

PRESS RELEASE
16 September 2011

DCU Ryan Academy Welcomes Anthony Lawlor TD to Open Day for the Second Year of the Business Innovation Programme

The DCU Ryan Academy today held its final Open Day to recruit participants for the second year of its Business Innovation Programme which supports unemployed professionals to upskill and re-join the workforce.

The Academy, which is a non-profit partnership between DCU and the family of the late Tony Ryan, was delighted to welcome Deputy Anthony Lawlor TD, Kildare North and member of the Oireachtas Committee for Education, Jobs and Social Protection to the event.

In its first year, with 122 participants, BIP was a huge success. To date, over 50 per cent of participants have secured employment.

Speaking at the Open Day, Deputy Lawlor said, 'It is vitally important that we do everything we can to support programmes like the DCU Ryan Academy Business Innovation Programme, to help get people back in the workforce and promote new ways of doing business.

In the context of the current unemployment figures which stand at 14.5% and with over 40,000 people being forced to emigrate in the past year, the DCU Ryan Academy's Business Innovation Programme is exactly the type of support that is answering the needs of real people in difficulty in Ireland. I am deeply committed to doing all that I can to support their work.'

The programme, which is part of the Higher Education Authority's Springboard Initiative, harnesses the skills, experience and potential of unemployed professionals and is tailored to suit the hard and soft skill needs of those looking to up-skill and increase their employability.

Ann Horan, Chief Executive of the Academy said, "We are focussed on working with people to increase their employability. We want to build on the success of last year, where we have seen one third and counting of our participants back in the workforce".

"The only way we as a nation will recover is by developing and nurturing our best and our brightest people. Our aim at the Academy is to work with individuals and entrepreneurs to help them achieve their potential."

The course is 9 months part-time and incorporates academic classes with an innovation team placement with one of 40 host companies, where participants, while working with senior management, get the opportunity to put their existing and new skills into practice.

The DCU Ryan Academy is currently enrolling for the second year of the Programme and looks forward to welcoming the second year of participants on 26 September 2011.

Speaking at today's Open Day, past graduate and Kildare native, Mike Cosgrave said, 'The Business Innovation Programme taught me new skills and enabled me to learn and gain experiences in new areas. The Programme also challenged me to think in innovative and different ways.'

'As a result of the Programme, I developed a new network of contacts, gave myself an edge in the job market that I didn't have this time last year when I was facing into the abyss of unemployment.'

Past graduate Alan Flynn who also hails from Co. Kildare said, 'With the Business Innovation Programme you have a wonderful opportunity to refit your skills tool box and make yourself a far more marketable prospect. The programme also provides you with a wonderful opportunity to broaden your horizons.'

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About the Ryan Academy:

DCU Ryan Academy is a joint venture between Dublin City University and the family of the late Tony Ryan (Ryanair). Our mission is to promote an entrepreneurial mind-set and real innovation focus among Irish businesses and start-ups through training, supports and investment programmes. We aim to bridge a gap between academia and entrepreneurial practice through our unique partnership.

The Business Innovation Programme:

DCU Ryan Academy has developed the Business Innovation Programme to combine up-to-date knowledge and training in innovation, project management and market research with practical hands-on experience, including an in-company project placement.

Last year 122 professionals took part in the inaugural year of the Business Innovation Programme, and this year's course it looking for the same numbers. Participants come from a range of backgrounds including accountancy, engineering, architecture, marketing, teaching, operations, finance, IT and production.

With an average age of 44, the course is primarily focussed on those who may have come out of the professional environment after a long period in the workforce; BIP is tailored to suit the needs of those looking to up skill.

This is a 9 month part-time programme which incorporates on the job work experience and classes which are scheduled to enable participants to continue to seek work. BIP is approved as part of the Higher Education Authority's Springboard initiative.

http://www4.dcu.ie/ryanacademy/bip_about.shtml

Enrolment and Start Date:

The DCU Ryan Academy is currently enrolling for the Business Innovation Programme. Interested individuals can contact the Programme Manager Anne Marie Scott at +353 (1) 7006764 or annemarie.scott@ryanacademy.dcu.ie

The Programme will officially commence on 26 September at 3013 Lake Drive, Citywest Business Campus, Dublin 24.