

MediaBook

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START-UP CENTRAL

NEWS, VIEWS AND PROFILES ON THE LATEST START-UPS IN IRELAND

HOW IT ALL STARTED

GAVIN COONEY

Founder and CEO

Learnosity

How did you fund your business initially?

Consulting revenue from bespoke e-learning projects helped to support us in the earlier years while we got up and running.

What's the best advice you were given?

You really need to listen to your customers. As an entrepreneur it can become too easy to fall into the trap of going in all guns blazing, full of innovative ideas telling customers that you have exactly what they need.

What was the most important lesson you learned starting out?

After doing both a business degree and a Masters in business I realised very quickly that I knew absolutely nothing about running my own business. It turned out there were lots of things to learn about funding and the traditional ways of growing a business. We discovered that going the VC route wasn't necessary.

Your biggest make or break moment?

The development of an embeddable 'record button' for one of our client's e-books in 2011. This was a pivotal moment for us, we found our niche and this paved the way for our strategic shift into SaaS where we give our clients the ability to build education's next big thing using our tools and services.

Would you change anything in hindsight?

We made a lot of mistakes, slept on lots of sofas and went to lots of conferences we didn't really need to be at. If I had to change one thing, it would be the amount of time we spent on doing the rounds with VCs. Concentrate on the product, make it awesome and they'll come knocking!

Company: Learnosity

Location: Dublin, Sydney, New York

Product: Set of tools and services which enable clients to quickly and easily incorporate interactive question types into their existing applications, eBooks and websites.

Staff: 32

Website: www.learnosity.com



Entrepreneur Bobby Kerr at the launch of JumpStart 2014

JUMP START YOUR BUSINESS

THE ANNUAL ENTREPRENEURIAL COMPETITION

'JumpStart 2014' has been launched at the Institute of Technology Blanchardstown. Now in its fifth year, JumpStart gives Irish entrepreneurs a unique opportunity to win a very real jump start to their business with a prize worth €25,000 including €10,000 in cash. For further details on the competition visit www.thelinc.ie/jumpstart.



Sean O'Sullivan, CEO, LEO, South Cork; Minister Simon Coveney; Martin Kelleher, Managing Director, SuperValu; Aidan Cotter, CEO, Bord Bia.

Food Start-Ups Hungry for Business

Minister for Agriculture, Food and Marine Simon Coveney has announced that food business start-ups plan to create 300 new jobs within 12 months, after receiving listings with their local SuperValu stores. The small food businesses secured the listings following their participation in the Food Academy Start programme, a collaboration between Bord Bia, SuperValu and Local Enterprise Offices (LEOs).

START-UPS AN ATTRACTIVE OPTION FOR IT STAFF

Some 45 per cent of IT workers in Ireland would consider moving jobs to a start-up or an established SME rather than work at a multinational, according to new research. The survey by Brightwater Recruitment reveals IT workers are less interested by perks in multinationals – including free food and healthcare – and are now opting for variety and challenge which are often associated with start-ups. A mere 15 per cent of IT professionals said they would choose to work for an established multinational. This compares with 35 per cent of professionals just one year ago.

"I think it's a great time with lots going on but there are lots of gaps as well. My job is to drive new initiatives that will move the needle for Dublin."

Dublin's first commissioner for start-ups Niamh Bushnell on her new role and the start-up landscape in the capital.

Recent statistics show an

8.4%

increase in the number of new businesses set up in August 2014 compared to last year, indicating a growing confidence in the small business sector and consequently, an increasing demand for start-up support. Source: www.vision-net.ie

START-UP PROFILE: ONSITE DENTAL



Since September, Onsite Dental has been taking a 53-foot mammoth health clinic on wheels to some of the highest profile workplaces across Ireland. Its purpose is to give staff at some of these companies access to professional dental health screening services without the need to take time off work. Onsite Dental is the brainchild of Joshua Perry and the company has previously provided mobile health and dental services to staff at firms in the US and Denmark. Perry has now joined forces with Mark Ryan to bring the service to Ireland.

Research shows that 60 per cent of the Irish population have not seen a dentist in 18 months. Interestingly, cost does not appear to be the deterrent, as only 15 per cent of

two million people who are eligible for free dental check-ups, make use of the service. Many working professionals are simply unable to make time to visit the dentist, so Onsite Dental makes it easier by taking the dentist to the workplace, offering check-ups, screening, preventative and restorative dental care. The onsite service is a win-win for organisations, employees and the dental community; staff members are provided with high quality dental care at a convenient location, companies no longer need to give staff time off to visit their dentist, and it gives the dental professional the chance to extend their patient base.

For further details go to www.onsiteservice.com

KICKSTARTER COMES TO IRELAND

Budding entrepreneurs with start-up ideas now have another crowdfunding option available to them after Kickstarter launched its service in Ireland. Kickstarter is the biggest crowdfunding medium in the world, targeted at creative projects - anything from product design to fashion to music. Until now, many Irish start-ups turned to the site's international competitors as well as indigenous crowdfunding sites Fundit.ie and PledgeSports. As of October, Irish entries will be able to sign up for funding with the website which will be open to donations from around the world.



Young entrepreneurs pick up €150,000 investment

Brian Hayes Curtin

bhayescurtin@corkindependent.com

Nine young Cork entrepreneurs picked up awards earlier this month with a number of the businesses earning investment too.

Among the big winners were a sports media website, a device to support endurance athletes, a respiratory rate monitor and a company that specialises in ethical, science-based canine care.

Cork's 'Best Young Entrepreneurs' were officially announced at an awards ceremony hosted by Cork's three Local Enterprise Offices (LEOs) in Vertigo, County Hall.

The campaign saw each of the three LEOs (Cork City, South Cork, Cork North and West) encourage Cork's young entrepreneurs to enter and be in with a chance to receive a portion of the €150,000 investment fund up for grabs.

The winner in each category received significant investment in their business, with one overall winner in each of the regions receiving the accolade of 'Young Entrepreneur of the Year' in their region.

In the LEO South Cork competition Ian Kerins won the Best New Idea category and received €10,000 investment on his company, Enduro Pro, which is developing the first non-invasive, optical sensor based wearable device to support endurance athletes.

Richard Barrett, Pundit Arena won Best New Start-up, receiving €20,000

investment. Pundit Arena is a sports media website powered by fans, aspiring and established journalists.

The winner of Best Established Business with New Add-on category and €20,000 investment was Myles Murray of PMD Solutions. PMD Solutions produces RespiraSense, calling it the "world's first and only ubiquitously designed respiratory rate monitor".

The Best New Idea category was won by Darren Hayes who received €10,000 investment in his renewable energy company, D.A. Renewable Energy.

Nanci Creedon of Creedon's Doggie Daycare received €20,000 investment in the Best Established with a New Add-on category.

The title of Best Start-up and €20,000 investment, went to Sarah Dineen of Uniwink, a new innovative e-learning platform allowing college students to access and share peer-generated course material and schedule real time peer tutoring sessions.

In the Cork North and West competition, the Best Start-Up Business category was won by brothers, James and Peter Nagle for their business The Crypto Broker, which is one of the leading Bitcoin brokers in Ireland.

Donogh Murphy won the Best New Idea category, scooping €10,000 investment in his company Max-Exam.ie.

Winner of the Best Established with new Add-on category, winning €20,000 investment in her company was Caroline Crowley for

CPC Outsourcing, a tax and accountancy service.



Pundit Arena co-founder Richard Barrett (24) and Uniwink co-founder Sarah Dineen (23) took home two awards each at last week's Cork regional Ireland's Best Young Entrepreneur awards.



Sports media start-up bags prize hat-trick

Winning a third award in its first year is just one of many achievements for Pundit Arena, whose sports website attracts 250,000 visitors monthly, raising its advertising potential, reports **Trish Dromey**

SPORTS media start-up Pundit Arena has just pulled off a hat-trick by winning the 2014 Young Entrepreneur of the Year award from South Cork Local Enterprise Office.

Offering a sports website with content generated by articulate and passionate fans and journalists, the company won the Bank of Ireland Ignite Business award earlier this year, as well as an award and a trip to Israel in the Start Tel Aviv competition.

Now attracting 250,000 visitors a month, the Pundit Arena website is unique in offering payment to sports fans for their contributions. It is like a sports blog only better, explains company co-founder Richard Barrett, who picked up both the Local Enterprise Board South Cork Young Entrepreneur and Best Start Up awards last week.

The website offers commentary on 17 sports, with articles written by 200 pundits or contributors as well as a team of four staff writers. Soccer postings are the main attraction but rugby and boxing are also popular.

Mr Barrett says the site is unique in offering payment to fans who con-

tribute. Operating by generating revenue from advertising and syndicating its content, Pundit Arena's goal is to establish itself as one of the largest sports web platforms in Europe.

The company came into being in October 2013 when its co-founders Mr Barrett and Ross O'Dwyer met while participating in the Ignite Accelerator programme at UCC.

"We both had ideas for sports websites," says Mr Barrett. "I had an idea to set up a sports blog aggregator and Ross came up with a revenue model for paying. We realised that it made sense to work together."

Mr O'Dwyer had a business degree, while Mr Barrett had started out as a PE teacher but went into sports journalism and set up a website, Sport is Everything.

The pair started Pundit Arena with just €5,000 they received from the Ignite programme. "We put in long hours and built the website ourselves. In our first month we had a lot of content but very little traffic," says Mr Barrett.

In November 2013, the site had just 307 users so the founders worked on search engine optimisation and targeted advertising on social media networks.

Getting attention and recognition was difficult but a few of Pundit Arena's articles went viral and they began to build readership.

The website's biggest success came this month with an article titled '19 Guys You Always See At Five-A-Side'.

"This has over 55,000 Facebook likes, has been tweeted nearly 1,000 times and according to Google has already had 1.2m readers on our site," says Mr Barrett.

Earlier in the year, a posting about mixed martial artist Conor McGregor was seen by 25,000 readers, while one about Sugar Ray Leonard was posted to the boxing legend's own Facebook account.

Mr Barrett says these are the type of postings which are getting attention and helping drive web traffic. He explains that postings from fans have to reach a certain standard and are screened and edited. "They have to be articulate, passionate, and legal," he says. "They may be biased but never boring. Contributors get paid when their contributions get 5,000 hits."

He estimates that over 60% of Pundit's users are in the UK but says the website has a strong fan base in Ireland and also

gets readers from English-speaking countries including Australia, New Zealand, the US, Nigeria, and Kenya.

Currently employing a full-time staff of five, Pundit Arena received grant aid from the Local Enterprise Board in South Cork and has also received some cash prizes with awards which have helped fund the company.

The award won this month provides €20,000 which will go towards hiring five new staff.

The company has begun to generate revenue from advertising. "We sold advertising to the FAI and UCC to promote their Roy Keane Scholarship and we use Google advertising, which generates revenue through clicks," says Mr Barrett, adding that some articles have also sold to newspapers.

Ongoing growth in web traffic is increasing the company's advertising potential and Pundit's aim is to sell advertising through a media buyer — a company which acts as a go-between for big brands in selling advertising.

It is in advanced talks with Electric Media in Ireland and the AD2One Group in the UK.

To fund further marketing and advertising, Pundit is in negotiations with Angel investors with a view to raising a six-figure sum.

The goal for 2015 is to generate a turnover of €500,000.

Fact file

- **Company:** Pundit Arena
- **Location:** National Software Centre, Mahon
- **Directors:** Richard Barrett and Ross O'Dwyer
- **Staff:** 5
- **Business:** Sports website
- **Website:** www.punditarena.com



Ross O'Dwyer and Richard Barrett.

Picture: Miki Barlok



Local Enterprise Offices honour young entrepreneurs

NINE of Cork's Best Young Entrepreneurs were officially announced at an awards ceremony hosted by Cork's three Local Enterprise Offices (LEOs) at County Hall.

The nine winners were chosen from almost 40 young entrepreneurs who were shortlisted from almost 150 applicants, as part of a nationwide search to find Ireland's Best Young Entrepreneur.

The campaign saw each of the three LEOs (Cork City, South Cork, Cork North and West) encourage Cork's young entrepreneurs to enter and be in with a chance to receive a portion of the €150,000 investment fund up for grabs.

The competition was judged in three categories. The categories were:

- Best New Idea.
- Best Start-up Business.
- Best Established Business with New Add-on.

To help prepare for this stage of the competition, the finalists participated in a business boot camp last month designed to help the participants to develop the skills required to take their entrepreneurial idea from concept stage to reality and to build towards an investable business plan.

In the LEO South Cork competition Ian Kerins won the Best New Idea category and received €10,000 investment on his company, Enduro Pro, which is developing the first non-invasive, optical sensor based wearable device to support endurance athletes in both monitoring and lactate threshold training.

Richard Barrett, Pundit Arena won Best New Start-up, receiving €20,000 investment. Pundit Arena is a revenue generating sports media website powered by articulate fans, aspiring and established journalists. Richard was also named Young Entrepreneur of the Year in the LEO South Cork region.

The winner of Best Established Business with New Add-on category and €20,000 investment was Myles Murray of PMD Solutions. PMD solutions is delivering the "lost vital" to healthcare professionals. This vital sign is a measure of how often a person breathes per minute and is the first indicator that a person is deteriorating in health.

In the LEO Cork City competition, the Best New Idea category was won by Darren Hayes who received €10,000 investment in his company, D.A. Renewable Energy. The goal of this renewable energy company is to remove fossil fuels in applications which can be re-

placed by a renewable energy source.

Nanci Creedon of Creedon's Doggie Daycare received €20,000 investment in the Best Established with a New Add-on category. Nanci has proven that over the last four and a half years that there is a market for ethical, science based canine care, designed to remove the fear that dogs feel during grooming.

The title of Best Start-up, and €20,000 investment, went to Sarah Dineen of Uniwink, a new innovative e-learning platform allowing college students to access and share peer generated course material and schedule real time peer tutoring sessions. Sarah also won the accolade of Young Entrepreneur of the Year for the Cork City region.

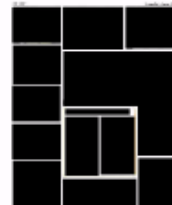
In the Cork North and West competition, the Best Start-Up Business category was won by brothers, James and Peter Nagle for their business 'The Crypto Broker', which is one of the leading Bitcoin brokers in Ireland and one of the leading Litecoin brokers in Europe.

Donogh Murphy won the Best New Idea category, scooping €10,000 investment in his company 'MaxExam.ie' from LEO Cork North and West. Donogh is developing an e-commerce company, positioning itself to become a market leader in offering tuition as well as benchmarking to secondary school students in STEM subjects.

Winner of the Best Established with new Add-on category, winning €20,000 investment in her company was Caroline Crowley for 'CPC Outsourcing'. Caroline's company provides tax and accountancy services for firms, mainly London based.

Caroline was also named Young Entrepreneur of the Year in the LEO Cork North & West competition.

The next stage of the national competition will see all nine Cork winners go forward to represent their LEO in a regional final in November.



Salute for Cork enterprise winners

AT THE awards ceremony hosted by theCork Local Enterprise Offices in Vertigo, County Hall, where Cork's Best Young Entrepreneurs were named were:

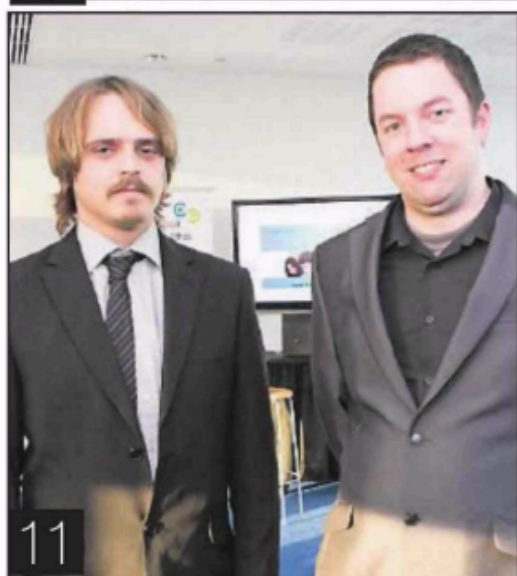
1. Cathal Burke, a nominee in the existing business category with Marie and Tim Burke of Tim Burke Bathroom and Tiles;
2. Niamh McKiernan of Talent Strada, Sarah Dineen of UniLink, Angela Beaumont of Angela Beaumont Luxury Womenswear and Sinéad Murphy of Blumin Organic Skincare;
3. Mayor of Cork County, Cllr Alan Coleman with Ciara McGee, business advisor at the South Cork Local Enterprise Office and Cork city's Lord Mayor, Cllr Mary Shields;
4. Local enterprise head Adrienne Rodgers with Don Cullinane of Cullinane Moretta Business Consultants and Fiona Donnelly of Petals Floral Design;
5. Winners Nanci Creedon of Creedon's Doggie Daycare, Caroline Crowley of CPC Outsourcing from Bandon, Richard Barrett of Pundit Arena, Aidan Molloy, Ian Kerins of Enduro Pro, ,

Darren Hayes of DA Renewable Energy, Sarah Dineen of Uniwink, James Nagle of The Crypto Broker from Rosscarbery, Myles Murray of PMD Solutions and Donogh Murphy of MaxExam.ie from Millstreet;

6. Glen Goggin of Ottera, Ross O'Dwyer of Pundit Arena and Anthony O'Mara, chairman of Cork Innovates;
7. Pat Humphreys of PHMS Ltd, Joseph Kelleher of WMJ Kelleher & Associates and Peter Finnegan of the CIT Rubicon Centre;
8. Michael Delaney, former vice-president and head of development at CIT and Ciara Concannon of Enterprise Ireland;
9. Sienna Aspell of Insidium Marketing and Sinéad O'Sullivan of Brooke Catering;
10. Andrew Hobbs of Closr, John Flynn of Buckley Kiely & Co, Darragh McCarthy, Ian Kerins of Enduro Pro and Shane O'Brien of iSave;
11. Kevin Sanderson and Paul Allen of Noob Gaming.

Pictures by
DARRAGH KANE









BACK TO SCHOOL MEANS BACK TO BUSINESS FOR SOUTH CORK SCHOOLS

Programme to Drive Entrepreneurship in Schools Kicks off

YOUNG entrepreneurs and budding business minds are invited to make their business ideas a reality this year through the **South Cork Schools Enterprise Programme**.

Co-ordinated by the Local Enterprise Office South Cork, the **South Cork Schools Enterprise programme** hosted an Innovation Day on Monday, September 22 at the Radisson Blu Hotel in Little Island. The Innovation Day was specifically designed to inspire teachers and students to generate creative business ideas, which would ultimately lead to mini-companies being established in schools across the Region. Noel Davidson and Muireann Fitzmaurice from QED Training delivered the creative and intriguing workshop to over 148 students and 11 teachers.

"Inspiring young minds and giving students the skills and confidence to become young entrepreneurs is at the heart of the Schools-Enterprise Programme," explains Sean O'Sullivan, CEO, Local Enterprise Office South Cork.

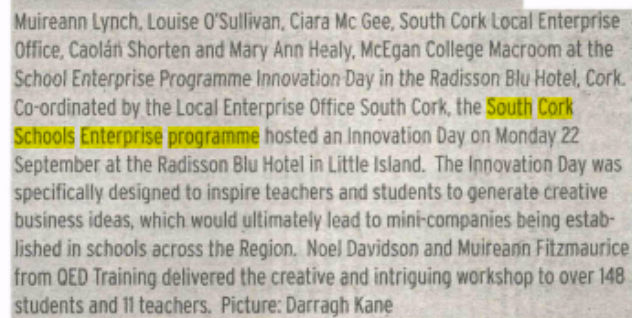
"The programme, which runs for the duration of the school year and includes regional and national award opportunities, aims to drive entrepreneurship among our talented young people, and to combine classroom business studies learning with real life experience of commercial activities".

At Innovation Day, students received spirited training from QED Training to encourage, motivate and guide them in the right direction towards establishing their enterprises and business activities. An interactive, practical workshop was also included in the day's agenda, as well as informative and engaging talks on entrepreneurship and business.

Innovation Day is just one part of the **South Cork Schools Enterprise Programme** with the Christmas Trade Fair later on in the year and the Regional Final and National Finals in the New Year so there is plenty time for students to start working on ideas and start their own business.

If you would like to get involved in the **South Cork Schools Enterprise Programme** please contact Katherine Corkery on 086 0422220 or at hello@cork-schoolsenterprise.ie

For more information, see www.localenterprise.ie/SouthCork/





Students told: Follow your dreams



by Eoin English

She had what many would have considered the dream job — interning for the senior style director of *Elle* magazine and living a *Devil Wears Prada*-style life in New York.

But West Cork-born Louise O'Neill, 29, who gave it all up to follow her first love of writing, told second-level students yesterday that it was only when she let go of the idea of what success should look and feel like that real success came.

"Society doesn't encourage us enough to dream," the best-selling author said. "Instead, it teaches us that we need to be practical,

that we need to find a job that pays the bills, and that listening to our intuition is nonsensical.

"If you can learn to just do whatever feels right for you — not for your parents or teachers or community — but for yourself, then you won't go wrong."

Louise, from Clonakilty, was one of several young entrepreneurs who addressed a major student enterprise conference in Inchydoney Lodge and Spa yesterday.

The blogger and author of *Only Ever Yours* encouraged the students attending the 'Leaders On Our Level' conference to trust their own instincts and pursue what they love.

The conference, hosted by the West Cork Schools Enterprise Programme, was aimed at encouraging the hundreds of fourth and fifth year students undertaking the enterprise programme to realise the possibilities available to them outside of the school gates.

The programme, run by the Local Enterprise Office in Cork North and Cork West, exposes students to the realities and challenges faced by entrepreneurs in every stage of business development.

Other speakers included Ciaran Sheahan, the founder of MuttMitts.ie; Clonakilty-born Declan Murphy of the Just-one.org charity; Alex Musgrave of digital production company Dog Day Media; and the national winners of last year's enterprise programme, My Little Big Adventure, from Castle-townbere.

Mr Sheehan encouraged the students not to be afraid to lead. "There are opportunities everywhere and you can find them in the most unexpected of places. Don't be left wondering what might have been, be fearless and go for it," he said.

Mr Musgrave, whose company video for Kearys of a road trip around Ireland recently went viral and whose clients now include Ed Sheeran, Warner Music, and Ballymaloe, also gave the students a vital tip.

"If your dream job doesn't exist, you can create it," he said.



Author Louise O'Neill speaks with Kate Murnane, Colaiste Pobail Bheanntri; Zach O'Sullivan, Mount Saint Michael; Laura Dunlea, the Convent Sacred Heart; and Tim Cotter at the Inchydoney Lodge and Spa.

Picture: Darragh Kane



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For more information, see www.localenterprise.ie/SouthCork/



Muireann Lynch, Louise O'Sullivan, Clara Mc Gee, South Cork Local Enterprise Office, Caolán Shorten and Mary Ann Healy, McEgan College Macroom at the School Enterprise Programme Innovation Day in the Radisson Blu Hotel, Cork. Co-ordinated by the Local Enterprise Office South Cork, the **South Cork Schools Enterprise programme** hosted an Innovation Day on Monday 22 September at the Radisson Blu Hotel in Little Island. The Innovation Day was specifically designed to inspire teachers and students to generate creative business ideas, which would ultimately lead to mini-companies being established in schools across the Region. Noel Davidson and Muireann Fitzmaurice from QED Training delivered the creative and intriguing workshop to over 148 students and 11 teachers. Picture: Darragh Kane



European Bench Press and Deadlift Champion David Gagnon and Belen Reyes from the CIT Powerlifting Club at the Cork Institute of Technology Sports Club day in the Students Centre. Pictures: Darragh Kane



Young Cork entrepreneurs #justdoitlike at bootcamp

Brian Hayes Curtin

bhayescurtin@corkindependent.com

A competition to find the best young entrepreneurs in Cork, and Ireland, with a €150,000 investment fund up for grabs, has kicked into gear recently.

A campaign to find 'Ireland's Best Young Entrepreneur' was launched in June, but earlier this month almost 40 young entrepreneurs attended a business bootcamp held in the Kingsley Hotel. The 40 attendees were shortlisted from almost 150 applicants for the event, which was organised by the three Local Enterprise Offices (LEOs) in Cork.

The bootcamp, designed to help the participants to develop the skills required to take their entrepreneurial idea from concept stage to reality and to build a viable business plan to commercialise the opportunity, covered areas including business strategy, financial planning and sources of finance, targets and performance measurement and investor proposals.

The competition was open to individuals aged 30 and under and will be judged in three distinct categories following the bootcamp - Best new idea, best start-up business and best established business with new add-on.

Adrienne Rodgers, Head of Local Enterprise, Local Enterprise Office Cork city says: "The aim of this initiative is to encour-

age and support a culture of entrepreneurship among young people in Cork, to promote entrepreneurship as a career choice, and to encourage the establishment and development of new innovative businesses by Cork's entrepreneurs.

"This is hugely important for job creation as two thirds of all new jobs are generated by businesses in the first five years of existence - more start-ups and an entrepreneurial culture will lead to more jobs."

She continued: "Our business bootcamp offered the shortlisted applicants the opportunity to focus on what is necessary to make it successful. These brave young people have decided to take that next step in to making their business dream a reality. In Cork we would say they decided to 'just do it, like!'"

Visit www.ibye.ie, @LEOSouthCork and Local Enterprise Office South Cork on Facebook.



Brendan Finucane, Myles Murray, Ciana Aspell and Eanna Keenan participated in a business bootcamp in association with the LEOs at the Kingsley Hotel from Friday 19 – Sunday 21 September, as part of the search for Ireland's Best Young Entrepreneur. **Photo: Gerard McCarthy**



Cork entrepreneurs bidding to win share of investment fund

IN June the three Local Enterprise Offices (LEOs) in Cork launched a campaign to find the best young entrepreneurs in their region in three distinct categories, with a €150,000 investment fund up for grabs, as part of a nationwide search find Ireland's Best Young Entrepreneur.

This weekend almost 40 young entrepreneurs, shortlisted from almost 150 applicants, came together to 'get fit for business' at a business bootcamp in association with the LEOs held at the Kingsley Hotel.

The bootcamp, designed to help the participants to develop the skills required to take their entrepreneurial idea from concept stage to reality and to build a viable business plan to commercialise the opportunity, covered areas including business strategy, financial planning and sources of finance, targets and performance measurement, and investor proposals.

The competition, which encouraged young entrepreneurs from all over Cork to 'just do it, like' and enter, was open to individuals aged 30 and under, will be judged in three distinct categories following the bootcamp. They are:

- Best New Idea.
- Best Start-up Business.
- Best Established Business with New Add-on.

In early October, each of the young entrepreneurs who attended the bootcamp will vie for a portion of the investment fund available from their LEO when they present their business plan and pitch to a judging panel in their region.

Each of the three LEOs (Cork City, South Cork, North and West Cork) has a total fund of €50,000 to invest in the three winning businesses according to criteria including businesses' investment needs and business prospects; with one overall winner in each of the regions eligible for an investment of up to €20,000.

Following this stage of the competition, the winners in each of the three categories will go forward to represent their LEO in a regional final in November; and if successful there, will fly the Cork flag at the national final to find 'Ireland's Best Young Entrepreneur' at the end of the year.

With the Cork region being heralded as the entrepreneur's hub of Ireland, the overall winner could well be from Cork.

Adrienne Rodgers, Head of Local Enterprise, Local Enterprise Office Cork City said: "The aim of this initiative is to encourage and support a culture of entrepreneurship among young people in Cork, to promote entrepreneurship as a career choice, and to

encourage the establishment and development of new innovative businesses by Cork's young entrepreneurs.

"This is hugely important for job-creation as two thirds of all new jobs are generated by businesses in the first five years of existence – more start-ups and a thriving entrepreneurial culture will lead to more jobs being created.

"Our business bootcamp offered the shortlisted applicants the opportunity to hone in on their business idea, and focus on what is necessary to make it successful.

"These brave young people have decided to take that next step in to making their business dream a reality. In Cork we would say they decided to 'just do it, like!'"

visit www.ibye.ie for more info. To follow the progress of Cork's young entrepreneurs, check out @LEOSouthCork on Twitter and Local Enterprise Office South Cork on Facebook.

Start-up savvy on display at Local Enterprise Offices business bootcamp

At a business bootcamp in association with Local Enterprise Offices at the Kingsley Hotel were:

1. Nancy Creedon and Adam Courtney.
2. Aidan Molloy with his father Derek Molloy.
3. Cathal Burke and Caroline Crowley.
4. Luke Prendeville, William Martin, Edward Bullman and Conor Browne.
5. James Nagle, Sadhbh Sullivan, Paul Mannix, Maeve O'Keeffe and Sinéad Murphy.
6. Shane O'Brien, Darragh McCarthy, Emma Harley and Donagh Murphy.
7. Aidan Molloy, Sarah Dineen, Holly Coloma and Angela Beaumont.
8. Brendan Finucane, Myles Murray, Ciana Aspell and Eanna Keenan.
9. John Burke, Ian Kerins and Paul McCarthy.
10. Glen Goggin and Stephine Lynch, who have been shortlisted in the Local Enterprise Office South Cork's Best Start-up Business category.

Picture: Gerard McCarthy









So is there anything to see in Dingle at all?

Travelbuddy founder, Peter Conway says his app is the first ever to aggregate tourist sites in Ireland for visitors who may feel just a little snowed under by ye olde 'look it up on Google' approach, writes **Trish Dromey**

Bringing new technology to bear on the tourist industry, Cork start-up company Travelbuddy is launching a new website and mobile app which allows users to book over 450 activities, tours and attractions around Ireland.

Founder and CEO, Peter Conway, says this is the first app which aggregates tourist sites in Ireland and offers everything from tickets to watching whales off the Cork coast to ones for the Titanic Experience in Belfast.

Aiming to launch another app for the UK market next year, he says Travelbuddy has created a unique feature not offered on mobile apps by tourist activity aggregators in other countries.

"When tourists use this app, they will get a message on their mobile, offering a ticket to visit an attraction in the area they are in, or a ticket for an activity they have indicated they are interested in. This does not require a roaming network, and tickets can be purchased without Wi-fi, unless live availability needs to be checked," reveals Mr Conway.

A marketing graduate with 24 years experience in the travel industry, Mr Conway previously set up a company selling Caribbean tours to Irish customers and also set up

a website to promote tourism in Cork.

The idea for Travelbuddy came to him while working in the US for a travel company selling holidays to Ireland. He noticed that tour operators, after initially selling travel packages to customers, found it difficult to re-engage with them to sell additional holiday products.

He decided that the advent of smartphones meant the market was ripe for an app which addressed this problem. "The tours and activities area is one of the biggest growth areas in international tourism and is estimated to be worth €35bn in Europe," he says, noting that at present, 60% of sales in this market still took place offline.

"To find attractions, tours and activities, people use Google searches which can lead to information overload. They look at guide books and they look at flyers when they get there. Tourists are on holidays with mobiles looking for things to do — with this app they can find them."

Mr Conway began researching the market in 2011, and in 2012, he secured an investor and enrolled in the New Frontiers entrepreneur development programme at the Rubicon Centre in Cork.

Using his own money, he also raised funds from family, friends, Ballyhoura

Rural Development,

South Cork Enterprise Board, Cork County Council and also got Competitive Start Funding from Enterprise Ireland in 2013.

Securing a premises at Cork Airport Business Park, Mr Conway found a company in Limerick to start working on the app and one in Cork to develop the Travelbuddy website. One of the hardest tasks was getting the content, since it involved contacting hundreds of tourist sites around the country which was slow and time consuming.

After two and half years of research, Travel Buddy launched a beta website late last year and a beta version of its mobile app at the start of this year. It initially had 200 events but now has 450, and Mr Conway has plans to add restaurants later this year.

As the company is at an early stage, and hasn't yet established itself in the market, it is planning to develop sales by offering a white-label version of its

site to tour operators and hotels. "Hotels and tour operators can improve their customer offering and generate additional revenue," he says.

Travelbuddy has this year secured High-Potential Start-up Funding from Enterprise Ireland. To date it has raised €150,000 and Mr Conway is making plans to raise €2m next year. The next step will be the launch of an app for London next year.

Mr Conway is also negotiating the setting up of a Travelbuddy franchise in Antigua in the Caribbean next year.

Fact file

- **Company:**
TravelBuddy
- **Location:** Cork Airport
Business Park
- **CEO:** Peter Conway
- **Staff:** Three
- **Business:** Website and
mobile app for booking
tourist activities and tours
- **Website:**
www.travelbuddy.mobi



**Peter Conway: First Ireland,
next London and Antigua.**



WILDBERRY BAKERY WINS FOOD SENSORY AWARD

At the recent Cork and Kerry Food Forum Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Simon Coveney presented Wildberry gluten-free products with the inaugural Food Sensory Experience Award sponsored by Sensory Research Ltd (SRL).

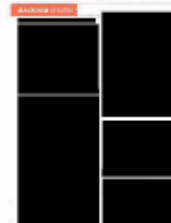
Wildberry Bakery produces a range of high-end, hand-made café bars at its two premises in Cork. The company supplies cafes and restaurants, as well as retailing in Cork's English Market. The company currently retails in all 32 counties in Ireland but has its sights set on international markets. Susan Robbins-Fehily, who operates Wildberry Bakery with her husband Tom, says: "I would hope to be going international in the next 12 months or so." The company plans to target the UK initially but Susan says it is very much a European product.

Speaking about the sensory award, Susan says the company supplied a number of sample products, which won on the basis of sight, smell, taste and the overall appearance.

SLR says the award pushes the boundaries of the food sensory experience and tested products incorporating all five senses of sight, sound, smell, taste and touch. "This award will assure consumers that they have found something exceptionally delicious with Wildberry gluten-free products, which delivers great quality and value, an overall excellent food sensory experience," said Margaret Shine, Founder and Managing Director of SRL Research.

Yawl Bay Cooked Irish Crab Claws and Harty's Preserves were also presented with certificates for food excellence at the awards.

"These awards celebrate the kind of food we all love to eat: interesting, authentic, great quality and value, and, above all, delicious," said Joe Burke, Local Enterprise Office, South Cork, speaking at the Cork and Kerry Food Forum – the largest event for artisan farmers market in the region, attended by over 4,000 people.



SEPTEMBER FOOD AND FUN IN MACROOM

The 3rd Macroom Food Festival takes place in the riverside town on Friday 26th, Saturday 27th, and Sunday 28th September. Events will be located at a variety of indoor and outdoor venues across the town centre, including the town Square, the Castle Hotel, the Briery Gap, the library and the Riverside Park Hotel. The festival is an artisan tasting affair and features Macroom taste trail, an international food marquee, MasterChef demo, cake decorating masterclass, schools cook-off competition, cheese & wine tasting, monster outdoor food market, children's entertainment & lots of live music.

The Macroom Food Festival team has been busy working on an even bigger and better line-up for this year's event. The previous two food festivals drew crowds of over 7000 visitors each year so there is an already established appetite for this annual extravaganza and expectations are sure to be met once again this year. The 2014 festival will take place over three days. The weekend will kick off on **Friday 26th** with a **welcome ceremony and 'An Artisan Affair'** which will be an evening of exquisite foods and flavours to showcase the vast array of Macroom's local produce, created by our finest local producers. **Saturday** will see the town come alive with a number of **childrens' events** in the morning, followed by a **taste trail** showcasing superb local produce in the pubs, shops, cafes and restaurants around Macroom to a soundtrack of **live music** performances throughout the town. A new **International Flavours** event will take place on the Square from 5pm – 7pm which will give the public an opportunity to discover new dishes from around the globe. Bakers and decorators will enjoy a **cake decorating** master class by Ellen O'Leary of No. 57 Gourmet Kitchen after which Diana Dodog will show off her **MasterChef** winning skills at a demo in The Castle Hotel. For those still hungry and thirsty for more, a **(local) cheese and (not so local) wine** event will finish off the evening at The Castle Hotel at 8.30pm. **Sunday** will see the square transformed into a massive **outdoor food market** with over 60 food producers and traders setting up stall, complete with children's entertainment, live music and plenty to eat all round, along with the **schools cook-off**.

The town of Macroom is looking forward to welcoming the now regular foodie visitors once more, plus lots of newcomers. The Macroom Food Festival organising committee says the programme of events will be diverse enough to whet the appetites of dedicated food enthusiasts, as well as families looking for an enjoyable weekend of culture and entertainment. The festival will, again, put the fantastic food of west Cork, Kerry and beyond in the spotlight. Macroom Food Festival will be an epic feast for all the senses.

See www.macroomfoodfestival.com for more details.

BEACON OF HOPE FOR RETAILERS

Cork County Council's initiative to support and assist retailers was launched in Macroom recently. The Beacon Initiative Retail Programme has already been implemented in Ballincollig, Castletownbere,

Contact the Editor - Tel: 026 41891 or **Email:** leevalleyoutlook@eircom.net

Charleville, Cobh, Dunmanway, Millstreet and Youghal, with very positive feedback from the participants.

Pat O'Connell, Chairman of the Lee Valley Enterprise Board, opened the meeting at Macroom E Business Centre, which, he stated was developed

by Cork County Council in partnership with Enterprise Ireland, Macroom Town Council, **South Cork Enterprise Board** and Lee Valley Enterprise Board to help people start up their own businesses. With consumer spending down over the past number of years, the County Council recognised that many retailers have been adversely affected by the economic downturn and have taken on board the need to support existing retail businesses. Their Beacon Initiative Retail Programme aims to provide help and ideas on how retailers can improve their own business. The programme is only open to fifteen retail businesses and these places were immediately filled.

Cork County Council, drawing on the Economic Development Fund, pays 75% of the €1,000 fee. Beacon will assist the participants build a 12 – 18 month strategic plan for their business and a dedicated Beacon Advisor will work with the business to discuss first-hand the issues they are facing and devise a plan of action which is continually reviewed over a 6 month period. This involves growing of customer base; staying ahead of competitors, building customer loyalty, exceeding customer expectation and running a more profitable business.

To date the Beacon Initiative Retail Programme has worked with Retailers across all categories including Pharmacy, Filling Station, Retail Fashion Outlets, Driving School, Sports Shop, Plant Hire, Public House, Activity Centre, Off Licence, Hardware Centre, Supermarket, Undertaker, Mobile Phone Shop, Electrical Retailer, Travel Centre, Hotel & Restaurant, Florist and Gift Shop. The Beacon Initiative is managed by Padraig O'Sullivan, who has extensive experience working with both SME's and Start-up Companies. Website www.beaconinitiative.net.



At introduction of Beacon Initiative Retail Programme at Macroom E Park, from left, James Burke, consultant; Paul Sutton, Cork Co. Council Economic Development; Pat O'Connell, Chairman Lee Valley Enterprise Board and Padraig O'Sullivan, Cork Co. Council © Lee Valley Outlook



James Burke addresses the attendance at Beacon Initiative at Macroom E © Lee Valley Outlook



Don Buckley, Catherine Costello and Pat O'Connell prepare for Macroom Food Festival, September 26 – 28. © Lee Valley Outlook



Silverstone Dimensions are celebrating Cork Craft Month 2014, which runs from 5 August to 5 September, and are launching their new website (www.silverstonedimensions.com) with a competition to win this Sterling Silver and rolled gold pendant from their Aura range. All Silverstone Dimensions jewellery is designed and handmade in Midleton, Co Cork using traditional techniques which result in beautiful and eye catching pieces that suit the lifestyle of the modern woman.

To win this striking pendant (RPP €140) simply name one more jewellery range by Silverstone Dimensions.

Complete the competition entry form on page 45. See www.corkcraftanddesign.com for more on **Cork Craft Month**.



Still plenty of time to get crafty around **Cork**

CORK Craft Month continues until September 5, and offers the perfect opportunity for you to explore your crafty side. This week's focus is on 'A Weekend of Crafty Fun Events' in Shanagarry, 'Woodspun' in Kinsale, 'West Cork Creates' in Skibbereen, and a range of fun workshops that you can part-take in from lace-making to woodcarving and ceramics. "Woodspun" takes place in the James O'Neill Building (formerly the Old Mill) in Kinsale until Tuesday, August 26, from 10am-5pm daily. This exhibition and pop up craft shop features hand turned craft pieces by members of the Cork Chapter of the Irish Woodturning Guild. Saturday is designated 'Meet the Makers Day', which offers a perfect opportunity to discuss technique, finishes, and wood types or just to chat and admire.

A Weekend of Crafty Fun Events takes place at Kilkenny Design Centre in Shanagarry, East Cork, from August 30-31. Visit Cork Craft and Design members in their painting studios, take a free painting class, or an introduction to watercolours with Belinda Nothcote. You can even treat yourself to a relaxing hand scrub and massage using locally made skincare products, and this event is particularly family friendly with music and face painting for kids.

West Cork Creates is an exhibition of handmade craft, paintings and photography, all created in the region, which takes place in the O'Driscoll Building off Main Street in Skibbereen until September 14, Monday to Saturday from 11am to 6pm daily.

The exhibition brings together a blend of contemporary craft, fine art and photography inspired by the West Cork landscape. It features work by the region's leading artists and includes ceramics, textiles, wood turning, furniture, metal work and jewellery.



Shanagarry goes crafty

A weekend of crafty events is to be held next week at the Kilkenny Design Centre in Shanagarry as part of **Cork Craft Month**.

The two-day event on Saturday, August 30th and Sunday, August 31st will include a free Introduction to watercolours by botanical artist and designer Belinda Northcote in her studio at the Shanagarry Design Centre from 1pm to 5pm. Northcote will demonstrate painting techniques and provide practical advice on the materials used in her work.

From 1pm to 3pm on both days, there will also be a natural hand-scrub treatment session with locally made products from cosmetic company, Angels Touch (€2) and a free step-by-step painting class for adults with artist Phil Davis. On Saturday, August 20th from 2pm to 4pm, there is to be an adults' clay modelling class with Stable Door Pottery and on Sunday, August 31st, there's a kids 'make and take' pottery class.

To book for Davis' workshop, email phil.davis08@gmail.com. Reservations for the pottery workshops can be requested through stable-doorpottery@eircom.net.





Supporting start-ups with accelerator programmes

Competition for places on accelerator programmes is intense, especially in Dublin

Pamela Newenham

In early 2005, Paul Graham and Jessica Livingston created a new model for funding early stage start-ups, an accelerator programme called Y Combinator.

Start-up companies on the programme would receive a cash injection and office space for three months, in exchange for a stake in their company. Y Combinator has since become the king of accelerator programmes, having sprouted two billion-dollar start-ups, namely Airbnb and Dropbox.

The rise of Y Combinator has led to the rapid development of other accelerator programmes and incubators around the world. These programmes provide new entrepreneurs with office space, mentoring, advice and practical training on legal, technical, business and fundraising topics. They also typically give money in exchange for a stake in the company.

While the terms accelerator and incubator are used interchangeably, broadly speaking accelerators offer investment for equity, whereas incubators are mainly about mentoring and don't take a stake. At present Y Combinator offers \$120,000 and three months office space in return for 7 per cent equity.

There are 27 different accelerator and incubator programmes in Ireland and competition for places on them is fierce.

Research carried out by Amárach on behalf of AIB earlier this year found competition for places on accelerator programmes in Dublin is particularly intense, with an acceptance rate of 21 per cent. Outside Dublin, this figure is higher, with 42 per cent of start-ups that applied for accelerator programmes accepted on to them.

NDRC Launchpad

The National Digital Research Centre (NDRC) is ranked in the top 2.5 per cent of incubators worldwide and is the only Irish incubator ranked in the top 20 of the UBI Index. The centre runs two Launchpad accelerator programmes each year, offering start-ups workspace for three months, and an investment of up to €20,000.

Investment is provided as €5,000 per start-up founder, with a minimum two founders required and a maximum of three founders, plus €5,000 project costs.

NDRC Launchpad director Gary Leyden says the programme is aimed at digital tech firms that can scale.

"We are not looking for copycat stuff. There needs to be a degree of innovation. It can be business model innovation or technical innovation," he adds.

Leyden says the programme usually sees 150 pitches before selecting 10 start-ups for each programme, which they are coached on sales, revenue models, pitching, marketing etc.

Well-known graduates: Soundwave, Newswhip

Wayra

International incubator Wayra selected Dublin as its 10th location in 2012. Its accelerator programme offers start-ups co-working space, support and expertise to get their projects off the ground and capital. Like Launchpad, the Wayra programme is also aimed at digital start-ups.

"It couldn't be a fish-farming business, but it could be a business that does data analytics for fish farming," Wayra director Karl Aherne says. He says start-ups on the programme get €40,000 in cash and up to nine months physical workspace.

"We spend a lot of time upskilling them, working with them on innovation, and matching them with experts."

Since the programme's inception, 21 start-ups have graduated, with recruitment currently under way for the next batch of 10. The capital given to the start-up by Wayra is initially a loan, but that loan is converted into equity following the start-ups first round of funding.

"We never take less than 7 per cent equity, but we never take more than 10 per cent," Aherne says.

Demand for places on the Wayra programme is huge and just 5 per cent of applicants will succeed in getting a place.

Well known graduates: Trustev, BragBet

Dogpatch Labs

Dogpatch Labs is another international incubator, with sister offices in New York, California and Massachusetts as well as Dublin. Founded by venture capital firm Polaris Partners, the incubator has led to the successful launch of several important

companies including Instagram, albeit from the US offices.

The Irish office is located down the road from Google's European HQ on Barrow Street. It offers open-plan spaces for entrepreneurs working on new business ideas.

Lab members also have access to industry thought leaders, senior advisers with best-practice knowledge and Polaris's network of professional contacts. More than 30 companies have passed through the incubator's doors in Dublin since it opened in 2011.

Well-known graduates: Intercom, CoderDojo, Logentries

Propeller Venture Accelerator

Based in the heart of Silicon Docks, the Propeller accelerator programme is run by the DCU Ryan Academy for Entrepreneurs.

It was established in 2010 with funding of €1 million from Irelandia Investments. Two programmes are run each year, with six companies participating in each programme.

In return for a 7.5 per cent equity stake, participants receive mentoring, three months incubation with free office space and services and a €30,000 cash investment for their business.

Participating start-ups have access to mentors including SAP Ireland managing director Liam Ryan, Frontline Ventures partner Will Prendergast, Fantom chief executive Paul Healy and Erica Roseingrave, head of public affairs at Coca Cola Ireland.

Well-known graduates: Likewhere, VideoElephant

Ignite programme

Ignite is the incubator programme at University College Cork. The university supports the start-ups financially and provides office space, but it does not take an equity stake.

Every year, the programme stakes on 10 start-ups, providing them with office space in UCC's Western Gateway Building for between nine and 15 months.

They also benefit from expert mentoring, seminars and approximately 30 days of workshops.

On completion of the programme, entre-

preneurs can avail of a further six months office space free of charge at the National Software Centre in Mahon in Cork.

The programme's primary funders are Cork City Council, Cork County Council, **Cork City and County Enterprise Boards** and Bank of Ireland.

Well-known graduates: UniWink.com, VConnecta

Ignite experience Sarah Dineen UniWink.com

Sarah Dineen heard about the Ignite incubator programme while at UCC. She had an idea for a business, but knew it wasn't as polished as it could be, so applied for Ignite.

"I submitted an online application form. I had done a lot of market research so I knew my stuff. I had never pitched before, though, and I had to pitch to a panel of five people."

Dineen started the programme in October 2013, learning about lean business models, setting up a business, idea generation and getting the price right. "The biggest thing I learned is that you can't have assumptions about what customers want."

She received a €5,000 investment in her business, from the programme, which went on web development for her e-learning platform UniWink. The platform had 2,500 users across six universities. "Students can get notes on our site, to prepare for their exams. We pay first-class students for their notes, and then charge students to access them. We want to be in all [Irish] colleges by October."

“
It couldn't be a fish-farming business, but it could be a business that does data analytics for fish farming





ARTISAN FOODS

DAY ONE

TASTING SUCCESS

Producers get a real taste of retailing



Start-up firms
can now place
products in
SuperValu
thanks to the
new Food
Academy,
writes **John
Daly**

MORE than 300 jobs are being created in food business start-ups as a result of the Food Academy Start programme, a collaborative initiative between the Local Enterprise Offices, Bord Bia and SuperValu.

More than 200 food business start-ups and producers who participated in Food Academy Start will supply SuperValu retailers for the first time, generating sales worth €5m and significant employment this year. As the stores are independently owned and operated, retailers are able to source directly from local suppliers on a one-to-one basis, enabling these start-up food businesses to gain their first retail listings in shops in their local communities.

SuperValu is also working with the companies involved to get their products listed in a cluster of nearby stores in order to set them on a long-term path to supplying their network of 223 stores.

"This initiative is a natural fit for SuperValu as our stores are independently owned by retailers who have developed a tailored offer for their community," says Martin Kelleher, SuperValu managing director.

"As a result, they can offer products that are not available in supermarket chains as our retail partners have the freedom to purchase directly from local suppliers." By matching the company's stores with start-up food businesses in their area, they have been able to assist with the creation of hundreds

of jobs across Ireland. "This underlines the local multiplier effect of the community retail model, as every time someone shops in our stores, their money goes back into the local economy."

Established in 2013 to help develop Ireland's artisan industry, Food Academy Start is a tailored programme which provides a platform for new and early-stage food business owners to develop commercially viable enterprises. For the first time, food start-ups regardless of their location have access to a standardised programme of supports throughout the country. Food Academy Start, delivered through workshop style training, is designed to guide companies from start-up to their first retail listing. The aim of the programme is to provide small food businesses with a solid foundation to progress confidently onto the shelves of retailers.

"Selection and participation in the Food Academy Start programme provides artisan food producers with direct access to expertise in branding, market research, purchasing, packaging and retail distribution," says Aidan Cotter, chief executive of Bord Bia. "This invaluable insight helps support small companies through the challenging initial phases of growth and greatly enhances their chances of market success. It is encouraging to see the positive and tangible benefits of the programme resulting in job creation at a local and national level and delivering sales of €5m."

All participants are given the opportunity to pitch their prod-

uct or idea to a panel of SuperValu representatives including the local SuperValu owner. This panel mentor the businesses to allow the participants to make any changes they deem necessary to improve their offer.

Crucially, SuperValu also provide successful participants the opportunity to trial their product in their local stores for a period of 12 weeks. This provides a significant advantage to small businesses in terms of real retail knowledge, including feedback on their product from the store staff and consumers, developing a marketing approach, packaging and distribution logistics.

"The local enterprise offices have been working closely with food startups and producers on the ground, to directly support these micro-enterprises and help them to grow", explains Joe Burke, LEO, South Cork.

"Today's Food Forum brings together food producers, Bord Bia, our retail partners SuperValu and the general public, to join together in a celebration of our thriving artisan industry."

SuperValu serves over 2.6m customers through 223 stores nationwide. Three-quarters of products on its shelves are sourced or produced in Ireland, sustaining 30,000 jobs in the Irish economy.

"The main challenges in getting a small business up and running are finding enough hours in the day or days in the week.

"You need to have a viable idea, research it well, ensure you can abide by and/or overcome all the regulations, negotiate the bureaucracy of applying for grants, permits, planning consents etc., never get disheartened, continue forward with the original plan when you encounter setbacks and importantly have a belief in what you are doing and why you are doing it. More than anything else the Food Academy gave me a good understanding of the systems and processes within the food retail sector, especially the multiples, and what is expected of

small, artisan food producers.

"Armed with this knowledge I could amend my processes on delivery and invoicing to fit in with them, and thus ensure I get paid in a timely fashion.

"It also was invaluable in giving me exposure to SuperValu store owners and Musgrave centrally.

"It was helpful, as have been the local enterprise office. However, in my opinion, more support should be given by central Government in the form of tax breaks and PRSI holidays for entrepreneurs starting a new business, and PRSI holidays for new job positions created. In order for the new business to grow it needs staff and the Government effectively puts a levy on that in the form of employers PRSI. In the early days, every penny counts and if the Government want to create jobs they need to support the small, viable, start up businesses as much as the big well established agri-businesses.

"Since the start of this year I have already taken on four employees and have a need for two more, and can see that need continuing over the coming months. In five years time, I would like us to be an established and well respected brand with a strong reputation for premium quality food products. I am optimistic about the economy. It is improving. There's still a lot of problems hanging over the economy and individuals as a result of what's happened over the past few years but I do see that people are beginning to spend a bit more and generally feel a bit more upbeat.

"I also see a strong demand for good quality locally produced food and that people are prepared to pay a little extra for something that's wholesome, satisfying, based upon good quality natural ingredients and free from anything artificial."

■ **West Cork Pies,**
Schull, Co Cork
■ **Product:** Pies,
pates, terrines

■ **Owner:** Paul
Phillips



Paul Phillips: Was given a good understanding through the Food Academy Start programme of the systems and processes within the retail sector.



SuperValu Listings To Create 300 Jobs

MORE than 300 jobs are being created in food business start-ups as a result of the Food Academy Start programme, a collaborative initiative between the Local Enterprise Offices, Bord Bia and SuperValu;

As stores are independently owned and operated, SuperValu retailers are able to source directly from local suppliers on a one-to-one basis, enabling these start-up food businesses to gain their first retail listings in stores in their community. SuperValu is also working with the companies involved to get their products listed in a cluster of nearby stores in order to set them on a long term path to supplying their network of 223 stores.

"These planned 300 jobs are predominantly in enterprises employing fewer than five people, mostly in start-up food businesses in urban and rural areas, and will further enhance the reputation of our food sector nationally and internationally," noted Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Simon Coveney TD, speaking at the Cork and Kerry Food Forum, one of Ireland's largest artisan food markets, recently.

Martin Kelleher, SuperValu Managing Director, noted how "more than 200 small food businesses will work with their local SuperValu retailers, resulting in sales worth €5m in the next year and leading to the creation of 300 jobs."

Welcoming the jobs

announcement, Aidan Cotter, Chief Executive, Bord Bia, commented, "Selection and participation in the Food Academy Start programme provides artisan food producers with direct access to expertise in branding, market research, purchasing, packaging and retail distribution. This invaluable insight helps support small companies through the challenging initial phases of growth and greatly enhances their chances of market success."



Pictured are Sean O'Sullivan, CEO LEO, South Cork; Minister for Agriculture, Food and Marine Simon Coveney TD; Martin Kelleher, Managing Director, SuperValu, and Aidan Cotter, CEO, Bord Bia.