



# Startup Gathering

Start Scale Succeed



Bank of Ireland 

For small steps, for big steps, for life

ACTION PLAN  
FOR JOBS  
2015

Dublin

Waterford

Cork

Limerick

Galway

**FINAL REPORT**  
5 Days - 5 Cities  
5<sup>TH</sup> - 10<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2015



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## FOREWORDS

Friends of Ireland's startup community,

The Startup Gathering 2015 has been described as the biggest nationally distributed startup week in the world for a country of our size. The national network of events and initiatives that took place during the Startup Gathering support ambition, scale and calculated risk. By the next generation of entrepreneurs in Ireland.

Creating the opportunities for genuine collaboration between startups and the partners critical to their successful growth was at the heart of the Startup Gathering. The week mobilised hundreds of entrepreneurs had a significant impact on thousands more. It created a unique platform for Ireland to demonstrate to the world that we are one of the best locations to start, scale and succeed a high growth business from. Running in five of Ireland's main regions from October 5th to October 10th, it was one of the most significant events to have happened for the Irish startup community in recent times.

For a first time event The Startup Gathering was an ambitious national project on a scale that had not been undertaken since 'The Gathering' in 2013. Announced in January as a pilot in the Action Plan for Jobs 2015 the concept of The Startup Gathering was rapidly embraced across Ireland. People felt they were becoming part of a movement. A movement that would see the long term sustainable development of a vibrant startup ecosystem in Ireland, a movement that will help future proof the country as a world leading startup hub.

This national week of events not only



provided a focal point for the many great initiatives and events that happened across Ireland but also had an important strategic component. In each city region the day commenced with the 'Startup Island 2020' Forum as a way of focusing the efforts of the key players in each startup ecosystem behind their local startups. The Startup Gathering brought international experts from 'Startup Commons' to facilitate the breakout sessions during each Forum. These breakout sessions made a tangible contribution towards the goal of Ireland becoming a global startup hub based on strengthening the startup sector in each city. This work was given a grounding in the real experiences of entrepreneurs across Ireland through the completion of a national survey in collaboration with Amarach Research of over 400 startups during The Startup Gathering.

While strengthening the startup sector in Ireland is important, the country also needs to increase the pipeline of entrepreneurs that start high growth companies. The Startup Gathering set out to demonstrate that being an entrepreneur is an exciting,

viable and well supported option in Ireland. It also sought to encourage those with established startups to move to the next step of scaling up their company. Throughout the country it achieved this over and over again. Following the week it was noted to me on several occasions that the week helped create many new relationships and collaborations. The week provided a unique spotlight on resources available and achievements being made in the Irish entrepreneurship space. International research has found that networks are the single most important driver of startup ecosystem growth. Therefore it is very encouraging that a key legacy of the week is that a series of startup network activation groups have emerged in cities where The Startup Gathering Forums took place to carry on the good work commenced by the Startup Gathering steering groups.

I wish to thank all who contributed to making The Startup Gathering the major success that it became. While the week was led by Startup Ireland, the involvement and active support of a wide group of committed people ensured that success was achieved. Many thanks to Minister Ged Nash for chairing the National Steering Group and his team at the Department of Jobs, Enterprise & Innovation, Bank of Ireland and their staff throughout their national branch network, Enterprise Ireland as the national enterprise agency, the city coordinators who worked tirelessly to bring this project to the grassroots level and the national and regional steering groups (comprised of enterprise agencies, representative associations and private sector partners). Many others in the startup community gave their invaluable support which was very

much appreciated as was the input of IDEA and the Board of Startup Ireland.

Finally, I would like to thank the event organisers across Ireland and the thousands of members of the public who enthusiastically supported the week of The Startup Gathering. Based on the sheer number of participants attending the entrepreneurship related events that ran during the week, past experience indicates that there will be increasing numbers of startups formed as a result in the coming months and years.

The legacy of The Startup Gathering is represented by the committed individuals in each city and region that have stepped forward to build on the week by carrying on the work of creating a vibrant startup ecosystem in their community. These engines of indigenous growth are the true social and economic dividend of The Startup Gathering 2015.

**Eoin Costello**  
CEO Startup Ireland  
National Director  
The Startup Gathering 2015

**The Board of Startup Ireland:**  
Brendan Butler (Chairman), Andrew Parish (Vice Chairman), Siobhan Finn, Sinead Heneghan, Eoghan Stack, Lorcan O'Sullivan and Professor Thomas Cooney.

**The Startup Ireland team:**  
Eoin Costello, Michael Guerin, Alison Kerr, Siobhan Ferris and Niamh Breathnach.

### A message from Minister Bruton

As I have said before, we have great entrepreneurs in Ireland, we just don't have enough of them. Two thirds of all new jobs across the economy are created by startups – that's why it is so crucial that we get our policies on entrepreneurship right.

We have put in place a startup plan aiming to create almost 100,000 extra jobs from startups over the coming years, and we have created new mentoring supports, new incubation spaces, new tax measures and a new competition to find Ireland's Best Young Entrepreneur.

The Startup Gathering was a major part of this plan, and the response to the initiative in the week of October was more evidence of the huge potential that exists in Ireland. I would encourage anyone with an interest in starting a business to build on the success of the Startup Gathering by going ahead and setting up so that many more of you will start, scale and succeed from Ireland.



**Richard Bruton T.D.**  
Minister for Jobs, Enterprise & Innovation

### A message from Minister Nash

We know that Ireland has a great entrepreneurial spirit and the Startup Gathering was about harnessing that drive, showcasing it and encouraging others to get involved. I am delighted to have chaired the National Steering Committee for the Startup Gathering. It allowed me to witness at first-hand the determination and enthusiasm across the public and private sector to drive engagement with this initiative and help make the Startup Gathering a fantastic success.

Organising more than 410 events across 22 counties for in excess of 18,900 participants is a huge credit to the hard work of those involved and shows the appetite there is across the country to support and promote startups. The events were accessible to all and I hope the experience of the Startup Gathering will encourage more people to take the first step on the road to entrepreneurship; to access the supports needed to grow their business or to entice new businesses with high potential to choose Ireland as their startup home.



**Ged Nash T.D.**  
Minister for Business & Jobs

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### Strategic Partner's Message

When we first heard about The Startup Gathering – through Eoin Costello of Startup Ireland – we at Bank of Ireland were delighted to come on board as sponsors and key Corporate Partner.

From the outset, we strongly supported the objective of this large scale programme which sought to make Ireland a global startup hub by 2020.

We viewed this venture as a true opportunity to partner with the team at Startup Ireland and were keen on maximising the full suite of opportunities available to us to ensure its success. In the weeks, days and hours leading up to The Startup Gathering we activated our network through intensive communications across our 250 branches throughout the Republic of Ireland, with 40 staff working on the programme for the week. We communicated with our customers by programming 1620 ATM screens with SG2015 content, and through our online resources, distributing the SG2015 message and encouraging people to get involved. And, most importantly, we hosted in excess of 70 events throughout the country during the week, inviting over 5,000 of our customers and associates to take part in these gatherings.

Entrepreneurs and startup companies will be a major part of our future economic development and need support in the early days. This is why, during the week of The Startup Gathering 2015, we launched StartLab Galway – a venture designed to support the tech startup community in

Galway city and the surrounding regions. Designed to incubate high-potential tech startups, supporting them through rapid scaling, StartLab Galway will give early-stage companies access to a range of supports to help them succeed and grow from Galway.

Liam McLoughlin,  
Chief Executive, Retail Ireland



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“We have great entrepreneurs in Ireland, we just don’t have enough of them. Two thirds of all new jobs across the economy are created by startups – that’s why it is so crucial that we get our policies on entrepreneurship right. We have put in place a startup plan aiming to create almost 100,000 extra jobs from startups over the coming years, and we have created new mentoring supports, new incubation spaces, new tax measures and a new competition to find Ireland’s Best Young Entrepreneur. The Startup Gathering is a major part of this plan, and the response to the initiative to date is more evidence of the huge potential that exists.”

**MINISTER RICHARD BRUTON**

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Ireland's Startup Gathering 2015 was the one of the most significant events to have happened for the Irish startup community in recent times. Considered to be the largest distributed startup event in the world for a country of this size, the success of the event continues to have positive implications for the Irish and International startup communities and the future of Ireland as a recognised leader in startup success.

Supported by the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation through the Action Plan for Jobs, and Bank of Ireland, The Startup Gathering was the brainchild of Startup Ireland and was launched as part of the Government's Action Plan for Jobs 2015. This ambitious project supported the Government's objective of encouraging entrepreneurship in Ireland and making Ireland a global hub for startups by 2020.

The Startup Gathering originally set out to run up to 50 events in five cities throughout Ireland - Dublin, Waterford, Cork, Limerick and Galway. Its purpose was to demonstrate to the domestic and International business communities that Ireland boasts significant resources to help startup companies start, scale and succeed from Ireland. It also served to mobilise regional stakeholders to take the necessary steps in helping their cities strengthen their ecosystems to help early stage startups succeed.

A pioneering project that would build on the success of the Gathering 2013, it was envisaged that each city engaged in the project would be inspired to organise and run events best fitting their area.

Supported by a city coordinator, as well as a national team, each city mobilised the local business community as well as private and public stakeholders to highlight their own city as a significant area for local, national and International startups to locate in and grow from.

The success of each city would be measured by the number of events that would be run, the numbers of people that would participate and the media attention received. However, the true success that emerged was unforeseen at any of the planning stages.

Running from October 5th to 10th, The Startup Gathering inspired 180 national, regional and local businesses to collectively host in excess of 410 events. Based primarily in the five cities, due to popular demand the focus expanded to include additional regions known as the 'North East' and the 'North West'. Events originally earmarked for the 5 cities, however, ultimately spanned across 22 of the 26 counties in the Republic of Ireland and over 18,900 people attended. The Startup Gathering also served to unite private and public sector service providers across political and industry divides - a pioneering union that served to enhance and empower the events of the week and the national agenda.

In order to recognise and capitalise on the strengths of each city a forum of key decision makers was hosted by Startup Ireland in each city. These days opened with a special 'Startup Island 2020 Forum' and aimed to unite all key decision makers in each region on the singular

goal of accelerating the development of internationally competitive startup hubs in each city region based on the regional industry strengths of their area. These forums were attended by senior stakeholders from each city representing professional service providers, startups, enterprise agencies, large corporates, higher education research centres, banks and investors. In surveys after the week of the Startup Gathering the majority of attendees supported the idea of The Startup Gathering becoming an annual event and 95% supported the ultimate goal of Ireland becoming a startup hub by 2020.

In addition to all other ambitions and goals, The Startup Gathering also hoped to deliver a social dividend. It hoped that the business communities and regional stakeholders would work to ensure their region was well represented in terms of events and media attention. Once again the extent of dividend returned was unprecedented and heart-warming. The event received a Céad Míle Fáilte from the grassroots of the Irish business community and stimulated a wave of positivity and action across the country. It activated a movement of effort, energy and enthusiasm among participants and volunteers to ensure Ireland is set apart as a global leader for economic success in startups. A movement which continues today. At the regional level two cities have proceeded with establishing steering groups to drive their startup ecosystem forward as a result of The Startup Gathering.

On an international scale senior decision makers representing 21 International startups were motivated to visit Ireland especially for The Startup Gathering, four

of whom contributed their international perspective and wisdom at various events. Intel's ChallengeUp Startup Accelerator participants visited for The Startup Gathering Dublin, two members of this team have since relocated to Ireland. Enterprise Ireland brought 20 International startups to Cork for their Overseas Competitive Start Fund Pitch, a number of whom have decided to locate here. Catching the attention of the international media, word of the event was carried by significant influencers such as USA Today, Startup Nations and Startup Commons. Due to the success of The Startup Gathering project in mobilising people on a national scale to promote entrepreneurship it has been studied by delegations visiting Ireland from Moldova, Armenia and Tatarstan.

From the outset, The Startup Gathering was deemed significant national news with the official launch making national TV news headlines. Large media players such as Silicon Republic, Communicorp (including Newstalk and Today FM), the Irish Examiner and the regional press were generous supporters of the initiative and helped to spread the word among their national and local audiences. In total 276 articles and reports were published in national printed and online media while 29 broadcasts were aired on national and regional radio. Regional media accounted for over half of all coverage, reflecting the local, community-based nature of The Startup Gathering.

The digital success of The Startup Gathering was also obvious across a variety of platforms. The most evident was on Twitter where the official hashtag, #startupIRL, was trending every day during

the week. On day one alone it received over 5.4 million impressions. Over the course of the week 3.4million accounts were reached by 16,053 tweets via 3,074 unique users mentioning the official hashtag - including a number of high profile accounts. A unique Startup Gathering Twibbon was created and was enthusiastically used by 360 organisations offering an imaginative opportunity for exposure.

Content on other social media outlets such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Pinterest and Youtube also returned significant figures. Facebook content reached over 3,500 Likes and the 11 unique Startup Gathering videos produced were viewed in excess of 120,000 times. LinkedIn content reached 2,414 users and there was an average of 300 monthly views of content on Pinterest.

In addition to The Startup Gathering in-house social media activity, the digital support offered by main sponsor Bank of Ireland generated significant attention. The activation of the bank's 1,620 ATM screens with Startup Gathering collateral offered a digital return of 5.5 million impressions and a further 4.4 million impressions were generated through owned, earned and paid social media. A further 203,000 social engagements originated from Bank of Ireland's three social media platforms.

The success of The Startup Gathering 2015 is evident on many levels. It was an event that inspired thousands and ignited in them a desire for a better future - not just for their own business but for Ireland as a whole. Following years of economic difficulty for the country, it sought to throw a spotlight on all the positive supports

and structures that are already in situ and demonstrated that by uniting many stakeholders toward one unified goal can collectively help to establish Ireland as a global hub for startups by 2020.

However, while the enthusiasm and attention gathered over the week was beyond imagination, the true success lies in the opportunistic connections made between grassroots business people and those who have supports and opportunities to offer. A key legacy of the week is the number of new relationships and collaborations - local, national and International - that have developed and will lead to greater economic success for everyone in Ireland.

The role of Bank of Ireland as Strategic Partners to the Startup Gathering was a pivotal one involving the mobilisation of staff, colleagues and customers from all over Ireland. This unified effort engaged in the design, delivery and participation of both the Startup Gathering and Bank of Ireland programme of events; but in addition, Bank of Ireland provided hands-on support in the areas of project management, network activation, stakeholder and steering committee coordination, marketing, PR and communications. The results of their consistent and invaluable support of the Startup Gathering, include: more than 3,800 attendees (to Bank of Ireland events), 250+ branches activated; 5.5m impressions across Bank of Ireland ATM machines, 4.4m impressions across social media and 1 major announcement for the Galway region – StartLab Galway.

THE STARTUP GATHERING 2015 AT A GLANCE







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“Accenture was delighted to partner with Startup Ireland to support The Startup Gathering. At Accenture we are passionate about the need to build bridges between the startup community and larger organisations in a tangible way to drive innovation. We also fully subscribe to playing our part in strengthening the startup ecosystem through our many programmes dedicated to helping early stage companies. Initiatives such as Startup Gathering play an important role in positioning Ireland as a ‘Startup Island’.”

**ALASTAIR BLAIR, COUNTRY  
MANAGING DIRECTOR, ACCENTURE**

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## STARTUP GATHERING 2015

### 5 Days - 5 Cities



“We have great entrepreneurs in Ireland, we just don’t have enough of them. Two thirds of all new jobs across the economy are created by startups... We have put in place a startup plan aiming to create almost 100,000 extra jobs from startups over the coming years, and... The Startup Gathering is a major part of this plan.”

Richard Bruton TD,  
Minister for Jobs,  
Enterprise and Innovation

## INTRODUCTION

### HOW DID IT ALL BEGIN?



Startup Ireland is a not-for-profit organisation deeply committed to the goal of Ireland becoming a global startup hub by 2020 so that more entrepreneurs can start, scale and succeed from Ireland. In October 2014 it organised a unique conference entitled ‘Vision 2020’ in Google Dublin where it brought together key public and private stakeholders who could help achieve the goal of Dublin becoming a global startup hub by 2020. Attending participants cited that Startup Ireland was the ideal organisation to help unite stakeholders behind progressing this agenda for growth of Ireland’s startup sector.

Following on from the ‘Vision 2020’ forum and further consultation with the Department of Jobs, Enterprise & Innovation, the Irish Government included Startup Ireland’s Startup Gathering proposal as a pilot project in the Action Plan for Jobs 2015. It was to be the avenue through which the national objective of encouraging entrepreneurship in Ireland

and establishing Ireland as the leading global centre for the success and growth of startup companies could be advanced on both a national and International scale.

The primary objective of The Startup Gathering was to help build an open, fluid, and dynamic network that helps startups make the connections they need to succeed. A week long initiative that would run a series of events in various regions throughout the country would help facilitate this. The events would focus on demonstrating to Irish and International businesses, Ireland’s strong network of supports and resources for any company to start, scale and succeed.

It was understood at the outset that to become a global startup hub, Ireland needed to simultaneously increase the pipeline of entrepreneurial talent and the aids that can help accelerate their growth. So while encouraging more people to choose entrepreneurship as a viable career choice is essential, Ireland must also provide them with the resources and supports to enable them to scale rapidly.

Five unique pillars combine to underpin any successful startup ecosystems; Service Providers, Enterprise Support Agencies, Research Centres & Tech Transfer Offices, Large Corporates and Investors. So essential are these five pillars to helping Ireland achieve status of a global startup hub, they were used as a platform upon which to build The Startup Gathering programme and were encompassed in the logo:



From the beginning, it was important that the outcomes of The Startup Gathering reflected the objectives contained in the Action Plan for Jobs.

These objectives were:

1. Increase the number of people choosing entrepreneurship as a viable career choice
2. Demonstrate the comprehensive network of supports available to national and International businesses throughout the island of Ireland to startup companies.
3. Promote Ireland as an International destination and hub of startup activity.

The Startup Gathering also intended to deliver a social dividend with a positive impact on startup communities across Ireland. It was intended to help bring about a growing interest in entrepreneurship as a viable career choice and to enable towns, cities and regions to embrace the startup agenda.

**WHO SUPPORTED IT?**

The Startup Gathering aimed to achieve a national policy objective and was enthusiastically supported from inception by the Minister for Business Ged Nash at the Department of Jobs, Enterprise & Innovation. Minister Nash's role was a significant factor in bringing the support of his Advisory Group on Small Business to the project, ensuring cross-departmental support and ultimately ensuring a truly unifying project for towns, cities and regions across the country. He accepted the role of Chairman of the national steering group for The Startup Gathering and helped bring focus and energy to its proceedings.

Business to Fireside Chats, Perfect Your Pitch Workshops, Women in Business seminars, Online Payments tutorials, CoderDojos and Startup Weekend. Ultimately, their input as sole Strategic Partners had a considerable qualitative and quantitative effect on the amplification and success of the event.

To deliver the project, Startup Ireland also received sponsorship support from Cpl

The Bank were in the ideal position to contribute at numerous levels across their branch network, which included a bespoke marketing and communication strategy rolled-out across their 250+ branch network; design and delivery of a new programme of events specifically for the Startup Gathering ranging from Speed Mentoring and Networking, Digital Skills, Show Your



The Board of Startup Ireland met with Minister Bruton in January 2015 to hear how his Department 's support of the Startup Gathering could help achieve their goals.

(whose team showed up in strength at Forums and events in all five cities), Intel (who brought their team of top International startups to the Dublin day, a number of whom spoke at events and ultimately decided to locate their businesses in Ireland), Accenture (whose Country Manager spoke at the Dublin Forum), IE Domain Registry (who also provided a special offer for startups), Bell Labs, Dublin City Council (who helped support the Dublin Recognition Awards reception), Magnet (whose CEO spoke at the Galway forum), Simplify Commerce by Mastercard (who sponsored The Startup Gathering app), GoCar (who provided transport for The Startup Gathering team as it travelled from city to city), NUI Galway Tech Transfer Office (who supported the Galway Recognition awards event). Enterprise Ireland and IDA Ireland provided significant support to the week on multiple levels.

A national Startup Gathering Steering Group comprising key representatives from the relevant state agencies and private sector

## HOW IT ALL HAPPENED?

The launch of the Startup Gathering and announcement of the strategic partnership with Bank of Ireland took place in the Bank of Ireland's newest branch 1 Grand Canal Square, Dublin, which has a designated space designed specifically for startups and entrepreneurs, called Workbench. A total of 149 people attended the event, and speakers included 2 Ministers, Liam McLoughlin, CEO of Retail Ireland and Head of Enterprise Development Gerry Prizeman,

supporters were responsible for delivering the project. At the city and regional level, the appointment of a Startup Gathering city coordinator was sought in each county. This city coordinator led the City Steering Groups comprising representatives from local networks, accelerators, companies, organisations and local authority staff/elected members.

These city coordinators were people who are steeped in the startup ecosystem of their city region and are passionate about building the economic success of their region. The success of The Startup Gathering week arose primarily from a strong city coordinator being in place as the fulcrum for The Startup Gathering-related activity in each city. All city coordinators were members of The Startup Gathering National Steering Group and were instrumental in ensuring the grassroots of Ireland's business community were engaged in the project. Following the event, it was noted by the national team that "having the local knowledge of a city coordinator in each region was fundamental to the success of the week."

alongside Eoin Costello CEO of Startup Ireland.

The involvement and input of the key stakeholders in each city was essential to the success of The Startup Gathering. If Ireland was to achieve the title of global startup hub, each city needed an opportunity to demonstrate their strengths. Therefore, it was important that the key messages and objectives were communicated to the key decision makers

at the earliest opportunity.

A series of 'Town Hall' meetings were organised where the city coordinators worked with The Startup Gathering team to engage key stakeholders and decision makers in the objectives of The Startup Gathering. These meetings were interactive forums featuring talks by successful entrepreneurs on why they chose the city to locate in; the Startup Gathering National Director on the objectives of the week; and a representative of Bank of Ireland outlining their supports for startups and for the week itself.

The results of these meetings formed the first successful outcome for The Startup Gathering. So enthusiastic were those in attendance that many became members of The Startup Gathering steering groups and met frequently to ensure momentum towards the week of The Startup Gathering.

Once the announcement of the Action Plan for Jobs was complete a national call for events and projects in the area of entrepreneurship, startup support and innovation was issued. Corporates, state agencies and enterprise organisations were welcome to submit events which met with the theme 'Start, Scale and Succeed from Ireland' which complemented the goal of Ireland becoming a global startup hub by 2020.

It was hoped that approximately 50 events would be held in 5 of the chosen cities (Dublin, Waterford, Cork, Limerick and Galway), however, such was the enthusiasm for the events that in excess of 410 events were hosted in 22 counties by 180

organisations.. Three types of events were hosted across the country throughout the week: Startup Island 2020 Forum; Open City Region Events (which broken down into a number of categories) and Startup Gathering Recognition Awards.

On the city regional days, the Startup Island 2020 Forum started the day while The Startup Gathering Recognition Awards ceremony was the closing event. These Forums and Awards were organised and run by The Startup Gathering team and the local city coordinators.

The Startup Island 2020 Forum was based on the successful model of the initial 'Vision 2020' Dublin Forum and was a morning of talks, presentations and panel discussions involving all key stakeholders from the region. The objective of the forum was to help accelerate the development of internationally competitive startup hubs in each city region and allow for the engagement of all key decision makers. In each city, the forums proved highly successful with a total of 824 of Ireland's leading personnel and decision makers attending and participating across the five days.

Crowd-sourced events organised and ran by other organisations known as 'Open City Region Events' were held typically between 2pm and 8pm everyday of The Startup Gathering week. These were events which were received and authorised following the national call. Each day ended with The Startup Gathering Recognition Awards Ceremony which was a unique event recognising the outstanding contributions made by individuals to the startup

ecosystem in each city.

As part of The Startup Gathering programme the Innovation & Entrepreneurial Skills Passport Workshops were Startup Ireland initiatives which aimed to improve innovation and entrepreneurial capabilities in practical workshops attended by potential entrepreneurs. The objective of the I&E Skills Passport is to help create the entrepreneurial pipeline in each city region and enable early talent spotting. In support of the Government's 'National

Talent Drive' Startup Ireland is developing the Innovation & Entrepreneurial Skills Passport. It will be an entry level, competence based, introduction to the development of key life skills essential to the New Economy in the area of innovation and entrepreneurship with the goal of boosting entrepreneurship across all areas of the economy and society.



**4/3/2015 THE LAUNCH AT** in numbers  
Bank of Ireland  
GRAND CANAL SQUARE

- 2** GOVERNMENT MINISTERS  
MINISTER BRUTON  
MINISTER NASH
- 12** SENIOR MULTINATIONAL REPRESENTATIVES LOCATED IN IRELAND INCLUDING  
PayPal, pch, Google, SAP, DELL, IBM
- 4** COUNTRY MANAGERS  
Eventbrite, accenture, facebook
- 5** EMBASSY OFFICIALS INCLUDING THE UK, US & AUSTRIA.
- 5** STARTUP GATHERING CITY COORDINATORS REPRESENTING DUBLIN, CORK, LIMERICK, GALWAY AND WATERFORD.
- 10** CEOS INCLUDING  
social entrepreneurs IRELAND, IVCA, IDA IRELAND, Junior Achievements, CoderDojo, Bank of Ireland, ledr, SFI, WILLIAM FRY
- 2** MEMBERS OF THE DAIL COMMITTEE ON JOBS, ENTERPRISE & INNOVATION
- 4** INTERNATIONAL ENTREPRENEURS FROM POLAND, CHILE, GERMANY AND ITALY THAT DISCUSSED WHY THEY CHOSE IRELAND TO GROW THEIR BUSINESS FROM.
- 6** SENIOR REPRESENTATIVES OF PROFESSIONAL SERVICE CO'S INCLUDING  
pwc, Deloitte, cpl.
- 4** VCS INCLUDING  
DELTA PARTNERS

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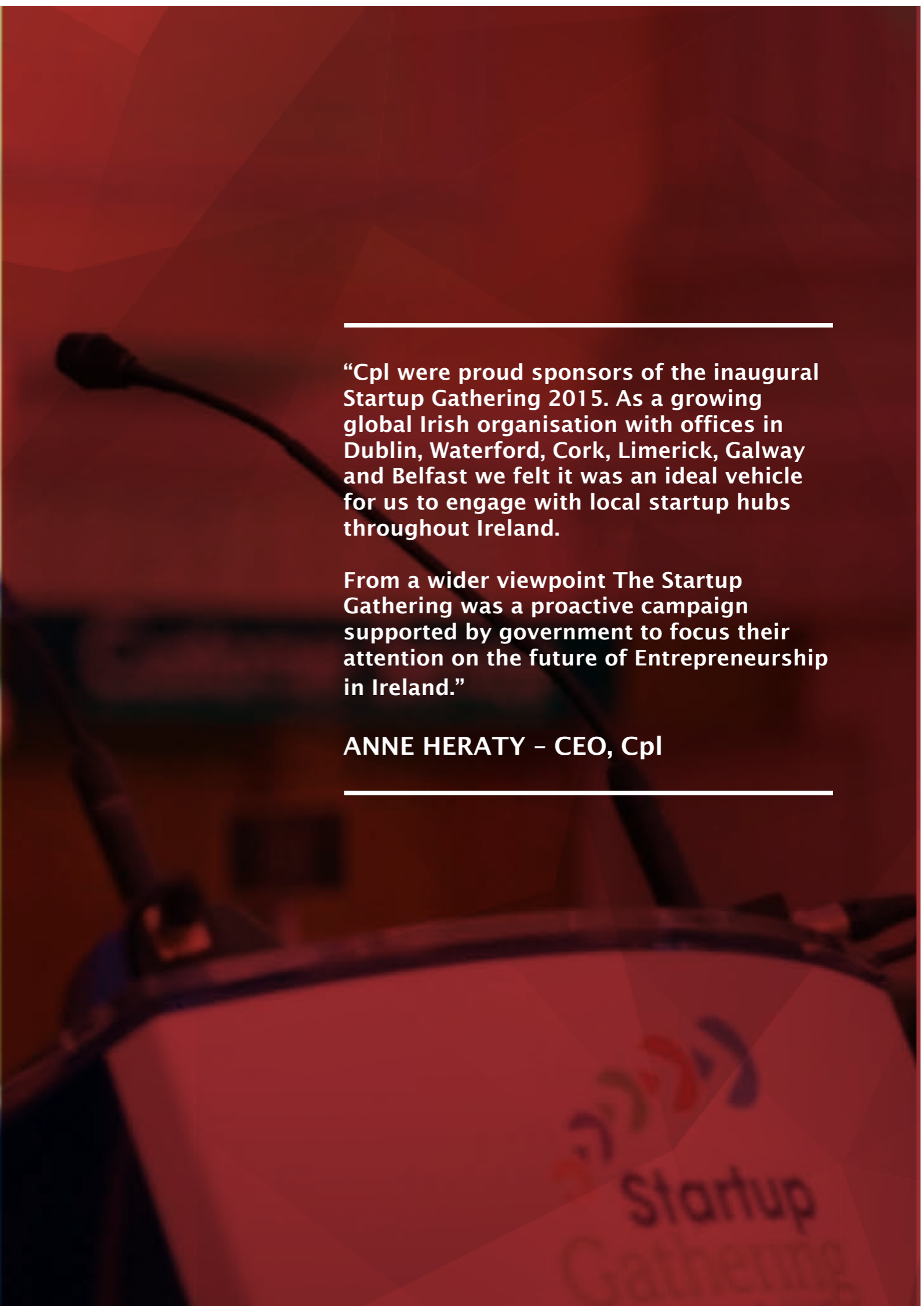
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**“Cpl were proud sponsors of the inaugural Startup Gathering 2015. As a growing global Irish organisation with offices in Dublin, Waterford, Cork, Limerick, Galway and Belfast we felt it was an ideal vehicle for us to engage with local startup hubs throughout Ireland.**

**From a wider viewpoint The Startup Gathering was a proactive campaign supported by government to focus their attention on the future of Entrepreneurship in Ireland.”**

**ANNE HERATY – CEO, Cpl**

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“We know that Ireland has lots of ambitious entrepreneurs and we are looking for even more of them to come forward and build a Startup revolution. With more than 400 events taking place across the country in The Startup Gathering I would encourage Ireland’s entrepreneurs, investors and mentors to get involved, make connections, and strengthen Ireland’s startup ecosystem right across the country. Through harnessing the talent, ambition and drive of our entrepreneurs we can create more opportunities for companies to start, scale and succeed and ultimately create more jobs.”

MINISTER GED NASH

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## SPONSORS, SUPPORTERS & STEERING GROUPS

The Startup Gathering 2015 became a great success due to the deep collaboration with and amongst our key stakeholders. These organisations dedicated their time and resources by being actively involved in the organisation of many events and initiatives across Ireland.

This project enabled key decision makers across Ireland to be unified and involved in a common cause to ensure the success

of The Startup Gathering 2015 and highlighting and promoting the strong ecosystem we have in Ireland to support startups.

The members of The Startup Gathering National Steering Group under the chairmanship of Minister Ged Nash and the project direction of Startup Ireland CEO Eoin Costello comprised:



## THE STEERING GROUPS

The Startup Gathering 2015 was a truly collaborative effort and without the help of each and every stakeholder involved, it would not have been the massive success it was. A special mention must firstly go to the two main sponsors, the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation through the Action Plan for Jobs 2015 and Bank of Ireland, who played very active roles on the steering groups.

The continued support from both Minister Bruton and Minister Nash along with the extensive range of supports supplied by Bank of Ireland provided the platform for The Startup Gathering to motivate so many people around the country to get actively involved in Ireland's startup sector, many for the first time.

The Minister for Business Ged Nash at the Department of Jobs, Enterprise & Innovation was the main project supporter on behalf of the Irish Government. He was responsible for securing cross department support for the project. The Minister maintained an active role in ensuring the project was meeting its objectives through personally chairing the seven meetings of the National Steering Group. These meetings were also attended by key departmental officials.

Over the week the Government and local elected officials was extremely supportive with 5 Ministers, 6 Mayors and 1 TD attended and speaking at Startup Gathering Forums across the country.





Bank of Ireland came on board at an early stage and were very supportive throughout. The involvement of senior members of Bank of Ireland staff was a key element in the success of the project. Some facts and figures of Bank of Ireland's involvements are listed below:



- 250+ Branches activated throughout the Republic of Ireland
- 2 Flagship branches activated with bespoke, large scale marketing collateral
- 70+ Bank of Ireland new events designed & delivered for SG2015
- 3,800+ Attendees at Bank of Ireland (only) events
- 5000+ Invites issued by (BOI) to attend SG2015 events
- 1620 Bank of Ireland ATM screens programmed with SG2015 content
- 5.5m Impressions from BOI ATM screens
- 4.4m Impressions through owned, earned and paid social media
- 203k Social engagements across three social platforms
- 1,432 Tweets mentioning #BOIstartups and @StartupIreland
- 165 Radio Campaign spots
- 70+ In-branch digital screens activated with SG2015 content
- 10+ Videos, designed and delivered for SG2015
- 40+ Bank of Ireland Staff working on delivering SG2015
- 12 Bank of Ireland staff engaged as speakers/panelists in SG2015 Programme
- 14\* Bank of Ireland customers engaged in core SG2015 programme
- 5 External service suppliers / agencies working to support delivery
- 2 Venture Capital Partners engaged in specific programmes
- 1 Sports star – Paul O’Connell – profiled in social media campaign
- 1 Major new Bank of Ireland announcement – StartLab, Galway



## MOBILISING IRELAND'S STARTUP SECTOR FOR #SG2015

Summary of briefings - April 15th 2015

**2:30**  
Briefing by Minister Bruton, Minister Nash and Gerry Prizeman, Bank of Ireland

**2:30**  
C-Level Attendees Included:

**3:30**  
Minister Nash chairs Startup Gathering National Steering Group at Stakeholders Included:

**1:00**  
Bank of Ireland Area Managers and 5 city region coordinators

**1:00**  
Startup Ireland board meeting chaired by Brendan Butler

**1:00**  
Briefing for LEOs and Community Enterprise Centres

**12:00**

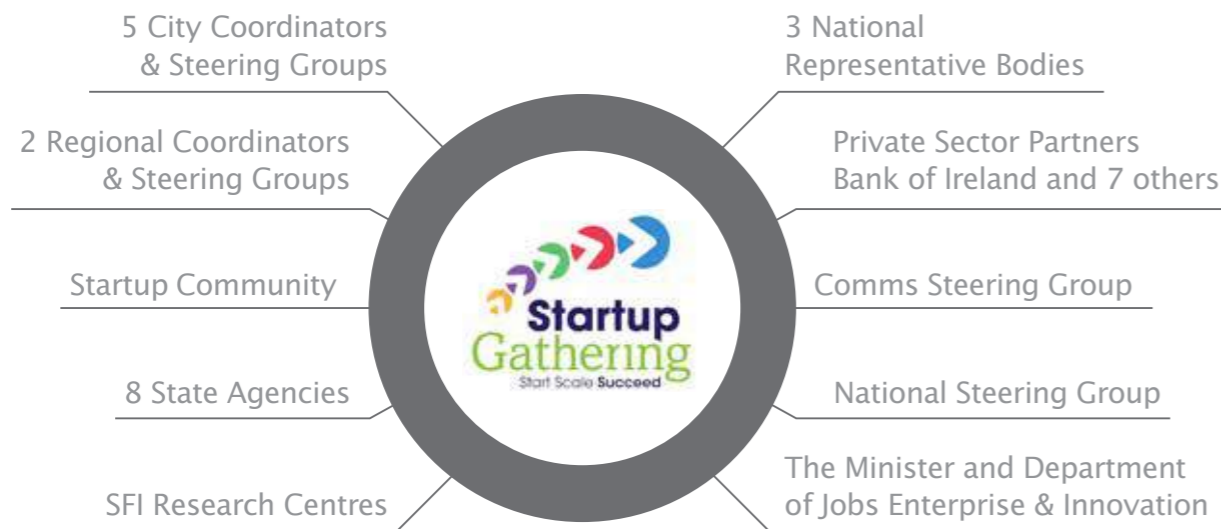
**55** Attendees

**8** Board Members

**9** State Agencies

**25** Attendees

**THE STARTUP GATHERING - A TRUELY COLLABORATIVE EFFORT ON A NATIONAL SCALE**



The success of the Startup Gathering was dependent on the close collaboration of multiple stakeholders at many different levels in both the public and private sector.

The work began with the formation under the chairmanship of Minister Ged Nash of The Startup Gathering National Steering Group. Through the meetings of the National Steering group hosted by the Department of Jobs, Enterprise & Innovation Minister Nash was actively involved in bringing the full support of many stakeholders to the project through his desire to see Ireland's startups

contribute to a regionally balanced growth of the country.

With responsibility for the national delivery of the week Eoin Costello (CEO Startup Ireland) managed the structure, communications and delivery of key elements of the project with the active support engagement by all members of the Steering Group. The PR and Communications function of The Startup Gathering was delivered by a Startup Gathering Comms steering group

**MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE SPONSORS**



In addition to providing financial support the above sponsors also made many significant non-financial contributions to the success of The Startup Gathering. Enterprise Ireland and IDA Ireland provided significant support to the week on multiple levels. Cpl helped The Startup Gathering by having senior members of their team help as moderators at each of the 'Startup Island 2020' Forums breakout sessions in all five cities. In addition Cpl ran individual events in support of The Startup Gathering such as "Find your dream job in Waterford" which highlighted roles in startups and established companies in the Waterford area. Intel brought their

team of top International startups from their ChallengeUp programme to the Dublin day, a number of whom spoke at events and ultimately decided to locate their businesses in Ireland. Accenture's Country Manager, a major supporter of the startup agenda in Ireland, spoke at the Dublin Forum on their plans for supporting Ireland's Fintech startup sector. The Accenture team were very supportive of The Startup Gathering delivery team with advice and feedback on the Forum format. Ireland's national domain provider, the IE Domain Registry, provided a special offer of .ie domain registrations for startups that were involved with The Startup Gathering.

Bell Labs provided support through publicising The Startup Gathering through their networks. Dublin City Council helped support the Dublin Awards reception and were instrumental in number of events and initiatives during the Dublin Day. Magnet's CEO spoke at the Galway forum with key advice for startups. Simplify Commerce by Mastercard sponsored The Startup Gathering app. GoCar provided vehicles for The Startup Gathering team as it travelled over 850 km from city to city during the week. The NUI Galway Tech Transfer Office supported the Galway Recognition awards event and were there in strength on the night.



### KEY SUPPORTERS

Startup Gathering 2015 also received much support and benefit-in-kind style sponsorship from several influential businesses and representative organisations in Ireland. William Fry was very supportive with the brand protection and legal registration of The Startup Gathering. PwC provided huge help to The Startup Gathering delivery team in completing the audit of the project. Best Practice Outsourcing did a fantastic job as

financial controllers to the project. Ibec ran 23 events in association with the week while Chambers Ireland coordinated the inputs of their member Chambers around the country. The American Chamber of Commerce provided advice and feedback to The Startup Gathering delivery team at relevant points of the project. Newstalk and Silicon Republic provided support and coverage through media partnerships.



### SPONSOR AND SUPPORTER IMPACT



### Ibec at Startup Gathering 2015 in numbers

Ibec proudly supported Startup Gathering 2015, as we recognise the importance of start-ups and entrepreneurs for the Irish economy. Ibec launched two new membership models for the start-up community.

Ibec, in partnership with Bank of Ireland and sponsored by Skillnets, hosted...

- 23 free open events
- in seven towns and cities
- with 850 senior business leaders attending
- Ibec tweet "Ireland can lead a startup revolution" had 990 impressions
- Ibec events retweeted over 400 times
- Ibec's CEO, president, and regional presidents launched their nationwide support of Startup Gathering week in Dublin.

Chamber supports Startup Gathering Cork

September 2015, ISSUE 8

works for your business

Cork Chamber



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**“Promoting Ireland as the ideal location for a startup is a key priority of Enterprise Ireland. We work in partnership with the various organisations within the ecosystem to ensure that we have a vibrant and supportive environment that encourages entrepreneurship. We also actively engage with International startups to bring them to Ireland. We were delighted to collaborate with The Startup Gathering initiative as it puts a spotlight on the vibrant Irish startup ecosystem and promoted Ireland’s offering to the diaspora and other International entrepreneurs.**

**In addition to promoting our first Competitive Startup Fund for international founders to encourage them to locate their new startup business in Ireland we used the week to promote entrepreneurship regionally through The Startup Gathering teams based in Waterford, Cork, Limerick and Galway.”**

**JULIE SINNAMON,  
ENTERPRISE IRELAND**

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## THE STARTUP GATHERING 2015 IN THE CITIES AND REGIONS

To help achieve the country's ambition of becoming a global hub for startups by 2020, The Startup Gathering day in the 5 cities (Dublin, Waterford, Cork, Limerick and Galway) opened with a 'Startup Island 2020 Forum'. Each Forum brought together key decision makers in each city and was composed of a number of segments that complemented each other, these segments included:

1. Introductory speakers including government ministers, Bank of Ireland representatives, the CEO of Startup Ireland and a high profile keynote speaker sharing their vision for a key opportunity for the city.
2. Breakout Session - To help the city start strengthening its startup ecosystem, attendees heard International experts' from Startup Commons insights into what underpins successful startup ecosystems. Attendees participated in a breakout session facilitated by Startup Commons. The objective of the breakout session was to commence the process of creating a shared vision via a Startup Manifesto to support early stage startups in each city.
3. Accelerating Momentum towards 2020 - Attendees heard senior representatives from their city, drawn from the key enablers of successful global startup hubs (namely investors, state agencies, large corporates, research centres and service providers) share how they are contributing to the 2020 goal by growing their collaboration with local entrepreneurs and their startups.
4. Voice of the Entrepreneurs - The Forum was also the opportunity for the voice of the city's entrepreneurs to be heard during a panel discussion concerning their first-hand experience of what it is like to start, scale and succeed from that city.

## THE STARTUP COMMONS BREAKOUT SESSIONS

The theme of the 'Startup Island 2020 Forums' in each city was about getting the fundamentals in place to build towards the goal of becoming a global startup hub by 2020. Experts from Startup Commons facilitated the breakout sessions during each Forum. Their first hand experience around the world is that by commencing at the start of the pipeline and getting more people in each city starting with great business opportunities then there is the potential to have more startups scaling and succeeding from Ireland. The focus is on how to improve the quality and volume of early stage startup businesses that can progress through the growth pipeline.



## THE STARTUP COMMONS' STARTUP PIPELINE MODEL

Ideation	Concepting	Commitment	Validation	Scaling	Establishing
6000 business ideas	4000 people - 250 teams	150 startup teams	55 potential startups	15 growing startups	4 significant companies

A key goal of the break out sessions was to focus the energy of the Forum participants towards a tangible, near term goal. The Startup Commons team felt that a Startup Manifesto for early stage startups could serve this purpose. The Startup Manifesto Movement is a grassroots initiative that seeks to drive change throughout Europe to help support the starting and scaling of more businesses by building more effective ecosystems for startups in the European Union's 28 member states. They seek to achieve this by working collaboratively with the key stakeholders in their cities and countries to create a document that represents their shared vision – a Startup Manifesto.

To help start this process each breakout group considered:

1. What questions need to be asked under the 6 pillars of startup ecosystems (environment, culture, skills, education, network, state support) for early stage startups in the city?
2. To answer these questions who needs to be consulted in the city?

Attendees were allocated into groups. To encourage new insights, the people in each group were from diverse backgrounds. There were highly visible boards for each of the 6 pillars of startup ecosystems, a Moderator and Rapporteur was allocated to each board. A separate detailed report has been compiled by Startup Commons in respect of the breakout sessions.





1% of startups scale to achieving £1 million in revenue 6 years after they start.

Reflecting a relatively low level of engagement with startups by large corporates and MNCs in Ireland, only 1 in 10 respondents availed of support from large corporates when building their startups. Equally due to the national shortage of suitable co-working space the startup sector has become slightly more polarised in terms of its location profile: the share of those working from home has gone up (from 40% in 2014 to 49%) as has the share in rented offices.

The research underpinned the importance of a national event such as The Startup Gathering because when answering

questions on the state of Ireland as a potential 'Startup Island' 78% are in agreement that Ireland becoming a global startup hub will benefit their business but 79% feel the startup sector in Ireland is not performing to its full potential.



### NATIONAL SURVEY OF IRELAND'S STARTUPS IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE STARTUP GATHERING

Removing the obstacles to the growth of Ireland's high growth businesses is fundamental to Ireland becoming a global startup hub by 2020. In order to help understand the experience of entrepreneurs in Ireland and identify the obstacles they face in trying to grow their businesses Startup Ireland conducts an annual survey in partnership with Amarach Research.

In 2015 the survey was carried out in the months of October and November in conjunction with The Startup Gathering and received over 417 responses. The results found that 81% of entrepreneurs find it difficult to access scaling supports to grow their business (72% in 2014) while 79% found access to funding and talent major obstacles. These obstacles to scaling are of concern because research in the UK by the national ScaleUp initiative found that just



STARTUP ISLAND 2020 FORUM  
**October 5th 2015 | Google Foundry | 278 Attendees**



**Gene Murphy**  
 Dublin City Coordinator  
 Startup Ireland Co-Founder

Entrepreneur in Residence at Bank of Ireland, Gene is a co-founder at Startup Ireland and was chosen as Dublin City Coordinator for his passion and involvement within the startup community. He runs numerous startup events such as Startup Weekend and is a well-known and respected ambassador for the entrepreneur community.

The Startup Gathering 2015 opened on a high note in the early morning of Monday October 5th with the Dublin Startup Island 2020 Forum. Vincent Wall, Business Editor with Newstalk was MC for the morning and the event was attended by 278 people representing corporates, service providers, academics, entrepreneurs and the state enterprise agencies.

delighted to see the Government's support for Irish startups "come to fruition" in The Startup Gathering. He described it as a "unique opportunity" to showcase startups and to develop "world-class regional startup hubs" all around the country.

The morning proceedings were opened by Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation, Richard Bruton who had included The Startup Gathering as a pilot in his Action Plan for Jobs launched January 2015. Minister for Business, Gerald Nash, also spoke at the event saying he was

The keynote speaker at the forum was Philip Moynagh, Vice President, Internet of Things Group at Intel Corporation. Mr Moynagh said he believes Dublin is an ideal test bed for innovation and Ireland has much to offer, from the help of the state agencies, to a vibrant community of innovators. Within moments of starting the event was trending nationwide on Twitter.

DUBLIN STARTUP GATHERING TOWN HALL MEETING  
**May 19th 2015 | Wayra Ireland | 82 Attendees**





The 'Accelerating Momentum towards 2020' panel included Owen Keegan - Chief Executive, Dublin City Council, Colin Goulding - Head of SMB Publishers EMEA, Google, Prof. Linda Doyle – Director of CONNECT (Science Foundation Ireland Research Centre), Gerry Prizeman - Head of Enterprise Development, Bank of Ireland, Kevin Sherry - Head of the HPSU and Accelerated Growth Division at Enterprise Ireland and Niamh Townsend - General Manager, DELL Ireland. The Entrepreneurs and their Supporters Panel was facilitated by Niamh Bushnell, Dublin

Commissioner for Startups and featured inputs from Jayne Ronayne - KonnectAgain Ltd, Radek Tadajewski - Oort Inc. (a member of the Challenge Up IoT accelerator programme), Alastair Blair – Country Managing Director, Accenture and David McKernan (Java Republic).

A highlight of the Dublin day was the involvement of the Intel Challenge Up startup programme group who came to Dublin specifically to participate in The Startup Gathering.

#### DUBLIN OPEN CITY REGION EVENTS - HIGHLIGHTS

<b>TIDA Pitch Off</b>	Science Foundation Ireland	Ben Lang, co-founder of Mapme, delivered a keynote address on his journey as a serial entrepreneur at the Science Gallery in Dublin on Monday 5th October. The SFI Technology Innovation Development Award (TIDA) Pitch Off was held in conjunction with the DCU Ryan Academy, showcased some of the talented people and innovative ideas being funded by Science Foundation Ireland across the Irish Higher Education Institutes.
<b>Wearable Wednesday</b>	Wearable Wear Inc	Wearable Wednesday events are an open community forum focused on the blending of technology, art and humanity in the Wearable Technology and Internet of Things ecosystem. Their goal is to provide a platform for industry innovators, entrepreneurs, builders and investors to connect with like-minded, motivated people with the knowledge, vision and partnerships that will move the Internet of Wearable Things ecosystem forward.
<b>Silicon Stroll</b>	Dublin Business Innovation Centre	Current Trends & Future Insights" conference Following on from last year's successful "Silicon Stroll" event, DublinBIC hosted their annual "Current Trends and Future Insights" Conference as part of The Startup Gathering 2015. Tech giants 'strolled' through their perspective on Current Trends and Future Insights. Multinationals from the Internet, enterprise software and the Internet of things delivered presentations on their views of "Current Trends and Future Insights" : Where are these industries currently and where they may be in 3-5 or 10 years time. A networking event after the presentations gave both sides the opportunity to start relationship building with the communities.

<b>Fingal Enterprise Week</b>	Fingal Local Enterprise Office	A week of events. Clinics were open throughout the week with particular focus on the following themes: Startup Advice, Raising Finance Advice, Business Advice, Branding Advice, Exporting Advice
<b>Tech Brew</b>	Irish Software Association and ISA Software Skillnet	Run by the Irish Software Association (ISA), and ISA Software Skillnet, ISA TechBrew is an informal gathering of software company management and technology leaders, getting together to chat over a bite and a beer. Topic under discussion: "Three Customers is not a Business - Pivot, Persevere or Pack-it-up" ■What does it take to get from early validation to a growing business? ■With insufficient data and only your gut how do you decide whether to Pivot, Persevere or Pack-it-up?
<b>Show Your Business</b>	Bank of Ireland	Bank of Ireland opened up the busiest footpath in Ireland, with c.200,000 people per day outside their premises in College Green to Startup businesses. With great food & music throughout the days, 30 businesses came together to showcase their business. The themes were Monday - Tech, Tuesday - Export, Wednesday - Tourism, Thursday - Retail, Friday - Food.
<b>Founders Forum</b>	Science Foundation-Ireland	The aim of the SFI Founders Forum was to bring together the research community and technology transfer offices who have been heavily involved in spinning out a company to share their experiences, challenges and best practises for commercialising the outputs of their research endeavours. The event provided a platform for discussion and the sharing of ideas that will contribute to the national dialogue around entrepreneurship and commercialisation, as well as supporting the objectives of The Startup Gathering. This was an invitation only event.
<b>Meet Ireland's Most Exciting</b>	Bank Of Ireland & Delta Partners	A showcase of the startups in the Bank of Ireland Startup and Emerging Sectors Equity Fund ('BOISES') portfolio. BOISES is a VC fund invested by Delta Partners. Approximately 20 companies shared their stories on how they are disrupting their industries, ranging from language translation to holographic images. Attendees also got the opportunity to take a tour around the iconic House of Lords building.
<b>Dublin Beta</b>	Russell Banks & Gene Murphy	Among the revellers at Dublin Beta were CXXs, developer's, database marketers, funding wizards, growth hackers, company builders and Jack & Jills-of-all-trades. Participants put their products on display and opened up the hood to 300 web and tech types.

STARTUP GATHERING DUBLIN RECOGNITION AWARDS  
**October 5th 2015 | Bank of Ireland College Green | 125 Attendees**

The Dublin Startup Gathering Recognition Awards reception was held in Bank of Ireland, College Green and was attended by 125 people. The Challenge Up delegation who had travelled to Ireland especially for The Startup Gathering were in attendance with Intel, Cisco and Deutsche Telekom representatives.

On the night The Startup Gathering Recognition Award was presented to Anne Heraty in recognition of her entrepreneurial achievement in developing from inception one of Ireland's leading companies. Anne is founder and CEO of Cpl and has played the key role in developing it to become Ireland's leading employment services company. Anne is also very committed to giving her time and support to many not-for-profit initiatives.

The second award was presented to Gene



Murphy, Dublin City Coordinator for his consistent contribution and deep personal commitment to the startup community through his mentorship and organising of numerous startup events throughout the year. He also received the award for his significant contribution to the success of The Startup Gathering 2015 in Dublin.



**Additional thanks to:** Bank of Ireland, Google, Enterprise Ireland, Dublin City Council, Dublin LEO, SFI, Ibec, NDRC, CONNECT, Bord Bia, Amber, DCU Ryan Academy, Entrepreneurs Anonymous, IdeaStarter, DBIC, Trinity College Dublin, Delta Partners, Failte Ireland, InterTradeIreland, Dublin Beta, Innovation Academy, Invisio, South Dublin County Council, Junior Achievement Ireland, Terenure Enterprise Centre, Connect Ireland, UCD, IADT, The Digital Hub, Great Life Distillery, Atlantic Bridge, Dublinked, WWED, Plato, 3DR, Silicon Drinkabout, SimVirtua, Andre Roland, IPIC, Magnet, Invent Showcase, Blackrock Castle, Irish Software Association.



**Eugene Crehan**  
**Waterford City Coordinator**

New Frontiers Programme Manager and Director of Programmes at Waterford Institute of Technology's Centre for Enterprise Development & Regional Economy. Eugene is a well respected advocate for entrepreneurs in Waterford and for the South East Region. Eugene's involvement in The Startup Gathering was kindly supported by Waterford Institute of Technology.

WATERFORD TOWN HALL MEETING  
**May 20th 2015 | Waterford Institute of Technology | 42 Attendees**



WATERFORD TOWN HALL MEETING

**May 20th 2015 | Waterford Institute of Technology | 42 Attendees**

The Startup Gathering Waterford got off to a very successful start with over 130 key decision makers and influencers participating in the Startup Island 2020 Forum at Waterford Tower Hotel. The forums' MC was Karen Tomkins, from Waterford Local Radio, stimulated the morning's proceedings and panel discussions. The attendees ranged from local to corporate organisations such as Red Hat, South East BIC, Waterford Chamber of Commerce, Ernst and Young and Cpl.

The keynote speaker was Professor Willie Donnelly, President of Waterford Institute of Technology and Director at TSSG: one of Europe's leading telecommunications R&D institute. Professor Donnelly stressed the importance of creating a healthy startup ecosystem to benefit local enterprise, but also to attract businesses to the area.

Professor Donnelly has been working on positioning Ireland as a world leader in smart agriculture through his work with TSSG.

The 'Accelerating Momentum towards 2020' panel included Lar Power - Deputy Chief Executive of Waterford City and County Council and Director of Economic Development and Planning, Peter Mc Loughlin – Head of Research at WIT - SFI, Gavin O'Brien – Genzyme, Ian Mernagh, Area Manager, Bank of Ireland, Southeast, Kevin Carroll - IDA Emerging Businesses Division and John O'Dea - Enterprise Ireland. The Entrepreneurs and their Supporters Panel featured inputs from Louise Grubb - Founder and CEO Q1 Scientific, Kevin Murphy – Co-founder CGM, Ed Hendrick – Sonru, Micheal O Foghlu - Succeed - Dr Mícheál Ó Foghlú -- CTO Red Hat Mobile and Joanna Murphy CEO Connect Ireland.



**WATERFORD OPEN CITY REGION EVENTS - HIGHLIGHTS**

<b>Enterprise Village for New Frontiers Enterprise Playground</b>	New Frontiers WIT Waterford Local Enterprise Office	This event was an opportunity to meet New Frontiers participants, see their business ideas and learn how they secured funding to accelerate their startup. In partnership with the Waterford City and Dungarvan Enterprise Centres, The Enterprise Playground was a workshop where new business ideas were developed, creatively expressed, their market broadly defined and the financial needs outlined. The workshop was designed for those in a startup phase or those adding new products/services to an existing offering.
<b>Find your dream job in Waterford</b>	Cpl	In partnership with The Startup Gathering, the team in CPL Waterford held an event to showcase the extensive employment options available in the area. Attendees found out about opportunities in exciting new startups and established companies based in the Déise across all areas of expertise. There were also talks from Startup Ireland CEO Eoin Costello, Cpl Director Graham Burns and some entrepreneurs.
<b>The Big Pitch</b>	Bank Of Ireland	Created and hosted by Bank of Ireland, the Big Pitch was an opportunity for Waterford-based businesses to pitch their big ideas to industry leaders and win a cash prize.
<b>Enterprise Village for New Frontiers</b>	New Frontiers WIT	This event was an opportunity to meet New Frontiers participants, see their business ideas and learn how they secured funding to accelerate their startup
<b>Driving Business Forward - Funding &amp; Innovation Supports for Start-Ups</b>	South East BIC & TSSG	South East BIC and TSSG presented a seminar for entrepreneurs and potential investors focused on one of the key challenges for businesses – funding – and offered solutions, guidance and practical support. It included speakers from South East BIC, Local Enterprise Office, Enterprise Ireland, Halo Business Angel Network (HBAN), InterTradelreland, TSSG and the Department of An Taoiseach, along with key clients of South East BIC and TSSG who presented case studies on innovation and funding supports they have utilised. More than 120 people attended.



South East BIC/TSSG Driving Business Forward event at the Tower Hotel Waterford, October 6th. L-R: Grainne Lennon InterTradelreland, Donnchadh Cullinan Enterprise Ireland, Michael Maddock South East BIC, Barry Downes TSSG, John Phelan HBAN, Niall Olden Kernel Capital

STARTUP GATHERING WATERFORD RECOGNITION AWARDS  
**October 6th 2015 | Waterford City Hall | 85 Attendees**

The Waterford Startup Gathering Recognition Awards reception was held in Waterford City Hall and was attended by 85 representatives from the local and regional business community. On the night a Startup Gathering Recognition award was presented to Patsy Carney, CEO of EirGen. Patsy's career, from working for a large multinational to leaving to build a startup from scratch to the point where it sold for \$135 million in 2015, is a very motivating example for entrepreneurs in Waterford

and across the country. He was presented with the award for his entrepreneurship and commitment to the economic development of the South East.

A second award was presented to Eugene Crehan, Waterford City Coordinator whose work in the lead up to The Startup Gathering Waterford was central to the ultimate success of the Waterford day and helped highlight the many supports Waterford has to offer national and International startups.



**Additional thanks to:** Bank of Ireland, Waterford Institute of Technology, Enterprise Ireland, Waterford City & County Council, Waterford Chamber of Commerce, LEO Waterford, IDA SouthEast, Regional Assembly, TSSG, Genzyme, EirGen, Bluefin Payments, Red Hat Mobile, Sonru, Connect Ireland, CGM, Q1 Scientific, Ibec/Irish Software Association, Cpl, SEBIC, Fumbally Exchange, Karen Tompkins, GBR Direct, Bord Failte, Viking Triangle Tour, Waterford Crystal Visitor Centre, Tower Hotel Waterford, Junior Achievement Ireland, Frontline AV.



**Siobhán Finn**  
**Cork City Region Coordinator**

As project Director for Cork innovates Siobhan focuses on supporting and fuelling the entrepreneurial reputation of the region through the provision of communication

and marketing supports for stakeholders, in line with the delivery of each individual partner members vision, mission and objectives.

The initiative has worked with the enterprise development system in Cork since 2012 with the overall goal of making it the best location to start a business in Ireland.

This has been achieved by working with regional stakeholders including local government, state agencies, educational institutions, business support organisations, entrepreneurs and the extended Cork business community to engage in a collaborative and complimentary manner, promoting the Cork story.

CORK TOWN HALL MEETING  
**April 27th 2015 | Clayton Hotel Silver Springs | 55 Attendees**

The Startup Gathering Cork Town Hall meeting took place on Monday April 27th 2015 and was a great success. There were 55 attendees with a strong representation from the R&D and Tech Transfer sectors,

Regional Development Agencies and industry bodies all enthusiastic about embracing the possibilities offered by The Startup Gathering 2015.

Cork Day Sponsors



STARTUP ISLAND 2020 FORUM  
**October 7th 2015 | Cork County Hall | 139 Attendees**

Boris Kantsepolsky, Business Development and R&D Manager with Motorola Solutions Israel (MSIL) was the opening keynote speaker at Startup Gathering Cork's successful Startup Island 2020 Forum in the Vertigo suite in Cork County Hall. Speaking to over 139 key decision makers within the private and public sectors of Cork's business community, in terms of lessons for Ireland's startup sector Mr Kantsepolsky offered a fascinating speech on the history of the startup sector in Israel - today seen as one of the world's leading locations for technological development. Mr Martin Murray, Executive Director of Asia Matters was the secondary keynote speaker on the morning offering an insightful perspective on Why Asia Matters for Smart Startups. Mr Murray is the Honorary Consul of Indonesia in Ireland.

The 'Accelerating Momentum towards 2020' panel included Julie Sinnamon, CEO, Enterprise Ireland, Professor Anita Maguire, Vice President for Research and Innovation, University College Cork, Anne Sheehan,

Enterprise Director, Vodafone, Orla Flynn, Vice President for External Affairs, Cork Institute of Technology, Niamh Townsend, General Manager, Dell Ireland and Albert Diggin, Area Manager, Bank of Ireland Cork.

The Entrepreneurs and their Supporters Panel featured inputs from Andrea Doolan, CEO, Atlantia Food Clinical Trials, Jerry O'Brien, CEO, Radisens Diagnostics, Barry Guiney, CEO, 4impacts, Michael Elliott, CEO, Over-C, Ray Alcorn, CEO, Exceedence Ltd and Blaine Doyle, CEO, GlowDX.



**CORK OPEN CITY REGION EVENTS - HIGHLIGHTS**

<b>The New Digital Reality</b>	Enterprise Europe Network	The Enterprise Europe Network supported The Startup Gathering activities in Cork, by hosting an information seminar for startups and SMEs on the the Single Digital Market that addressed questions such as : How will the EU's new data protection and privacy regulations affect ecommerce businesses? How are we bringing the digital agenda to a local level and how are traditional businesses moving online?
<b>IPIC Photonics Bootcamp</b>	Irish Photonic Integration Centre	The IPIC Photonics BootCamp – Advancing Photonics Entrepreneurship In Ireland was a workshop and sign-up event to the new IPIC Photonics BootCamp, a fully funded programme for the training and support of potential photonics Entrepreneurs in Ireland. This was aimed at those at any stage of Entrepreneurial process and open to all members of the photonics community.
<b>Fly Hack Fly</b>	IT@Cork & Cork Airport	Forty+ hack enthusiasts competed for Prize money and the chance to impress an A-List judging panel from the investment and aviation industries at Fly Hack Fly - held in Cork Airport. 20,000 holiday makers and business travellers using the airport over the course of the event made this event truly unique. They, not only had the opportunity to observe the hackathon live, they were also intrinsic participants in the hackathon. Over the 2 days the airport passengers acted as a live test bed, allowing the hack participants, to research customer needs, validate their proposition and battle test their solution with real travellers.
<b>Speed Up Startup - Speed Networking Event</b>	Cork Chamber	Cork Chamber and Bank of Ireland joined forces for The Startup Gathering on Tuesday 6th October for a highly energized event, 'Speed networking' is a more structured form of networking where participants had 1 ½ minutes each side to pitch their business and make connections for both buying and selling.
<b>The Venture Academy Conference</b>	CorkBIC	At the CorkBIC Venture Academy Conference, participating companies got real feedback, advice and coaching on their pitch. It was also a unique opportunity for early stage startups, SMEs and potential investors to hear from serial entrepreneurs and investors, as well as see the final pitches from some of the hottest startups around.

STARTUP GATHERING CORK RECOGNITION AWARDS  
**October 7th 2015 | Cork County Hall | 180 Attendees**

The Cork Startup Gathering Recognition Awards reception was held in Cork City Hall and was attended by over 180 people from the local business community. As the keynote speaker for the Cork 'Startup Island 2020' Forum Boris Kantsepolsky (Business Development and Technology R&D Manager at Motorola Solutions Israel) set out to explain how Ireland can become a global startup hub by highlighting the history of the startup sector in Israel, which is seen Internationally as one of the world's leading locations for technological development. Mr. Kantsepolsky travelled specifically to contribute his knowledge and experience to The Startup Gathering and in light of the value of his keynote to providing a fantastic platform for the breakout session in Cork, he was awarded The Startup Gathering 2015 Recognition Award.

A second award was presented to Siobhán Finn, City Coordinator for her efforts in ensuring Cork has a central role to play in Ireland becoming a global hub for startups by 2020 and the significant contribution she made to the success of The Startup Gathering Cork.



**Additional thanks to:** Cork innovates Sponsors, Cork City Council, Cork County Council, Cork Chamber, Cork innovates Partners, Cork City Council, Cork County Council, Cork Chamber, CorkBIC, Cork City & County Local Enterprise Offices, Cork Institute of Technology, Enterprise Europe Network, Enterprise Ireland, University College Cork. **Regional sponsors:** Irish Examiner, RedFM, Vodafone **Additional Contributors:** Bank of Ireland – regional offices,, Blackrock Castle Observatory (CIT), Brook Catering Services, Cameo Communications, CIT Mallow Systems Innovation Centre, CIT Rubicon Centre, CIT School of Music, Cork Airport, Cork County Council E-centres, DesignerDojo, Entrepreneurs Anonymous Cork, FlyHackFly (IT@Cork and Plus 10), Hyperion Ltd, Ibec, IIBN (Irish International Business Network), Intertrade Ireland, Irish Examiner, Irish Photonic Integration Centre, Irish Software Association, Irish Startup TV, Kernal Capital, LEADER (SECAD & Cork City Partnership), NCBA Network, NewsTalk, NOTWork, Really Useful Training & Development, Start Planet, Startup Weekend Cork, The EntrepreneurShip (IMERC), Tyndall National Institute, UCC Gateway



**Gillian Barry**  
**Limerick City Coordinator**

Gillian Barry manages all enterprise related activity for Limerick Institute of Technology including responsibility for all 4 of the LIT incubation/ acceleration centres across Limerick & Tipperary, running programmes such as the Enterprise Ireland New Frontiers Programme, managing two Seed Funds and is also a board director for Limerick Civic Trust, Croom Enterprise Centre and The Learning Hub. Gillian is passionate about the startup community and entrepreneurship.

LIMERICK TOWN HALL MEETING  
**May 21st 2015 | Clarion Hotel Limerick | 89 Attendees**



STARTUP ISLAND 2020 FORUM

October 8th 2015 | Limerick School of Art & Design | 150 Attendees

Startup Gathering Limerick day got off to an inspiring start with the Startup Island 2020 Forum at the Limerick School of Art & Design gallery. A beautiful location on day 4 of The Startup Gathering week, this forum was MC'd by Kingsley Aikens who is passionate about the whole area of diasporas and how countries, organizations, regions, cities, companies and individuals can build Diaspora networks for mutual advantage.

Keynote speaker Chris Bryne, CEO of SensorPro, co-founded Cashbook.com in 1992 which pioneered electronic payment and reconciliation solutions on the IBM AS/400 and Microsoft platforms. His inspiring presentation offered an insight into the opportunities that exist for Limerick in becoming an International hub for startup success by thinking big.

The 'Accelerating Momentum towards 2020' panel included Liam Sheedy Head of Sales and Revenue at Bank of Ireland, Dr. Maria Hinfelaaar- President LIT, Dermot O 'Connell

- Executive Director and GM OEM Solutions EMEA Dell, Kieran Harte - GM UBER and Denis Hayes Managing Director, IRDG.

The Entrepreneurs and their Supporters Panel featured inputs from Adrian Fleming - Founder & CEO of Accuvio, Colm O'Brien - Founder & CEO Carambola Kidz, Hannah Wrixton - Founder & CEO LastMinuteMinders, Shane McCarthy, Founder CEO & COO Bluechief Social and Sallyann Hynes IDA Kevin Sherry Enterprise Ireland.



Gerry Prizeman, Bank of Ireland, attending the Limerick Forum



LIMERICK OPEN CITY REGION EVENTS - HIGHLIGHTS

Turn your Final Year Project into a Startup Lessons from the trenches	Limerick Institute of Technology University of Limerick	Students were invited to hear from entrepreneurs who have started a business based on their final year projects. As a startup having the right skills and resources in place is fundamental to your success. This workshop had presentations from entrepreneurs who shared their first hand experiences of how they identified and filled these gaps in their journey to maximising the economic value of their startups.
Building Value through Scale	BDO	Con Quigley, Corporate Finance Partner in BDO compered an event for companies looking to scale. Con and a panel of speakers discussed businesses in the scale-up space on how to grow, sell overseas & gain access to funding. Con was joined by Niall Olden, Managing Partner of Kernel Capital, Jerry Kennelly, Co-Founder & CEO of Stockbyte and Tweak.com, and Hugh Murray founder of MOLA International and EVA.
Turn your Final Year Project into a Startup	Limerick Institute of Technology	Students were invited to hear from entrepreneurs who have started a business based on their final year projects.

**Additional thanks to:** Bank of Ireland, Limerick Institute of Technology (LIT), Mary Immaculate College, University of Limerick, Dell, Hartnett Enterprise Acceleration Centre, Nexus Innovation Centre, National Franchise Centre, Questum, Thurles Chamber Enterprise Centre, Croom Community Enterprise Centre, LERO (R&D Centre), Shannon ABC (R&D Centre), ACORN (R&D Centre), Limerick Chamber of Commerce, Ibec, Shannon Chamber of Commerce, Shannon Airport, BDO, Grant Thornton, Holmes O'Malley Sexton, Limerick City and Country Council, Innovate Limerick, Paul Partnership, IDA, Enterprise Ireland, Limerick Local Enterprise Board, Teckro, Bluechief Social, Mobanode, Last Minute Minders, Carambola Kidz, Kingsley Aikens, Accuvio, AMCS.

**STARTUP GATHERING LIMERICK RECOGNITION AWARDS**  
**October 8th 2015 | Ormston House | 155 Attendees**

The Limerick Startup Gathering Recognition Awards reception was held Ormston House - cultural resource centre situated in the heart of Limerick city. The event was attended by over 150 people and the award on the night was presented to Gillian Barry, Limerick City Coordinator. Ms. Barry is embedded in the startup sector in Limerick

and was personally motivated to ensure the week of The Startup Gathering made a tangible impact for Limerick city. Her stellar efforts ensured that Limerick was well represented throughout the week and made strides to advance itself as a hub for startup success and advancement.



Successful entrepreneur Jimmy Martin, CEO of AMCS, shared with the audience lessons he had learnt building his business up.



**Dr John Breslin**  
**Galway City Coordinator**

Dr John Breslin is a Senior Lecturer in Electronic Engineering at NUI Galway. He is also a Research Leader at the Insight Centre for Data Analytics at NUI Galway (formerly DERI). He is co-founder of boards.ie, adverts.ie, and StreamGlider. John plays a pivotal role within the startup community in Galway leading many startup events and projects including the development of the Portershed, the new coworking space in Galway city.

**GALWAY TOWN HALL MEETING**  
**May 21st 2015 | Bank of Ireland Workbench, Mainguard Street, Galway | 56 Attendees**





**STARTUP ISLAND 2020 FORUM**  
**October 9th 2015 | Meyrick Hotel | 144 Attendees**

The Startup Gathering Galway day was opened by a rousing and inspiring Startup Island 2020 Forum at the Meyrick Hotel. Pádraig Ó Máille, a successful local business man was MC on the morning which saw over 140 delegates representing local and regional corporates, stakeholders and public bodies in attendance.

The keynote speech was delivered by Professor Abhay Pandit, Director at CÚRAM Centre for Research in Medical Devices at NUI Galway. He spoke about the opportunities available for Galway to become a startup hub in the medical device sector. Curam's 2020 vision for Galway includes 20 spin outs, 80 new inventions, an additional 10,000 jobs, partnering with five leading global healthcare providers, and having all 20 top MedTech companies located in the region. The vision is built on Galway's emerging startup ecosystem, which has an innovation pool rich with startup nutrients.

The 'Accelerating Momentum towards 2020' panel included Mark Kellett - CEO Magnet Networks, Colm Feeney -CEO, SSL Ireland,

Colin Kingston - Regional Manager, Bank of Ireland, Dr Brian O'Neill (Manager of HPSU Industrial and Lifesciences, Enterprise Ireland), Dr Sinead Keogh (Director, IMDA), Dr Darrin Morrissey -Director of Programmes, Science Foundation Ireland and Dr Helen Raftery - CEO, Junior Achievement Ireland.

The Entrepreneurs and their Supporters Panel featured inputs from Sarah Roarty - CEO, N17 Craft Brewery, Jill Holtz - CEO, My Kids Time, Wayne Allen - CEO, Embo Medical, Deirdre Lee - CEO, Derilinx and Mike Hannon - Co-Founder PlanNet21.



**GALWAY OPEN CITY REGION EVENTS - HIGHLIGHTS**

<b>Design Your Future</b>	CÚRAM	From Young Researcher to Medical Device Entrepreneur - The purpose of this event was to promote entrepreneurship as a career path to researchers at different stages of their career. The event provided an opportunity to help young scientists in their career development and offered them an interdisciplinary discussion forum within an exclusive circle.
<b>Startup Weekend</b>	In association with Bank of Ireland	Startup Weekend is coming to Galway, 2nd - 4th October! Developers, designers and business development folks will come together to pitch an idea and launch a business, all in one weekend. It is a great opportunity to test startup ideas, meet potential co-founders, build the community in Galway and launch your next startup!
<b>Patents Workshop</b>	Local Enterprise Office	This workshop focused on Building a Business on your Ideas, in conjunction with the Patents office.
<b>Going International</b>	WestBIC	"Going International" was hosted by WestBIC and featured a number of start-up companies sharing their experiences of establishing an international presence. It featured Gail Gillian-Bain, President and CEO of the Canadian Association of Business Incubation ( <a href="http://www.cabi.ca">www.cabi.ca</a> ), and David Tee, Head of Membership Services of the European Business Innovation Centre Network- EBN, Brussels ( <a href="http://www.ebn.eu">www.ebn.eu</a> ), who led a discussion on how the process of early stage West of Ireland start-ups going International is being made easier through intelligent networking.

### STARTUP GATHERING GALWAY RECOGNITION AWARDS October 9th 2015 | Meyrick Hotel | 70 Attendees

The Galway Startup Gathering Recognition Awards ceremony was the official event to close The Startup Gathering 2015. Taking place at the Meyrick Hotel in Galway city, the award ceremony was attended by 70 people and saw awards presented to Gerard Barry and Dr John Breslin. Local entrepreneur Gerard Barry offered a keynote address highlighting his journey in building a company in rural Galway and taking it to international success. Mr. Barry, who is the founder and CEO of Fintrax Group, was awarded a Startup Gathering recognition award based on his significant contribution as an entrepreneur that grew an Internationally traded business from a Gaeltacht area.

with an award in recognition of his pivotal role in Galway's startup community and for the immense work he carried out in the weeks and months leading to The Startup Gathering in Galway which was key to making it a success.



Dr John Breslin, Galway City Coordinator and serial entrepreneur was presented

**Additional thanks to:** Bank of Ireland, Galway City Council, Galway Local Enterprise Office, Enterprise Ireland, IDA Ireland, Ibec, NUI Galway, Galway Mayo Institute of Technology, West BIC, NUI Galway Ignite Technology Transfer Office.

### DAY 6 - THE STARTUP GATHERING 2015 CLOSING EVENT LIMERICK MEGADOJO

The final event of the Startup Gathering 2015 was a CoderDojo MegaDojo in the Limerick Institute of Technology (LIT). The event saw almost 1,000 children and teenager participating in the #MegaDojo in LIT. The #MegaDojo was taking place in recognition of the opening day of the EU Code Week which took place from the 10th to the 18th October.

As part of the European Union contribution to the week of the Startup Gathering Commissioner Elzbieta Bienkowska, Commissioner for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs, relayed a recorded message of congratulations to the Startup Gathering and gave her encouragement to the young CoderDojo members to consider a career as an entrepreneur.

As the event was also part of the Startup Gathering 2015 schedule the Minister for Education, Minister Jan O'Sullivan, Pat Carroll, Startup Community Manager, Bank of Ireland and Eoin Costello, CEO Startup Ireland spoke at the gathering.

The event was covered by the News section of TG4 with interviews with Minister Jan O'Sullivan and Eoin Costello.





**IRELAND NORTH EAST**



**Breannán Casey**  
North East Regional Coordinator

Breannán Casey has a particular interest in small enterprise support and is currently

the Business Development Manager at The Mill which is Drogheda’s first purpose built community enterprise centre. They aim to become the Hub for the accelerated creation & growth of healthy new enterprises in the South Louth, East Meath and Drogheda areas.

Breannán was the North East Regional Coordinator and played an important role motivating and ensuring the North East region’s involvement in The Startup Gathering 2015. The highlight of the week being the E-Payments conference on 9th October where guest speaker David Birch, from London-based Consult Hyperion, which specialises in secure electronic transfers, spoke on the future of the e-payments sector

**THE SUPPORTERS**

- Anne Caldwell, Enterprise Ireland - Dundalk
- David Moore, Bol Drogheda
- Geoff Fitzpatrick, Jack Cody’s Brewery
- Joe English, Louth LEO
- Alan Costello, Ruby Consulting
- John Cunningham, Epicom

- Deirdre Craven, IDA
- Mark Reilly, Aphix Software
- Gary O’Meara, Navan Enterprise Centre
- John McEntaggart, Monaghan LEO
- Vincent Reynolds, Cavan LEO
- Caroline Power, Meath LEO’

Additional thanks to:

- Drogheda & District Chamber / Navan Chamber / Dundalk Chamber / Kells Chamber
- VESTA (sponsored the e-Payments conference)
- InterTrade Ireland
- DKIT

DCU, DKIT, Yapstone, Intact Software, Jack Cody’s Brewery, Frontline VC, Currency Fair, Aphix Software, Slane Whiskey, Outsource Services, InterTrade Ireland, Floweb, IDA, Abarta Consulting, Delta Partners, Bynk, Lorraine Murphy Coaching, Paycheck Plus, Boann Distillery, Deko Foods, Meath County Council’



**IRELAND NORTH WEST**



**Michelle Connolly**  
North West Regional Coordinator

Michelle is the Enterprise Development Manager at the Letterkenny Institute of Technology and is involved in a number of projects such as the Leitrim Development Company in the North West region.

Michelle was the volunteer Startup Gathering North West Regional Coordinator and her enthusiasm and networking skills underpinned the success of the Startup Gathering 2015 in the North West region. The highlight of the Startup Gathering North West was the three conferences which took place in Sligo, Leitrim and Donegal. All three were based on the overall Startup gathering theme of Start,

**IRELAND NORTH EAST TOWN HALL**  
**June 24th, 2015 | D Hotel, Drogheda**  
**| 45 Attendees**

Scale and Succeed. The events combined seminars from a startup founder, a mid size business owner and a representative from a multinational – all based in the relevant county. Leading national experts from the business sector with close links to each county were keynote speakers. The events highlighted the opportunities and challenges of doing business in the Northwest. Ibec representatives in the Northwest also held seminars at each roadshow. The 3 events attracted over 300 attendees and has spurred the formation of a number of smaller collaborative projects.

**THE SUPPORTERS**





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“It’s hard to coordinate the alignment of the many different organisations, agencies and agendas in the entrepreneurship space, The Startup Gathering has shown itself to be a model for how this can be done.”

VINCENT WALL,  
BUSINESS EDITOR NEWSTALK

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## DIGITAL IMPACT OF STARTUP GATHERING

Given the nature of any startup event or tech conference in current times, it was vital The Startup Gathering had a strong digital presence. In the months leading up to The Startup Gathering a new website was launched, a purpose built app was available

on both iOS and Android, Startup Ireland curated the new map of Ireland's Startup Ecosystem of supports and a huge social media campaign was launched, both paid and organic.

### STARTUP GATHERING APP

The 'Startup Gathering 2015' app was launched a month before the event and was sponsored by IE Domain Registry. From then on the number of events submitted to appear on the app was over 410. With the user interface supplied by well known event app supplier 'Attendify', The Startup Gathering team uploaded all vital details for events including Name, Time and Location.

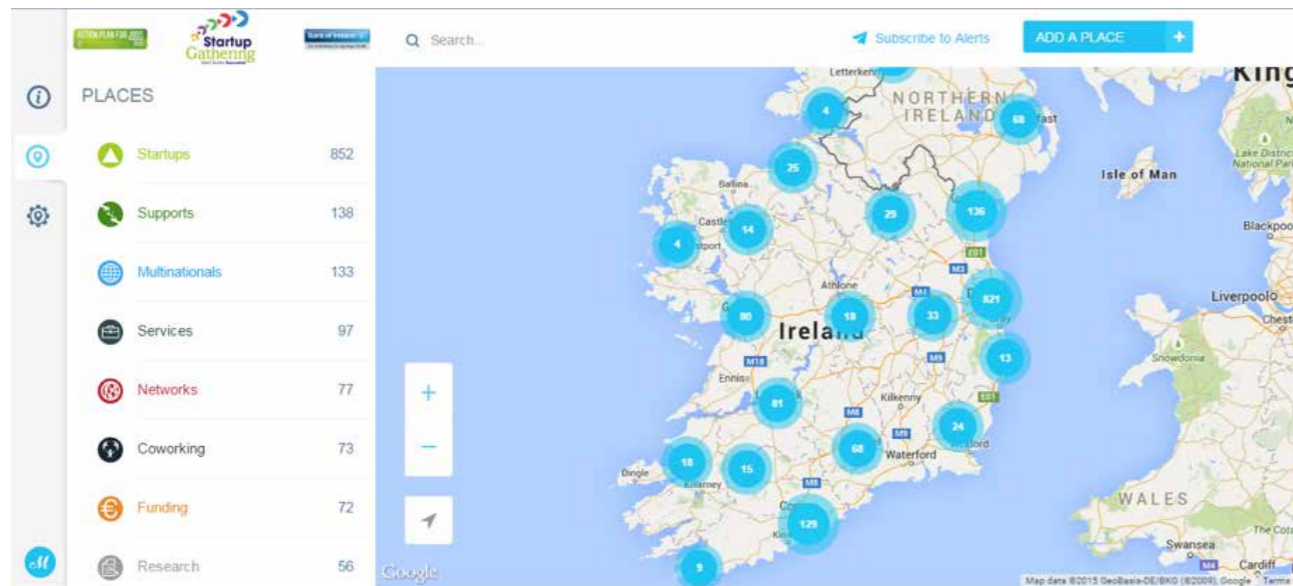
The most impressive feature of the app was the ability for event organisers to submit speaker bios, documents associated for the events, e.g. PowerPoints and PDFs, and even register for the event, all within the app interface. This easy to use interface was embraced by hundreds of users through downloads and used thousands of times through the week for scheduling and networking.



### THE STARTUP GATHERING WEBSITE

StartupGathering.ie had two main functions for the event; firstly, to inform and engage the potential attendee and secondly, to provide a platform to showcase and promote over 400 events happening during the week.





**STARTUP GATHERING MAP** - The mission of The Startup Gathering was to bring every element of Ireland's Startup ecosystem closer and give them the opportunity to network. While this is massively important offline, the map provided the platform for this to happen online as well.

What began as a smaller sideline project to the larger Startup Gathering, spiraled from around 200 entries to 2000 in a matter of months. The success of this platform is largely due to the service provided by Mapme. This is an open sourced data system whereby anyone can add an entry, edit or claim an existing entry. It is this attribute that makes the map so relevant and with its

live updating and continuous growth, the appeal was clear from the beginning.

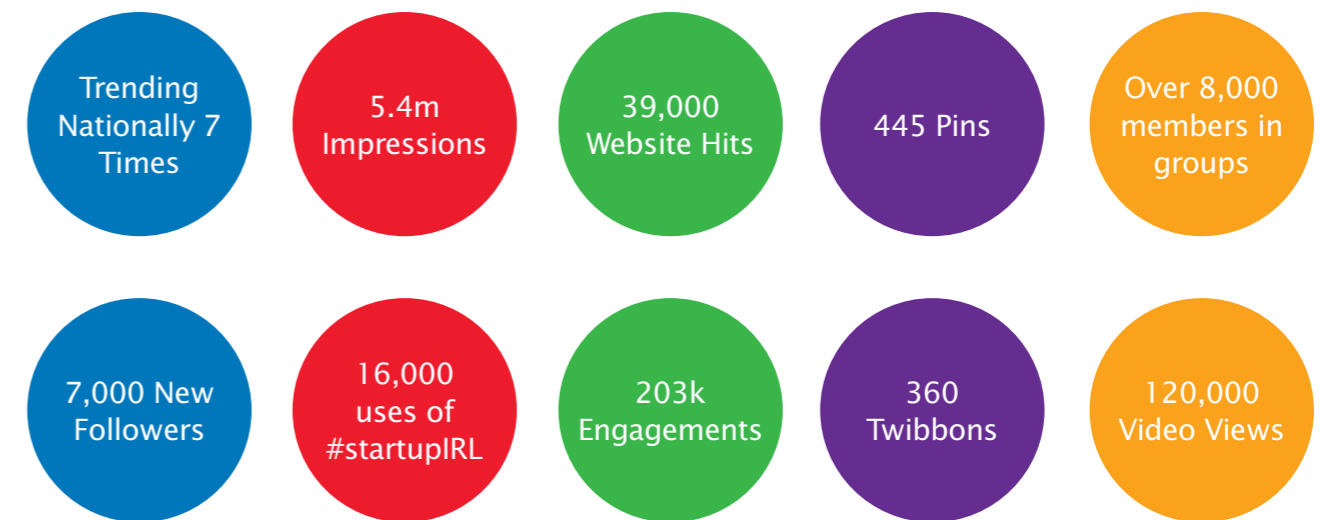
However, the publicity the map received after its launch was unprecedented as shown by the screenshot (left). Silicon Republic's article about the launch of the map was shared over 850 times in the first 24hours. This is testament to the usefulness and easy of access provided by the platform.



### SOCIAL MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS

Startup Ireland's public profile was largely built on social media, more specifically on Twitter and LinkedIn. Because of this previous success, it was inevitable that a

focus would be put on social media for The Startup Gathering. The success of the social media campaign is clear from the figures below.



STARTUP GATHERING – BANK OF IRELAND SOCIAL SNAPSHOT

Organic Social Content

**BOIstartups** @BOIstartups · Oct 9  
 #Galway you were only mighty! Day 5 was a fantastic end to an incredible week: [tinyurl.com/nsot45o](http://tinyurl.com/nsot45o) #BOIstartups  
 ↳ Dave Tighe, Gene, Lesley Tully and StartupWeekendGalway

**BOIstartups** added 3 new photos.  
 Published by Annemarie Boyhan · 8 October at 22:40 ·

Day 4 #startupIRL #Limerick video highlights for anyone who missed the action today- such a vibrant city bursting at the seams with ideas and creativity #BOIstartups  
<http://tinyurl.com/oyf94nt>

**@Tweetinggoddess**  
 Samantha Kelly  
 ROSSLARE HARBOUR, IRELAND

14,540 FOLLOWING 25,733 FOLLOWERS 186,926 TWEETS

I sprinkle #Twittermagic everywhere! Don't have time to Tweet? I'm your Girl! Trainer, Speaker, Friend. Biabber. Compassion and Kindness Rock!

AUTHORITY 8/10  
 WEB [tweetinggoddess.com/](http://tweetinggoddess.com/)  
 TWITTER [twitter.com/Tweetinggoddess](https://twitter.com/Tweetinggoddess)

RT @PatCarrollTouch. @Tweetinggoddess yes, great week Samantha. Exciting things happening. The future is bright for Irish startups. #startupirl  
 06-Oct-2015 18:06 PM More Tweets

**@ShaneBlueChief**  
 Shane McCarthy  
 LIMERICK / IRELAND

2,489 FOLLOWING 2,352 FOLLOWERS 7,819 TWEETS

I run @BlueChiefSocial & @goWasup. Launch initiatives, design events, do all things social media & love #StartupLife #Ireland

AUTHORITY 6/10  
 WEB [BlueChief.ie](http://BlueChief.ie)  
 TWITTER [twitter.com/ShaneBlueChief](https://twitter.com/ShaneBlueChief)

RT @johnbreslin The @bec\_irl and @BOIstartups team at #startiab #Galway #Startupirl @genemurphy @Tracy\_Keogh  
 15-Oct-2015 18:33 PM More Tweets

**@johnbreslin**  
 John Breslin  
 GALWAY, IRELAND

3,136 FOLLOWING 11,647 FOLLOWERS 23,509 TWEETS

Senior Lecturer @EEENUIGalway Social Media @ResearchCentre @Insight\_Centre @NUIGalway Cofounder @boards @adverts\_ie @StartupGalway @GalwayCity @PorterShed

AUTHORITY 8/10  
 WEB [bresl.in](http://bresl.in)  
 TWITTER [twitter.com/johnbreslin](https://twitter.com/johnbreslin)

RT @DorothyCreaven @GalwayBeta has kicked off - great energy here in @BOIstartups #Galway #startupIRL <http://t.co/HZG5TVCb7>  
 10-Oct-2015 03:57 AM More Tweets

**@genemurphy**  
 Gene  
 DUBLIN, IRELAND

3,856 FOLLOWING 5,916 FOLLOWERS 16,590 TWEETS

I [ ] Startups! I help @dublinbeta @drinkaboutdub @swdub @startupnextirl Cofounder @startupireland & I'm E.I.R. at Bank Of Ireland. Tweets Rt's favs are all mine

AUTHORITY 7/10  
 WEB [bit.ly/StartIRL2015](http://bit.ly/StartIRL2015)  
 TWITTER [twitter.com/genemurphy](https://twitter.com/genemurphy)

RT @niallmccormick Thanks @BOIstartups and #startupIRL for a great week! Well done to all the team, especially in Galway! #BOIstartups  
 11-Oct-2015 12:59 PM More Tweets

Top Performing Tweets

Welcome to StartLab Galway. A tech #startup incubator. #everythingbegins #BOIstartups #startupIRL  
<http://t.co/PFqixMiJTn>  
 9 Oct 2015 by Gene · 48 estimated Tweets

Reach Demographics  
[View Tweet Life](#)

Months of preparation have come to fruition at Dublin's #startupIRL yesterday- #BOIstartups are just getting started  
<https://t.co/YuASH5DFjO>  
 9 Oct 2015 by BOIstartups · 36 estimated Tweets

Reach Demographics

**BOIstartups** Retweeted  
 Roots Journey @Roots\_Blog · Oct 8  
 Hey #startupIRL! Wonder who the awesome people in the back of the room are? :) Read this: [therootsjourney.blogspot.ie/2015/10/giddy...](http://therootsjourney.blogspot.ie/2015/10/giddy...)  
 ↳ Clayton Mooney, Rachel Kelly, Margaret Stafford and 7 others

**BOIstartups** Retweeted  
 Alison Kerr @alkerr77 · Oct 7  
 We have arrived !!! @GillianBarry. Day 4 #startupgathering2015 we are getting ready for you #limerick #startupIRL.  
 ↳ Startup Ireland, Shane McCarthy, BOIstartups and 6 others

**Gene** @genemurphy · Oct 3  
 Some of today's amazing mentors say hello to the #Startups this morning @IdeaStarterHQ #startupIRL #boistartups  
 ↳ Louis Grenier and BOIstartups

DAY 1 - DUBLIN

Social Media Video

**BOIstartups**  
Published by AD Eightytwenty [?] · 6 October at 07:30 · Edited · [?]

Wise words of support from Ireland Rugby Captain, Paul O'Connell, for The Startup Gathering taking place this week.  
Learn how you can join the Startup Revolution here: <http://goo.gl/mYEj>



Startup Gathering 2015  
01:06

95,258 people reached

Boost Post

Like Comment Share

**BOIstartups**  
Published by AD Eightytwenty [?] · 6 October at 09:45 · Edited [?] · [?]

Paving the way for the other #startupIRL cities, Dublin set the bar high for the week ahead. Hard work, months of planning and #BOIstartups are just getting started...  
Here's what you missed yesterday.



Startup Gathering Day 1  
02:08

87,565 people reached

Boost Post

Like Comment Share

DAY 2 - BOIstartLAB LAUNCH




Workbench Galway  
Work. Connect. Innovate.  
Call into us today

BOIstartlab Galway  
bankofirelandgroup  
Subscribe 943  
263 views

Add to Share More

**BOIstartups**  
Published by AD Eightytwenty [?] · 7 October at 11:38 · Edited · [?]

Want to be part of a space designed for #tech #startups to experiment and grow? Introducing #BOIstartlab Galway.  
Take a look inside...



174,492 people reached

Boost Post

Like Comment Share


65k Views

Top Comments

DAY 2 - WATERFORD

**BOIstartups**  
Published by AD Eightytwenty [?] · 7 October at 08:35 · [?]

Enjoy the highlights of #startupIRL Day 2 at Europe's largest deep-water port and the home of WIT & the renowned entrepreneurial program New Frontiers. Waterford, you sure know how to give a warm welcome!



Startup Gathering Day 2 Highlights  
02:06

54,957 people reached

Boost Post

Like Comment Share

**BOIstartups** @BOIstartups · Oct 7

#Waterford displayed an impressive line-up for #startupIRL Day 2 #BOIstartups



Startup Gathering Day 2 Highlights  
Enjoy the highlights of #startupIRL Day 2 at Europe's largest deep-water port and the home of WIT & the renowned entrepreneurial program New Frontiers.

19 20



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“At Dell we believe that entrepreneurship is the foundation for innovation, global economic growth and job creation. This is why as a company we are passionate about supporting the startup community in Ireland.

We were delighted to be involved with The Startup Gathering and participate in the events hosted in the locations where we operate in Dublin, Limerick and Cork.

It was great to meet so many entrepreneurs and hear their ideas – it’s a sign of a promising future for Ireland and an area we should continue to nurture and grow as a country. We’re already looking forward to next Startup Gathering and seeing it grow as an event.”

**NIAMH TOWNSEND,  
COUNTRY MANAGER, DELL**

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## UNITING THE NATION BEHIND ENTREPRENEURSHIP – THE COLLABORATIVE EFFORT OF THE STARTUP GATHERING

### THE TEAM

The secret to the success of this project was down to the goodwill, dedication and enthusiasm of a large number of people across the nation many on a volunteer basis. Along with the CEO, Eoin Costello, the core team consisted of a small group of volunteers, 2 of which progressed on to work as full time employees on this project with the united purpose of fulfilling Startup Ireland’s objectives. Alison Kerr, National Events Manager and Michael Guerin, National Operations Manager at Startup Ireland were employed to ensure the smooth running of this national event.

As the project developed and time drew closer to the week itself, their roles also

developed into a larger responsibility of project managing the event. This entailed ensuring the recruitment of a larger team once the time drew closer to the event to ensure the success of the event.

A highly professional team was created and included experts such as Jo Mathews and her operations team who had previously worked on large festivals such as Taste of Dublin , Paul Condron Photography who documented each day and a full stage and sound team. This team travelled across the country each day to the different locations working around the clock, enabling the success of SG2015.



### VOLUNTEERS

There is an endless list of people across the nation who volunteered their time to this project between City Coordinators, Steering Groups and event hosts.

In the run up to The Startup Gathering, our Volunteer Coordinator, Vincent Nally, travelled across Ireland to recruit volunteers for each city to help us in the forums and evening events organised by Startup Ireland. Over 50 enthusiastic people hailing from all backgrounds and of varying ages volunteered for The Startup Gathering week. Each of the Forums had a designated



Bank of Ireland Welcome Desk manned by representatives from the local branch in each of the cities.

Each city had a new set of volunteers who were ready to carry out a number of tasks such as meeting and greeting guests, guest registration, distribution and preparation of lanyards and name badges and providing signposting and information at the breakout sessions. With the specially branded t-shirts, the volunteers were a colourful and enthusiastic group of people who contributed enormously to The Startup Gathering 2015.





One of the most inspiring experiences of my life

Limerick City volunteer



### IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY VOLUNTEERS

In May 2015 Startup Ireland were contacted by Clayton Mooney, an Iowa State Student and Entrepreneur. He was arriving in Ireland and wanted to get involved in Startup Ireland's mission to help Ireland become a global startup hub. From then on Clayton's enthusiasm and passion for startup ecosystem growth was clear both in Ireland and at home in Iowa.

During their time with us, they worked extremely hard on all digital platforms including Social Media, App and Website to promote and maintain a continuous narrative of the events as they unfolded throughout the week. Their passion and drive to illustrate the activities of the week, coupled with their expertise in social media and entrepreneurship resulted in a reach of over 5 million on the first day alone and had #startupIRL trending nationally throughout the week. We would like to take this time to thank them and Iowa State University for all their hard work and support across Startup Gathering 2015.

We were delighted to hear that upon Clayton's return to Iowa State, Kevin Kimle his programme director had agreed to fund Clayton and two others, Natalina Sents and Rachel Kelly to return to Ireland for The Startup Gathering 2015.

To be a part of it all, to be inspired for 5 days straight, is a moment that any aspiring entrepreneur could use. Ireland is a location that has offered me more than I could have ever hoped for.

Clayton Mooney – Startup Gathering Social Media Team Leader & Entrepreneur



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“Successful new businesses are central to Ireland’s economic prospects and the creation of a truly dynamic, diverse economy. We can be one of the EU’s most prosperous and successful regions, and the best country in the world in which to do business, but this won’t happen by itself. Already our globalised economy is home to some of the most innovative, dynamic companies in the world, both large and small, but we need to look ahead. Events such as those held during The Startup Gathering are important in raising awareness of entrepreneurship right around the country.”

SHARON HIGGINS, Ibec

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## NATIONAL & INTERNATIONAL ENGAGEMENT

From the initial launch to an audience of senior business and educational figures on March 4th in Bank of Ireland, Grand Canal Dock, The Startup Gathering gained a large amount of traction both nationally and internationally. This traction quickly turned into support across a wide range of stakeholders, from a video message from an EU Commissioner to 12 International startups who were flown in by Intel for the Dublin Forum in Google Foundry to a group of 3 students from Iowa State University who were funded by their university to fly over and join the social media team for the week, it is no secret that the word of Startup Gathering 2015 quickly spread globally.

### National Impact

The objectives of the marketing and communications plan for The Startup Gathering were to maximise the awareness, profile and engagement with The Startup Gathering 2015. This plan was very successful in that over 276 articles and reports appeared in national and regional media with a total Advertising Value in September/October of €2,272,855 (Source Q4 PR). Regional media accounted for over half of all coverage, reflecting the local, community-based nature of The Startup Gathering.

29 broadcasts were recorded on national and regional media (including RTE News). The tone of media coverage throughout The Startup Gathering was extremely positive. Marketing campaigns were run on Silicon Republic, Google and Facebook to complement the radio campaigns that were taking place across the country.



The input of Bank of Ireland had a considerable positive effect on the distribution and national impact of the event. The Bank contributed at numerous levels across their branch network which included a bespoke marketing and communication strategy rolled-out across their 250+ branch network; design and delivery of a new programme of events specifically for the Startup Gathering ranging from Speed Mentoring and Networking, Digital Skills, Show Your Business to Fireside Chats, Perfect Your Pitch Workshops, Women in Business seminars, Online Payments tutorials, CoderDojos and Startup Weekend. Ultimately, their input as Strategic Partners had a considerable qualitative and quantitative effect on the amplification and success of the event.

To engage online audiences a stream of interesting and relevant content in the run up to and during the week of The Startup Gathering was created daily by a member of The Startup Gathering team.

In terms of engaging visual content eleven videos were created during the week. These videos captured the buildup and the week itself and displayed the energy and enthusiasm that The Startup Gathering created. The videos received over 120,000 views.

There was significant engagement via Facebook. The Startup Gathering Facebook content generated over 3,886 Likes. The largest social media impact of the week was on Twitter, highlights included:

- The hashtag of The Startup Gathering week #startupIRL reached over 1 million twitter accounts on the 5th of October.
- On day one of the week there were over 5,415,233 Impressions of The Startup Gathering hashtag #startupIRL.
- Within a 7 hour period on Monday 5th between 10am- 5pm there were over 1,500 tweets from 561 twitter accounts.
- The most retweeted content was from Enterprise Ireland's Twitter account.



“I was delighted to participate in the Irish International Business Network’s (IIBN) inaugural event in the South West, as part of The Startup Gathering 2015. IIBN expanding its reach to the south west of the country was symptomatic of The Startup Gathering which rightly went to great efforts to reach out beyond the capital. Regional days in Limerick, Galway, Waterford and Cork recognised and capitalised on the distinctive expertise in our regional hubs.



Minister Jimmy Deenihan, Minister of State for the Diaspora



welcomed the StartUp Gathering 2015 as a forum for further engagement with the startup community. During a focused week of activities and in partnership with other players, the Local Enterprise Offices across Ireland facilitated hundreds of events for StartUp Gathering 2015. “



**Kieran Comerford, Chairman of the network of Local Enterprise Offices**



“From networking to startup assistance to innovation programmes, the Local Enterprise Offices, under the umbrella of the Local Authorities, are a key player in the startup eco-system in Ireland. Responsible for the development of an enterprise culture at grass roots level the Local Enterprise Offices

**INTERNATIONAL IMPACT**

**ENTERPRISE IRELAND OVERSEAS COMPETITIVE START FUND**

Enterprise Ireland used the week long event as a platform to promote a major International competition. This was a new €100,000 Competitive Start Fund aimed at encouraging entrepreneurs outside Ireland to locate their start-up businesses here. The competition proved to be very successful.

20 companies pitched in Cork and 10 were selected. The winners receive €50k in cash in return for 10% equity in their business. Enterprise Ireland are in the process of working with the 10 winning companies to help them move to Ireland shortly.

“Cork has everything that a busy capital has to offer, we attended the final event of The Startup Gathering Day run by Cork Business Innovation Centre and Cork Innovates. It left us with wonderful memories. We had a chance to meet great entrepreneurs and listen to their success and failure stories. The experience with Enterprise Ireland throughout the Competitive Start Fund process was excellent, we look forward to joining the startup map of Cork.”

Anastasia Volkova  
CEO Survival Russian App



**INTEL CHALLENGEUP STARTUP PROGRAMME**

Intel’s ChallengeUp team visited for Startup Gathering Dublin day, two have now located in Ireland. Challenge Up was the most innovative corporate startup program of 2015, by Intel, Cisco and Deutsche Telekom. The startups that are best at executing their solution while in the program are eligible for potential co-investment from Cisco, Intel and Deutsche Telekom also from leading corporate venture funds. The Startup Gathering had the privilege of hosting the 12 participating ‘early stage’ companies from the inaugural Challenge Up programme on the Dublin Day (October 5th). These were the 12 finalist companies who had been selected from over 300 applicants across EMEA (Europe, Middle East and Africa) and

who visited The Startup Gathering as part of an extensive learning and networking experience offered by the Challenge Up Programme. During their time in Ireland the 12 finalist teams were given the chance to participate in a number of events being hosted as part of The Startup Gathering as well as spending time at the IoT Ignition Lab at Intel’s Leixlip campus



“To join The Startup Gathering at Google’s headquarters in Dublin as part of the Challenge Up visit allowed us to broaden our horizon. Here, we developed the vision for our ComfyLight V2 together with our prospective partner Intel. The combination of Intel’s chipset know-how with ComfyLight’s focus on customer experience would not have been possible without this forum. We will definitely come back to Dublin – the native city of ComfyLight V2.”

Marcus Köhler, Co-Founder, ComfyLight

**ELZBIETA BIENKOWSKA  
EU COMMISSIONER FOR MARKET, INDUSTRY, ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND SMES**

The final event of The Startup Gathering 2015 was the CoderDojo's Mega Dojo in Limerick Institute of Technology on Saturday 10th October. The European Commissioner for Entrepreneurship and SMEs, Elzbieta Bienkowska, joined via video link to share her message of support for The Startup Gathering with the hundreds of children assembled there and to encourage those at the Mega Dojo to consider entrepreneurship as a career choice.



**BORIS KANTSEPOLSKY  
BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT AND TECHNOLOGY R&D MANAGER AT MOTOROLA SOLUTIONS ISRAEL**

A key objective of the 'Startup Island 2020' Forum in each city was to identify based on International benchmarks how that city can become a global hub for startups based on the industry strengths of each city region. Boris Kantsepolksy (Business Development and Technology R&D Manager at Motorola Solutions Israel) set out to explain how Ireland can become a global startup hub by highlighting the history of the startup sector in Israel which is in the

global top 20 ranking of startup hubs. Mr. Kantsepolksy highlighted the key role of a high concentration of R&D facilities of the multinationals in his country as underpinning the rapid growth of the startup industry there. Boris ended his presentation with three things for aspiring entrepreneurs to take away: 1. Excellence is a passion 2. Realizing excellence is a commitment 3. Combined, the sky is the limit.



**STARTUP GATHERING AS AN INTERNATIONAL CASE STUDY IN BEST PRACTICE**

Due to the success of The Startup Gathering project in mobilising people and a broad range of stakeholders on a national scale to promote entrepreneurship it has been studied by delegations visiting Ireland from Moldova, Armenia and Tatarstan.



Neelie Kroes and Startup Delta learn about the Startup Gathering 2015

### STARTUP IRELAND INNOVATION & ENTREPRENEURIAL SKILLS PASSPORT

As part of The Startup Gathering a number of pilots of the Startup Ireland Innovation & Entrepreneurial Skills Passport were carried out. The ability to be more entrepreneurial and innovative in a rapidly changing environment is an essential life skill. This passport is intended to be an entry level, competence based, introduction to the development of key entrepreneurial life skills, essential to the 'new economy' in the area of innovation and entrepreneurship. The pilot workshops took place in

Cork in partnership with Cork Institute of Technology's Hincks Centre for Entrepreneurship Excellence, in Limerick in partnership with the National Franchise Centre of Ireland and Limerick Chamber of Commerce while in Dublin the workshop was conducted in partnership with Northside Enterprise Centre. In the pilot conducted in Cork CIT provided significant input into the creation and delivery of the training content for the day.



**'It was a great introduction to some of the key skills that I need for my new startup, I would love to take the full programme when it is available.'**

Dublin Participant

**'It was an excellent workshop with great practical exercises, worthy of more time to help practice the skills that were shared with us on the day.'**

Limerick Participant

**'It was an excellent workshop. Worthy of more time to help absorb more details and exercises.'**

Cork Participant

**Startup Ireland**  
@startupireland

A real pleasure to deliver our #startupIRL Passport to enthusiastic potential entrepreneurs at @northenterp today



RETWEETS 5 LIKES 5







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**“I felt a real sense of positivity, hope and optimism about The Startup Gathering. I was particularly impressed that this initiative was countrywide, at grass roots level, and that people were willing to host events in every region. I haven’t seen anything like it before, and I believe it is the start of a movement towards empowerment, and people taking ownership over their future.”**

**CATHERINE DUGGAN - VOLUNTEER**

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## OUTCOMES, LEARNINGS & RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE FUTURE

The Startup Gathering 2015 was a pilot project supported by the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation with Bank of Ireland as Strategic Partner. The ultimate results far exceeded those originally predicted and it has laid a solid foundation stone for the journey towards Ireland becoming a global hub for startups by 2020.

A key goal of The Startup Gathering was to help create the conditions for new partnerships and collaborations to emerge amongst organisations that had not collaborated in the past. It was noted that one of the most significant outcomes of the week was that these new collaborations and partnership to support entrepreneurship emerged across the country in a way that had not been done before. New working relationships and links were built by the Startup Gathering resulting in a stronger national network and vision for the future growth of Ireland's startup community.

In terms of networks International research has found that networks are the single most important driver of startup ecosystem growth. The Startup Gathering set out to create a platform where networking was facilitated on a local and national scale. Feedback offered by those attending the

'Startup Island 2020' Forums highlighted networking and opportunities to build new connections as one of the significant benefits to attending the event.

The final number of events taking place during the week demonstrated the high level of interest and enthusiasm that is present nationwide for driving the longer term agenda of The Startup Gathering. Corporates, educators and state agencies collectively wanted to offer an insight into the resources and supports available to startups. However, upon reflection, it was felt that there should be focus on the quality of events rather than the quantity so that there isn't competition between hosts for audiences and attendees have greater opportunity to attend all events.

Throughout the week, and in feedback surveyed post The Startup Gathering, there was strong support offered for The Startup Gathering becoming an annual event. Many event hosts said they would align their events again with future Startup Gatherings. Overwhelming support was given by stakeholders, participants and event attendees for the central objective of The Startup Gathering, that of Ireland becoming a global startup hub by 2020.

**Much has come out of the Fly Hack Fly event during The Startup Gathering in Cork Airport and positive outcomes are still occurring.**

Fergus Murphy – Fly Hack Fly event leader

Arising from the impact of the Startup Gathering 2015 the Startup Gathering website was successfully nominated for a Eircom Golden Spider in the category of Charity and Not-for-profit. As a result of the successful social media campaign underpinning the

Startup Gathering the event was nominated for the Accenture Digital Media Awards in the Best Integrated Media campaign.



## SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE EVENT HOST AND STEERING GROUP MEMBER SURVEYS AFTER THE STARTUP GATHERING

On the theme of what worked well in respect of the Event Hosts the majority (62%) felt that The Startup Gathering was beneficial to their event and 71% indicated that they would align their event with The Startup Gathering week if it were to run in 2016. The key benefits cited were:

- The majority felt that The Startup Gathering had delivered for their organisations (91% satisfied).
- Raised the profile of individual events as part of the bigger initiative, provided critical mass.
- Increased public awareness of importance of role of entrepreneurship.
- Merchandising of key events was seen as very helpful.
- Provided national exposure for their events and increased connections for them.
- Their approach to their event was different as a result of participation, new innovative approaches were adopted to their previous events.

### Recommendations

The key recommendations arising from the surveys included:

- Focus on quality rather than quantity to avoid competition for audience.
- Events should be concentrated in a single physical area rather than too wide a catchment area.
- Spreading the events out over the week would help with less focus on an individual day.
- The steering groups worked extremely well in mobilising collaboration amongst stakeholders, many for the first time. Ways should be sought to continue the activation of these groups.
- The consensus was that a significantly larger International element is needed, more International focus and startups are needed in potential future events.

**“Great turnout, atmosphere and quality of actual flagship Startup Gathering events. The Startup Gathering is a must have annual Irish national initiative for the future success of the Irish economy.”**

Michael Cusack Clyne – Invent Fest

**“Excellent events, great vibrancy at the events and the feeling that this could be the start of something big.”**

Ciaran Flanagan IDEA



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“Our goal is to help make Ireland a global hub for startups by 2020, to do this we need to get the fundamentals right now. We must rally all parts of the community behind Ireland’s entrepreneurs so that more can start, scale and succeed from Ireland. The Startup Gathering is the focal point for this work.”

EOIN COSTELLO, STARTUP IRELAND

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## SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE 'STARTUP ISLAND 2020' FORUM AND BREAKOUT SESSIONS

The majority (82%) felt that the Forums had been beneficial, were professionally delivered and informative with good opportunities to network. In terms of the content of the Forums the Keynotes, the Entrepreneur Panel and the networking opportunity were the most popular.

There was strong support for The Startup Gathering becoming an annual event, providing a unifying focal point for maintaining momentum and 'joined up' thinking towards the goal of Ireland becoming a global startup hub (a goal which was supported by 95% of respondents).

In terms of the breakout sessions facilitated by the Startup Commons ecosystem experts in each of the five cities, their recommendations at a national level focus on

data capture, benchmarking and increased collaboration. The recommendations include:

- In order to achieve the goal of becoming a global startup hub by 2020 Ireland needs to implement a common national framework to unify the startup ecosystems unique to each city.
- Establish a shared vision for the national strategy of becoming a global startup hub through the creation of a Startup Manifesto for Ireland.
- Strengthen the steering groups as catalysts for the growth of each city's startup ecosystem by meeting all year round.
- Implement a datadriven startup ecosystem development approach nationally starting with an initial benchmarking exercise.
- Increase the volume of startups in each city through action at the early stage of the startup pipeline. To get 4 significant companies (employing 100+ staff) emerging from the pipeline each year, a city needs at least 6,000 people working on ideas at the beginning of the pipeline.



As a result of the work of our Startup Gathering Steering Group there was a collaboration of many NEW stakeholders (agency staff, industry, industry representatives, entrepreneurs) who previously had not been involved and also the relationships and bonding between agencies and other organisations has strengthened as a result of The Startup Gathering as has the development of a greater and stronger network.

Steering Group Member

## SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE AMARACH NATIONAL STARTUP SURVEY

Conducted in partnership with Amarach Research during The Startup Gathering the research based on responses from over 400 startups identified the obstacles encountered by Ireland's entrepreneurs and their attitudes to the strength of the startup sector in Ireland. Despite record number of startups being created each month in 2015, few are scaling successfully. This underpins the fact that coordinated action across the private and public sector is needed to enable Ireland's startup sector to deliver to its full potential.

The recommendations arising from the national survey of startups include:

- Improve availability and awareness of scaling supports as 81% of entrepreneurs find it difficult to access scaling supports to grow their business (72% in 2014) while 79% found access to funding and talent major obstacles

- Improve the sustainability of startups by increasing their access to R&D supports as the majority of startups that have not developed any significant IP in their business (64% have neither patents nor trademarks).
- Provide incentives to the multinationals located in Ireland to engage with startups as only 1 in 10 respondents availed of support from large corporates when building their startups.
- To maximise the growth potential of startups increased levels of alignment and coordination are needed nationally with 78% of startups are in agreement that Ireland becoming a global startup hub will benefit their business but 79% feel the startup sector in Ireland is not performing to its full potential.

**"High potential startups with an ability to export are key, and there have been encouraging developments in this area. The Startup Gathering was a great initiative."**

Norah Casey in the Irish Times article "Business and the diaspora: 'We are in a battle for the brains'"

**We planned a joint event between Newfoundland, Canada with Cork to highlight some of the cooperation in the ocean tech sector and hosted a social here in St. John's, calling it the Overseas Gathering. It was a great success.**

Roger Power – Startup Newfoundland

## THE FUTURE

The Startup Gathering 2015 is already delivering a strong legacy that the startup sector in Ireland can build on towards the goal of becoming a global startup hub by 2020. Two cities have indicated that arising from the week they are proceeding with continuing the momentum by converting their Startup Gathering steering groups into all year round steering groups dedicated to strengthening the startup ecosystem in their city.

The Startup Gathering has proven itself as a model for creating collaboration across many stakeholders towards a common goal. There is a clear desire for The Startup Gathering to continue providing a focal point for the startup sector in Ireland. Equally there is a desire for greater collaboration and networking amongst the stakeholders across the country, a 'joined up' approach. Furthermore collaboration between north and south of the border is needed to compete effectively on the International stage. One answer to this could be the organisation of an all-island annual conference for the startup sector in Ireland, a day on which all those with an interest in the central role of startups in our future economic growth can meet in one location and share experiences, knowledge and best practice.

Equally the call from The Startup Gathering 2015 for greater international involvement in future events could be met by seeking to bring to Ireland major International events that can contribute directly to the visibility of Ireland's startup sector both within the EU and Internationally. Another practical way that this call could be met is

through an International startup pitching competition. Modern entrepreneurship is a global endeavour and the opportunities that present themselves span geographical and cultural boundaries. In an era where startups are regarded as the new FDI, many cities around the world are running International startup competitions as a way of attracting high growth businesses to locate in their cities and meet the collaboration needs of the multinationals located there.

As one of the Forbes' best countries in the world for business, Ireland has lots in its favour with an enviable presence of leading International companies, good rankings in the Global Innovation Index, a skilled workforce, good accelerators and incubators for early stage companies and well-established, comprehensive support systems from State agencies. However our country does not currently appear in influential rankings of top startup ecosystems.

A key catalyst towards global leadership in the very competitive International rankings of startup ecosystems might be provided by increasing levels of engagement by large corporates with high growth startups in Ireland. In Silicon Valley multinationals can provide the first sale for ambitious startups. This in turn attracts more international investors and potential acquirers to Ireland thus creating the virtuous circle which many would like to see in Ireland. In advanced economies the acquisition of a high growth startup by a multinational is often the first step to entering a country. Therefore a vibrant startup ecosystem in Ireland will help highlight Ireland as an attractive destination

for foreign direct investment while incentivise the key 'mission critical' activities of existing multinationals to be located here thereby helping make these corporates more deeply embedded in Ireland for the long term.

In many ways our future economic growth depends on the health of our startup sector. At the start of 2016, a very significant year for our country, Minister Bruton's statement (Action Plan for Jobs 2014) that now is the time to start creating a new future rings true. Startups are capable of leading this

new future. Ireland needs to provide every support possible so that many more can start, scale and succeed from Ireland. Helping create this environment requires a statement of Ireland's ambition, a statement of intent to become a global startup hub by 2020 for the benefit of future generations of all ages living in Ireland. The most enduring legacy of The Startup Gathering 2015 will be the creation of a Startup Manifesto for the island of Ireland, a shared vision for Ireland to become a global startup hub by 2020.



**We found synergies in the overall goal of The Startup Gathering to help more companies on the island start, scale and succeed. As a key business support body we found that we could influence and amplify the message of The Startup Gathering to cross-Border audience in Ireland and Northern Ireland. We also look forward to The Startup Gathering in 2016 including vibrant startup cities like Belfast and Derry~Londonderry.**

Thomas Hunter McGowan, CEO Intertrade Ireland



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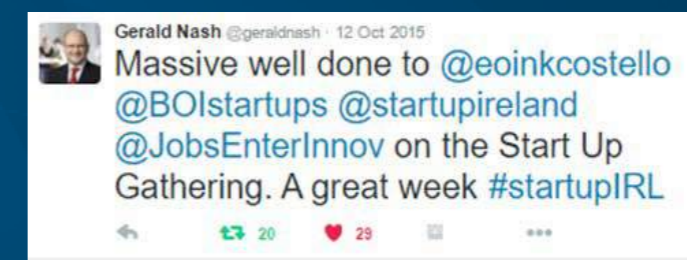
“For Ireland to become a global startup hub more national alignment and coordination with local startup ecosystems is needed, this might be best achieved through the creation of a national Startup Manifesto for Ireland.”

VALTO LOIKKANEN - STARTUP COMMONS

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## Thank You

Minister Bruton and Minister Nash. Our Startup Gathering City and Regional Coordinators. The Bank of Ireland team nationwide for their ongoing commitment enthusiasm and support throughout the project. Brendan, Andrew and the Board of Startup Ireland.

Michael, Alison, Niamh and Siobhan from the Startup Ireland team. Paraig, Patrick and Garry from the Department of Jobs, Enterprise & Employment. Ciaran, Jane, Elaine and Mark from IDEA. The members of the Startup Gathering steering groups, sponsors and supporters. Máiréad O'Donnell for content creation.

All the event organisers across Ireland who have been part of this project, for their time, energy and dedication to helping make Ireland a startup island.

Without you all the Startup Gathering 2015 would not have been possible.

I look forward to another exciting year in 2016.

Eoin Costello





# Startup Gathering

Start Scale Succeed

