UNICA Entrepreneurship Competition for Students and Young Researchers which takes place later in 2009.

The SUSSED! Competition will be run in two stages. Participating teams will be asked to submit their business plans setting out their business ideas. These business plans will then be reviewed by a Judging Panel which will contain a mixture of experienced entrepreneurs, academics and industry representatives from diverse sectors.

The Judging Panel will then short-list the teams which will go forward to the "Dragons' Den" stage of the competition. These teams will then make presentations to the Judging Panel who will select the top three prize-winners.

The final deadline for the submission of application forms and business plans is 15<sup>th</sup> May.

**Contact:** For further information please contact Caroline Gill, t: 01 7163 715, e: [caroline.gill@ucd.ie](mailto:caroline.gill@ucd.ie).



## NovaUCD Open Day Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown Enterprise Week

NovaUCD held a very successful Open Day in March as part of the Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown Enterprise Week. The aim was to give budding high-tech entrepreneurs an opportunity to discover the unique services, supports and facilities available to them at NovaUCD.



Audience at the NovaUCD Open Day

The Open Day took place during the Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown Enterprise Week which was designed to help aspiring entrepreneurs to start new businesses and the owners of existing businesses to expand.

The guest speaker at the NovaUCD Open Day was Sean Gallagher, co-founder, Smarthomes and a 'Dragon' on RTE 1's "Dragons' Den" TV Programme. His message to all entrepreneurs and business owners was to aim to 'fly higher' despite the current economic climate.



UCD engineering students and members of UCD's kite club, Justin Perry and Christina Connolly with Sean Gallagher

**A podcast** of Sean's talk available to download via [www.ucd.ie/nova/podcasts](http://www.ucd.ie/nova/podcasts).

In addition the NovaUCD Open Day consisted of a series of talks, tours of NovaUCD facilities and an opportunity to meet NovaUCD's successful community of entrepreneurs.

The Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown Enterprise Week ran from March 23<sup>rd</sup> to March 26<sup>th</sup> and featured a series of county-wide activities designed to support the ambitions of aspiring entrepreneurs and small business owners.

Ten organisations, working collaboratively are jointly hosting the Enterprise Week. These include the Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Enterprise Board, Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council, Enterprise Ireland, FÁS, Bank of Ireland Business Banking, Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown Chamber, Dún Laoghaire Institute of Art, Design and Technology, NovaUCD, the Southside Partnership and the Irish Internet Association.

## NovaUCD 2009 Campus Company Development Programme

The 14<sup>th</sup> NovaUCD Campus Company Development Programme (CCDP) has commenced and 16 new high-tech and knowledge-intensive business ventures, involving 35 researchers, are taking part.

The Programme assists UCD academic entrepreneurs in bringing their innovative ideas from intellectual concepts to fully developed and sound commercial business enterprises.

Ventures participating on this year's programme are commercialising research undertaken in disciplines such as Agriculture, Bioinformatics, Computer Science, Education, Engineering, Physics and Veterinary Medicine.

Now in its fourteenth year, over 140 ventures and 210 individuals have now completed the NovaUCD CCDP which is supported by Enterprise Ireland. Former participants now collectively employ over 750 people. Companies which previously participated on the Programme include Asimil8, BiancaMed, Celtic Catalysts, ChangingWorlds, CRDS, Haptica and TopChem.





Paul Groarke and Garrett Hussey, co-founders, Asimil8, winners of the NovaUCD 2008 CCDP

The CCDP is a nine-month, part-time programme designed to suit the busy timetable of researchers and academics. It offers a mix of monthly workshops, mentoring and one-to-one consultancy and is delivered by NovaUCD staff, with support from the NovaUCD sponsors, Enterprise Ireland, as well as other outside experts.

It is designed to assist academic entrepreneurs by providing the skills necessary to transform ideas into commercially feasible ventures. Participants on the programme have the opportunity to access NovaUCD's desk space and incubation facilities and associated services. The programme culminates with a high profile Awards Evening held in November.

Asimil8, an e-learning venture, co-founded in 2008 by Paul Groarke and Garrett Hussey was the overall winner of the NovaUCD 2008 CCDP.

**Contact:** For further information contact Dr Ciara Leonard, Project Manager, Enterprise Development, tel: 01-716 3714, email: [ciara.leonard@ucd.ie](mailto:ciara.leonard@ucd.ie).

### NovaUCD 12th 'Entrepreneurs Live!' Seminar Series

The 12<sup>th</sup> 'Entrepreneurs Live!' seminar series, run by NovaUCD in association with Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Enterprise Board was launched by French entrepreneur Jacques Lefebvre, co-founder and CEO of DataKraft, in early February.

The guest speakers who took part in this series, which ran over 4 weeks were:

### Jacques Lefebvre, co-founder and CEO, DataKraft



### Brendan O'Regan, founder and CEO, Zenith Technologies



### Charlotte O'Kelly, co-founder and MD, TechWorks Marine



### Donal O'Riain, founder and MD, Ecocem







A **podcast** of each seminar is available to download via [www.ucd.ie/nova/podcasts](http://www.ucd.ie/nova/podcasts).

A total of 69 well known entrepreneurs have now contributed on this very popular seminar series. The aim of the 'Entrepreneurs Live!' seminar series is to promote a spirit of entrepreneurship among the academic, research and student population at UCD.

The 13<sup>th</sup> series will commence in October 2009 and further details will be available in due course.

**Contact:** For further information please contact Caroline Gill, t: 01 7163 715, e: [caroline.gill@ucd.ie](mailto:caroline.gill@ucd.ie).

### Companies at NovaUCD

Twenty-six innovative new ventures, occupying 39 incubation units, or over 90% of the available incubation space, are currently located in NovaUCD.

NovaUCD continues to welcome proposals from the promoters of high-quality, knowledge-intensive ventures who are interested in locating in NovaUCD.

**Contact:** For further information contact Dr Ciara Leonard, Project Manager, Enterprise Development, tel: 01-716 3714, email: [ciara.leonard@ucd.ie](mailto:ciara.leonard@ucd.ie).

### Companies in the News

#### Asimil8

Asimil8 the NovaUCD-based e-learning venture has won the Dublin regional final of the Bank of Ireland 'Bright Ideas Challenge'. In addition to its award Asimil8 received a cash prize of €5,000, along with a mentoring and training package from the Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Enterprise Board valued at €5,000.



Paul Groarke and Garrett Hussey, co-founders Asimil8 with Gavin Duffy, Entrepreneur and a 'Dragon' from RTE1's "Dragons' Den" TV Programme (centre) who presented Asimil8 with their award

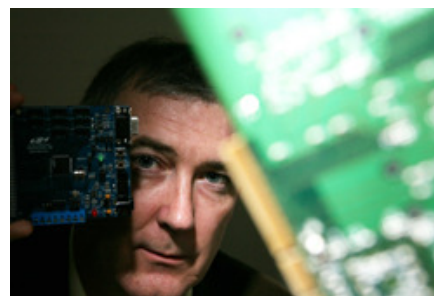
Asimil8 will also go forward to the national final of the 'Bright Ideas Challenge' which will be held in early 2010 with the opportunity to win an attractive investment package.

The 'Bright Ideas Challenge' sponsored by Bank of Ireland and the City and County Enterprise Boards, aims to encourage and support both innovation and enterprise in business start-ups, SMEs, and individuals in the early stages of their business development.

Asimil8 beat the other finalists to the winning post with their next generation learning platform which provides immersive education for languages and other subjects using virtual world and gaming technologies.

#### Duolog Technologies

Duolog Technologies the NovaUCD-headquartered Collaborative Design Automation™ company has acquired, in a combined cash and equity deal, the technology and products of Beach Solutions Ltd as part of its global expansion strategy.



Ray Bulger, Duolog Technologies

Beach Solutions was a privately held, UK-based, Electronic Design Automation (EDA) company established in 1998 which offers



register management solutions for System-on-Chip (SoC) design. Having raised over £6 million in venture capital funding Beach researched and developed innovative products that are used by major semiconductor companies in Europe, US and Asia.

Duolog Technologies develops software tools that enable chip design companies to design their products faster, at lower cost and with fewer bugs. As part of its international expansion plans Duolog opened a sales, marketing and support office in Los Gatos, California last year. With this new acquisition Duolog has established a significant presence in the key Asian market. During the coming year Duolog intends to accelerate sales and to grow its revenues to \$15 million.

Duolog Technologies currently employs more than 80 people and is headquartered at NovaUCD and has design centres in Galway and Budapest, Hungary, as well as US and international operations.

### **Evolution**

Evolution the NovaUCD-based human resources software company, has appointed Cian O'Sullivan as its new Operations Manager. Cian has been appointed to drive and accelerate sales for Evolution's Software-as-a-Service (SaaS) division.

Evolution assists SMEs to reduce the cost of having a HR department by automating many manual HR tasks (e.g. tracking sick leave, annual leave and time sheets) by giving employees direct access to HR functions.

Cian has over 10 years experience in the software industry, with firms such as Musgrave Group, iB Solutions, and SoftCo. He is a UCC Commerce graduate and also completed an MBS in Management Information Systems at UCD's Michael Smurfit Graduate Business School.



Cian O'Sullivan, Operations Manager, Evolution

Last year Evolution launched TempSheets.com, an easy-to-use online system designed to help recruitment agencies eliminate paper-based timesheets and to speed up their approvals and invoicing processes. This software product compliments Evolution's VacationTracker.net software system which enables companies of all sizes to effectively and efficiently manage their employees' holidays and other absences.

Evolution was founded by Alistair Thacker in 2006 and currently employs 5 people.

### **Q-Validus**

Q-Validus the NovaUCD-based international certification solutions provider has entered into a formal relationship with the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) which will see the two organisations collaborating worldwide on two groundbreaking Q-Validus programmes.



David Carpenter, CEO, Q-Validus and Dr Janet Brown, CEO, SQA

The two innovative computer programmes which have achieved SQA endorsement and which will now be showcased around the SQA's international networks are Spreadsheet Safe® and Computer Wings®.



Spreadsheet Safe® is a cutting-edge programme designed to assist businesses in reducing the risks associated with poor spreadsheet design. Computer Wings® is an exciting new computer skills training and certification programme which consists of ten stand-alone modules which focus on the productivity and collaborative skills required in today's rapidly changing economy.

Q-Validus, which was established in 2007 is already recognised as one of the most innovative players in the certification solutions sector.

The SQA is an executive non-departmental public body (NDPB) sponsored by the Scottish Government. It is the national accreditation and awarding body in Scotland. It also operates within the rest of the UK and globally, providing hugely respected "Scottish" qualification expertise to clients worldwide.

The SQA has endorsed the content and quality of the awards of both Q-Validus programmes. Work is under way to place these qualifications within the Scottish Credit and Qualification Framework rating process. They are now ready to be rolled out across Ireland, the UK and internationally.

The agreement between the two organisations was facilitated by Enterprise Ireland and Q-Validus is part of the agency's High Potential Start-up Programme.

**Contact:** For further information contact Micéal Whelan, Communications, tel: 01-716 3712, email: [miceal.whelan@ucd.ie](mailto:miceal.whelan@ucd.ie).

### NovaUCD LinkedIn Group

The purpose of the NovaUCD LinkedIn Group is to connect members of the NovaUCD community which includes entrepreneurs, innovators, researchers, staff, the NovaUCD network of professional contacts along with any individual who is based or has been based at NovaUCD or is otherwise linked with NovaUCD.

If you wish to become a member of this group please use the URL below or visit the LinkedIn website, [www.linkedin.com](http://www.linkedin.com), and search for 'NovaUCD' under 'Groups'.

<http://www.linkedin.com/e/qis/149865>

**Contact:** For further information contact Micéal Whelan, Communications, tel: 01-716 3712, email: [miceal.whelan@ucd.ie](mailto:miceal.whelan@ucd.ie).