While you have your hands full with the real work of tackling a research problem, Enterprise Ireland and our partners in your Technology Transfer Office are here to make sure your work has every opportunity to end up making a difference in use. Because we seek out research that may have a strong potential application, rather than waiting until a certain technology has been proven, we want to talk to researchers as early as possible. The first step? A cup of coffee.

The Cup of Coffee

An informal, fifteen minute chat with your Technology Transfer Office contact could be the first step in bringing your research work to life. This meeting requires no preparatory work or commitment on your behalf but brings with it a high chance of receiving feasibility funding based on providing a description of your work and its potential application.

The Feedback

Next, Enterprise Ireland will respond through your Technology Transfer Office with feedback on your research and the options open to you. Because we have oversight of ongoing research work in all Irish third level institutions as well as a thorough knowledge of Irish companies involved in R&D, we are uniquely positioned to guide and advise researchers. This can include:

- An indication as to whether your research might hold some commercial potential;
- Advice on connecting with industry;
- Guidance in tailoring your work towards a particular application.

Feasibility Funding

If your research is found to show a potential application, the next step is to undertake a more comprehensive study to determine its feasibility. Again, Enterprise Ireland is on hand to provide ongoing support, guidance and advice to researchers. We work with researchers to help design their project in a way that suits their personal criteria and provides the best chance of success. We can also help researchers establish their connections with industry by providing introductions to appropriate companies or advising on business-related questions.

A feasibility grant of €15,000 is readily available once a potential application has been identified and we take a flexible and pragmatic attitude to how this is used. For example, consultants may be used to conduct the feasibility study, relieving the researcher of the time and effort involved. Complete confidentiality is assured throughout the process.

When should you make contact?

- Whatever your research work’s nature or stage
- Whatever the stage of your career
- Whether you are working alone or in a team
- Whether or not you have established feasibility
- Confidentiality assured
- No proof of concept necessary

80% of applicants qualify for feasibility funding

Further Support

Once the feasibility study has been completed, Enterprise Ireland is on hand to provide ongoing support, guidance and advice to researchers.
Globally there is enormous demand for sea urchin roe and, with assistance from Enterprise Ireland, researchers in UCC have developed a new, efficient way to farm the animals. Dr Gerry Mouzakitis and his team developed and patented the UrchinPlatter system which uses specially designed modular cages and tanks that allow the sea urchins to grow happily. Gourmet Marine spun out from University College Cork in 2008 to commercialise the technology. With funding from Enterprise Ireland and private investors, the company has completed successful academic and industry validation of the sea urchin farming system, including major trials in Chile, which is one of the world’s major producers. The company is now starting to tap into the global market for sea urchin farming (worth about €800m per year) by providing equipment, training and consultancy to seafood producers.

An innovative platform developed by Waterford-based company, FeedHenry, takes a lot of the hard work out of building and managing an app in the cloud. “We have a cloud-based mobile application platform,” explains CEO Cathal McGloin. “It allows anybody; a developer or business to build mobile app solutions in the cloud that will run on all smartphones and tablet devices from a single build.”

Leading edge technology developed at Dublin City University helps prevent defects in silicon wafers by shining pulses of light on the material and measuring the acoustic signal that comes back. Detecting this with a sophisticated microphone allows faults in the material to be picked up and classified as critical or tolerable. The method by which the light is delivered and the acoustics analysed is protected IP. The technology arose from breakthrough research at the Nanomaterials Processing Laboratory headed by Prof. Patrick McNally in DCU, and is now being developed for industry by spin-out Sonex Metrology Ltd. Sonex recently secured funding through Enterprise Ireland, private venture capital and angel investors, and the capital will allow the company to work with industry and develop more sophisticated prototypes.