



Two Tyndall teams competing for €1m SFI Future Innovator Prize

Minister for Business, Enterprise and Innovation, Heather Humphreys TD, and Minister of State for Training, Skills, Innovation, Research and Development, John Halligan TD, today announced the twelve teams, including two from Tyndall National Institute, in the running for the SFI Future Innovator Prize, a new challenge-based prize calling on researchers to develop innovative approaches to societal challenges facing Ireland. With five teams to be shortlisted in April of this year, an overall winning team will be announced in December and receive a prize award of €1 million, providing the opportunity to implement an innovative solution with potential to deliver significant impact to Irish society.

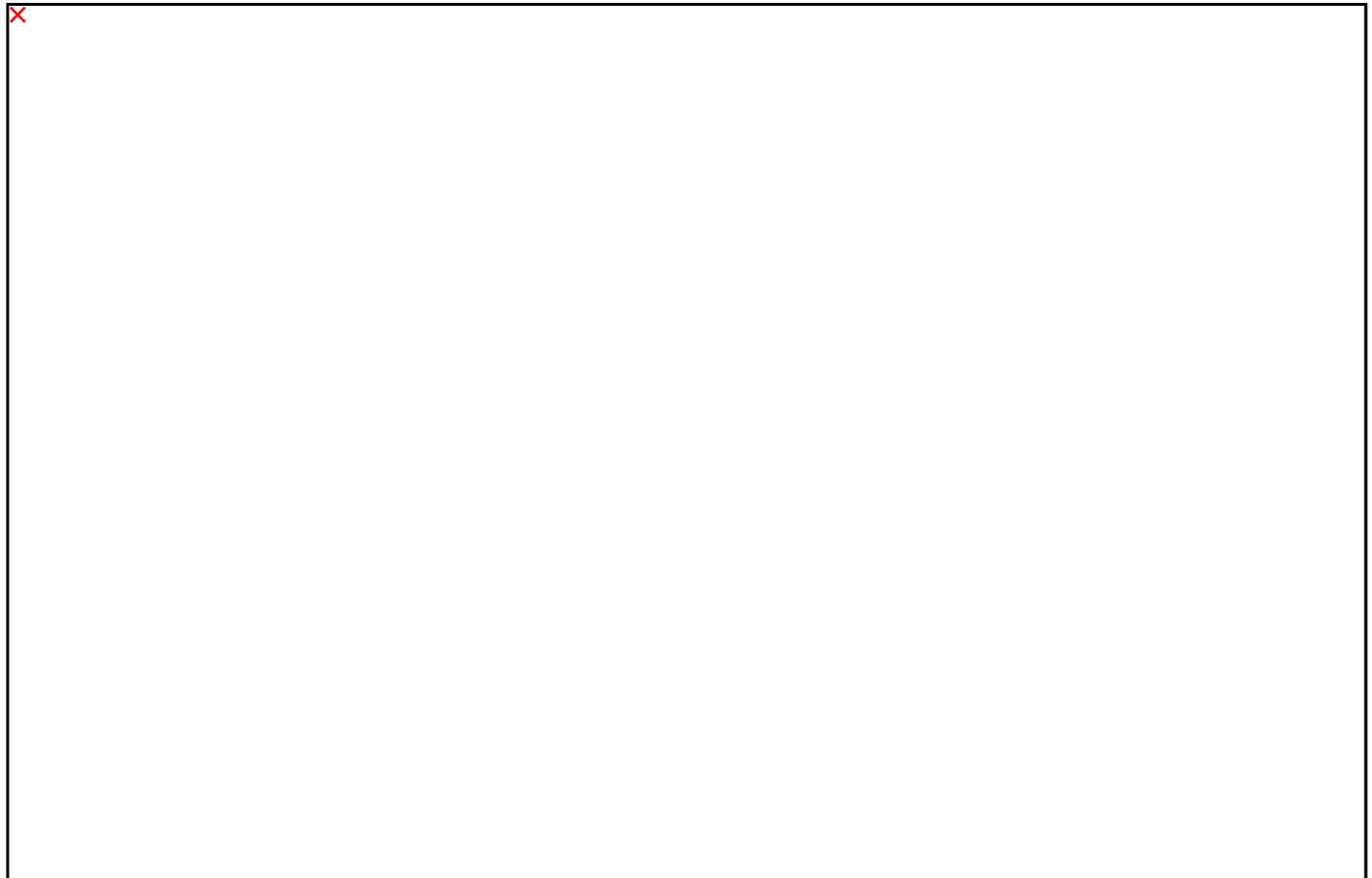
The teams from Tyndall will look at enabling better breast cancer diagnosis and creating eco-friendly and cost-effective super magnets for electric vehicles:

- **Development of a technology for clinicians to improve the breast cancer diagnostic pathway through real time point of care detection of breast disease**

Dr Eric Moore (Analytical Chemistry, Tyndall/UCC); Mr Martin O'Sullivan (Lead Surgeon, BreastCheck Southern Unit and UCC); Liosa O'Sullivan (Patient Advocate)

- **A novel sustainable electric motor using highgrade permanent magnets based on common metallic elements**

Dr Ansar Masood (Physics and Material Science, Tyndall); Dr Paul McCloskey (Material Science, Microelectronics and Chemical Engineering, Tyndall); Wassim Derguech (Senior Software Engineer, Jaguar Land Rovers)



Congratulating the competing teams, Minister for Business, Enterprise and Innovation, Heather Humphreys TD, said: *“The Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation launched the SFI Future Innovator Prize with Science Foundation Ireland to encourage bright minds across the country to work together to identify major challenges facing Ireland’s society, and to propose creative and impactful solutions to them. It is very exciting to enter into the next phase of the competition with twelve teams of diverse and interdisciplinary individuals. Their innovative ideas are of a superb standard and I am confident that ultimately, the prize award of €1 million will support research that will provide Ireland with positive, tangible impact.”*

The SFI Future Innovator Prize, funded by the Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation through Science Foundation Ireland, is part of an overall government plan to cultivate challenge-based funding in Ireland. Challenge-based funding is a solution focused approach to funding research that uses prizes and other incentives to direct innovation activities at specific problems. The SFI Future Innovator Prize challenges the country’s best and brightest unconventional thinkers and innovators to create novel, potentially disruptive technologies in collaboration with societal stakeholders and end-users.

Minister of State for Training, Skills, Innovation, Research and Development, John Halligan TD, said: *“The excellent standard of the projects demonstrates the importance of continuing to implement competitive and challenge-based funding in the Irish ecosystem, which will ensure that obstacles which impact the everyday lives and the future of our citizens are addressed in novel ways. I want to congratulate each of the teams for succeeding to this phase of the competition, and to wish them all the very best of luck with the next stage.”*

The 12 proposed projects aim to address problems across a number of strategic challenge areas such as sustainable manufacturing, reducing the impact of packaging, novel technologies for life sciences and medicine, improved outcome for patients of such illnesses as cataracts, osteoarthritis, cancer, Epidermolysis bullosa (EB) and sepsis, minimisation of mining emissions and the cost of electric vehicles, pain management, and improved healthcare delivery.

Professor Mark Ferguson, Director General of Science Foundation Ireland and Chief Scientific Adviser to the Government of Ireland, said: *“I am pleased to congratulate the twelve teams who have made it to this stage of the SFI Future Innovator Prize competition. Challenge-based funding is of strategic importance to Ireland, ensuring that publicly-funded research can address significant national and global issues including environmental protection, disease diagnosis and treatment, optimal healthcare, and developing methods of sustainable manufacturing. Competitive funding strategies empower innovators to collaborate in unconventional ways on creative ideas that can ultimately be put into practice, and the proposed projects which we are announcing today are an excellent reflection of that. I would like to commend each team on their hard work and dedication, and to wish them every success in the rest of the competition.”*

The competing teams are led by academic researchers and “Societal Impact Champions” drawn from a range of disciplines and stakeholder groups such as industry and civil society in an effort to support convergent and collaborative problem-solving.