

Unlocking Knowledge Transfer - Accessing World Class R&D through Ireland's Technology Gateways

In our latest *Unlocking Knowledge Transfer* webinar series, we got to hear about the practical application of knowledge transfer through the top-class network of R&D centres of excellence known as Technology Gateways. Guiding us through the role of the Technology Gateways, along with their benefit to businesses, was:

- Mark Whelan, Technology Gateway Programme Manager, Enterprise Ireland
- Tom Fitzmaurice, Applied IoT Gateway Cluster
- Tim Yeomans Applied IrishFoodTec Gateway Cluster
- Stephen Rooney, Engineering, Manufacturing and Design Gateway Cluster

Mark Whelan kicked off the discussion with an overview of just what the Technology Gateways are and the role they play. Drawn from Institutes of Technology and TU Dublin, there are 15 Technology Gateways located in every corner of Ireland. With 350 staff across all the Technology Gateways, each one has a particular specialisation (for example; internet of things, artificial intelligence and design) and, as Mark described, they work with industry to find problems which can be addressed by the research base. In particular, a focus on the close to market needs of industry means the Technology Gateways are expertly placed to assist businesses of all sizes with transforming an idea into a marketable product. Access to funding was also covered, with Enterprise Ireland Innovation Vouchers discussed.

The Technology Gateways are further organised into clusters, with research centres combining their knowledge to provide a suite of expertise for industry in need of cross-discipline research and innovation. Tom Fitzmaurice, from the Applied IoT Gateway Cluster, described them as consortiums from across the country with individual expertise and discussed GrazeBot as a prime example of a cluster working with industry to deliver a solution – in this case for the agritech sector. GrazeBot is an automated moving fence system which allocates fresh grass to grazing animals.

Stephen Rooney from EMD Ireland outlined in practical terms what the Technology Gateways and clusters can offer companies, and how the business development managers play a key role in managing relationships between industry and research. Areas like differentiating from your competition, identifying end-user needs and defining USPs are where the Technology Gateways can assist industry and the key, as Stephen remarked, was to always be challenging and asking questions.

Tim Yeomans from the Applied Irish FoodTec cluster, which includes seven Technology Gateways across Ireland, used the example of Nutramara who brought its seaweed products to market in just six months with the assistance of the cluster. Tim aptly summed up the discussion as Technology Gateways being a one-stop shop.

The next *Unlocking Knowledge Transfer* webinar will take place on September 1st and will discuss the topic of research collaboration. KTI will be in conversation with Donagh Buckley, CTO (R&D) Ireland CoE & Sr. Director Research at Dell EMC and Brendan Hogan Senior Vice President of Engineering & Operations at Aerogen Ltd to explore topics such as how companies choose their research partners, the decision making around committing to projects, how they assess the value of the relationship and more. This webinar will touch all aspects of the collaboration chain from first contact through to contract and on to project delivery. Register [here](#) to join the discussion.