

Bell Labs to establish major research and development centre in Ireland

June 30 2004

Ireland is set to become a world-leading location for research into engineering, manufacturing and value-chain technologies in the telecommunications sector as a result of a 69 million pounds investment programme agreed between Lucent Technologies' Bell Labs, IDA Ireland and Science Foundation Ireland.

The Tánaiste and Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment, Mary Harney T.D. announced today, Wednesday 30th June 2004 that the Government has agreed the proposal subject to EU approval.

Key to the project will be the establishment of a Bell Labs centre in Ireland. The centre will be a global headquarters for research into telecommunications and supply chain technologies and will be located at Lucent's facility in Blanchardstown, Dublin.

The investment will also include the establishment of the Centre for Telecommunications Value-Chain-Driven Research (CTVR) to be headquartered at Trinity College, Dublin.

Opportunities for up to 120 researchers will be created between the two centres.

The research to be undertaken in CTVR will focus on advancements in product engineering, manufacturing and value/supply chain techniques, tools and technologies. The expertise and know-how developed in the centre will facilitate, stimulate and encourage design and innovation and

allow for new products to be brought to the market more quickly and more efficiently. That expertise and know-how will be directly applicable to both multinational and indigenous companies engaged in the design, manufacture and operation of highly refined electronics products, including in the next generation of fixed and wireless communications networks.

The CTVR will involve eight other leading Irish Universities and Institutes of Technology, including the University of Limerick; NUI Maynooth; Dublin Institute of Technology; Institute of Technology Sligo; University College Dublin; Dublin City University and University College Cork and NMRC.

Researchers from both new centres will work together in tightly knit teams. The knowledge and expertise of some of Bell Lab's top talent will be available to the research teams and the global reach of Lucent Technologies will be important in bringing the research to fruition. The Bell Labs facility in Ireland will exploit the effective utilisation and commercialisation of innovations that will emerge from the CTVR.

Making the announcement, the Tánaiste said: "This project is one of the most significant direct investments by the State in a joint corporate and academic research project. The investment is a perfect fit with the Government's policy for the expansion of R&D and the attraction of high-calibre, knowledge-led activities into Ireland. The investment moves us a step closer to becoming a globally acknowledged world leader in next-generation engineering, manufacturing, telecommunications and related information technologies.

The Tánaiste congratulated IDA Ireland and SFI both of whom, she said, had been instrumental in bringing about the investment:

"Thanks to the efforts of SFI and IDA Ireland, we now have in this

country a major cluster of academic and industrial research facilities in the information and telecommunications technology sectors. The Trinity College-led centre will actively complement and underpin these activities," the Tánaiste said.

She continued: "The involvement of Lucent's Bell Labs is fundamental to the success of the project. It is one of the most renowned industrial research organisations in the world with a history of groundbreaking technology achievements, including the development of the transistor, mobile telephony and lasers - all inventions that have, over recent decades, transformed the way we live."

"Bell Labs has been granted over 30,000 US patents, and 11 of its researchers have won the Nobel Prize. Bell Labs continues to be granted an average of two new patents every working day," the Tánaiste said.

Seán Dorgan, CEO of IDA Ireland said: "As technology development and manufacturing becomes ever more complex, competitive advantage will go to those economies and locations that are centres of innovation and design, and the arrival of Bell Labs offers Ireland the opportunity of becoming one of these seats of power."

Dr. William C. Harris, Director General of SFI added: "Today's investment is further testament to SFI's commitment to supporting world-class research in Ireland. This investment will act both to attract additional industrial research initiatives into Ireland and as a catalyst for the creation of future technology start-ups in Ireland. Importantly, it signals the quality and potential of the academic research culture in Ireland and the skills and knowledge that Irish students will acquire through the CTVR," he added.

Dr. Jeff Jaffe, President, Research and Advanced Technologies, Bell Labs said: "Establishing a Bell Labs centre in Ireland signifies Lucent's

commitment to creating a long-term presence in this country, and indeed in Europe. Europe is a critical market for us, so it is appropriate that we create a research centre here dedicated to exploring ways that we can bring better, even more innovative products to market faster."

"Ireland is at the heart of Lucent's European supply chain operations, and the company currently employs 500 in Ireland as part of the approximately 5,000 employees in its operations across all of the major European countries," Dr Jaffe added.

Mike Devane, vice president and managing director of Lucent Technologies in Ireland said: "Bringing Bell Labs to Dublin is a major accomplishment. It is a welcome development of our Blanchardstown site that takes us to an exciting world of research. It is an excitement we share with the universities, the IDA and Science Foundation Ireland. "Given the history, tradition and success of Bell Labs, this world-class research centre will open up new possibilities for collaboration within Ireland and Europe and I look forward to working these relationships and making the centre a success."

An international peer review group, involving some of the best experts in the world in the technologies involved, evaluated and validated the proposal. Its report described the project as "an ambitious and well thought out undertaking with major potential benefits for Ireland. Its strategy merges with Ireland's vision of creating a knowledge intensive economy and a major win for Ireland is the establishment of the Bell Labs facility in Ireland."

The original press release can be found [here](#).

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