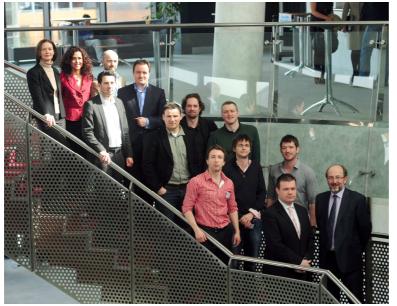# DCU Students Launch Connector Series to Kick-start High Tech Entrepreneurship

The first ever Connector Series event aimed at students wishing to create technology businesses was launched in DCU on April 4th. Organised by three students on the Masters in E-Commerce course, Gary Fox, Ed O'Riordan and John Walsh, with the assistance of Invent DCU and the DCU Careers Office, it is the first in a series of events organised by the team.

Launched by the DCU President Prof. Brian MacCraith with an opening address by Minister Alan Kelly TD, the event boasted the brightest minds in the tech sector in Ireland.

Speakers included Ciaran Crean founder of Micks Garage and tech investor Eoghan Jennings, who also runs Startupbootcamp in Dublin, along with Alan Foy, Chief Executive of Blueface Technologies and Gary Conroy, COO of Realex Payments.

Niall Harbison, one of the co-founders of the social media agency Simply Zesty, also traced his route from start-up to success. The start-up was acquired by TV and internet player UTV plc for about stg. £1.7m in early March this year.

Organiser Gary Fox said "We want to get students thinking about launching their own business and creating their own jobs instead of going down the traditional graduate job route. Another aim of the event is to forge links between different faculties, such as computing and business. It will hopefully create connections between students that could possibly lead to future enterprises. At the moment, we see a recurring trend where business students have an idea but no technical skills, such as programming, and the same is true of programmers who have all the skills but perhaps not the business acumen to make their idea commercially viable," he said.

Fox said the aim is to launch another event in early summer in conjunction with the DCU Ryan Academy that will again focus on the practical nature of starting a new entreprise for students. "It would see students coming together over a weekend and working together to try and kick start a few new business ideas," he said.

The event was organised with support from the DCU Careers Service, Invent DCU, RINCE Institute, DCU School of Computing and the DCU Ryan Academy.