



## Sustaining Regional Innovation and Growth through Partnership

A growing body of both research and practice suggests that successful interactions between industry, government and higher education/research institutions is a crucial ingredient in promoting sustained regional economic development. Furthermore, this need for partnership, which involves real collaboration and co-operation, is essential to promote innovation and knowledge-based growth, with all key actors having a role to play. Research and higher education, for example, needs to push the boundaries of innovation and knowledge growth in a region, both through leading-edge research and world-class teaching, but in ways that respond to the innovation needs and capabilities of industry in the region. Industry, meanwhile, has to be better able to clearly and quickly articulate its need for innovation, and work with research/higher education so as to turn “knowledge” into goods and services that will succeed in the dynamic, fast-moving markets of today. Government, finally, needs to act as a catalyst, which boosts academic-industry links by providing a policy and support environment that promotes the generation of ideas and knowledge, facilitates co-operation and coherence, and better matches innovation demand and supply.

This conference, which is the fourth international conference hosted by the FP7-funded eDIGIREGION<sup>1</sup> project, presents and debates a series of methodologies, frameworks and processes that have been used to develop these types of partnerships in the project’s four partner regions - South East Ireland, Castilla-la Mancha (Spain), Central Hungary and Bucharest-Ilfov (Romania). In particular, it demonstrates how industry can work with both higher education and government to develop regional Joint Action Plans (JAPs) in digital technologies, which identify both the key digital “smart specialisations” in each region and the actions required to progress these specialist targets. Moreover, it also shows how regional stakeholders across all four regions have similarly worked together to develop an inter-regional JAP (iJAP), which nurtures a collaborative process of transnational sharing and exchange of knowledge in the digital domain.

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<sup>1</sup> eDIGIREGION ‘Realising The Digital Agenda Through Transnational Cooperation Between Regions’ is funded by the European Union’s Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development, as part of the regions of knowledge theme in the capacities work programme.



## Day 1

09.00

### Registration

09.30

### Welcome Address:

Prof. Bill O’Gorman, eDIGIREGION Coordinator  
Prof. Willie Donnelly, President, WIT  
Dr. Tom O’Toole, Head of School of Business, WIT

10.00

**Keynote Address:** Mr. John Halligan, Minister of State for Training, Skills and Innovation

10.20

### ICT - A Regional and National Smart Specialisation:

Dr. Gerard Kennedy, Enterprise Ireland

10.45

**Smart Specialisation - from Central to Regional Hubs:** Dr. Marius Mitroi, Executive Agency for Higher Education, Research, Development and Innovation Funding, Romania

11.30

Coffee/Tea

12.00

### Smart Specialisation Strategy for South-East Ireland:

- Introduction and Overview: Prof. Bill O’Gorman, WIT
- SEAPJ: Mr. Sean McKeown, Director, SEAPJ
- Smart Specialisation and Skills: Mr. Edmond Connolly, South-East Skills Forum
- Smart Specialisation in Action: Ms. Kathleen Prendergast, Tipperary County Council (Digital Media)

13.00

Lunch

14.00

**Glanbia: Growth Through Innovation:** Mr. Michael O’Connor, Quality Director, Glanbia Ingredients Ireland.

14.45

### Parallel Workshops

Workshop A ‘How Industrial Doctorates benefit Industry’

Workshop B ‘How to bring industry needs into the curriculum’

Workshop C ‘Industry 4.0: The Digital Transformation of Industry’

Workshop D ‘Funding the Innovation Lifecycle’

15.45

Coffee/Tea

16:15

**Feedback from Workshops** (rapporteur in each workshop)

16.45

**From Research to Innovation to Commercialisation (RIC) – panel discussion of mentors and mentees;** Chairs, Mr. Dave Feenan and Ms. Edina Nemeth

17.30

### Networking and Refreshments

18:45

### Conference Dinner, Faithlegg House Hotel

### Pre-conference dinner speaker

Dr. Michael O’Foghlu, CTO, Red Hat



## Day 2:

09.00 **Day 2 Registration**

09.30 **Welcome Address:**

Prof. Bill O’Gorman, eDIGIREGION Coordinator

Dr. Peter McLoughlin, VP for Research and Innovation, WIT

10.00 **Blueprint for Cities and Regions as Launch Pads for Digital Transformation:** Mr. Nicolai Sederberg Rottboll, Quercus, Denmark

10.45 **Innovation Districts: A New Geography of Innovation:** Mr. Jakob Stoumann, Oxford Research, Denmark

11.30 Tea/coffee

12.00 **EU Policy Trends in Innovation:** Prof. Lena Tsipouri, Research Innovation and Science Expert Group

12.45 Lunch

14.00 **Societal Basis for Diversities of Innovation: Opportunities for industry and Policies:** Prof. Ulrich Hilpert, University of Jena, Germany

14.30 **The Potential Role of Digital Ecosystems in Regional Innovation Networks - The Case of the Irish Animation Industry:** Dr. Chris Van Egeraat, National University of Ireland Maynooth

15:00 **Implementing Joint Action Plans and International Joint Action Plans:** Regional Lead Partners

15.45 **Repository Demonstration and Workshop:** Ms. Elena Simion & Mr. Cosmin Cioranu, UEFISCDI

16.15 **Concluding Remarks and Close:** Prof Bill O’Gorman

16.45 Final networking