

**IBEC-CBI Joint Business Council and Dissolving Boundaries Press Release
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JBC and Dissolving Boundaries promote enterprise skills among students using new technologies for learning

The IBEC-CBI Joint Business Council (JBC) and Dissolving Boundaries today hosted a showcase of cross border schools' enterprise projects at University of Ulster and NUI Maynooth, linked by video-conference. The aim of the initiative, which is part financed by funding under INTERREG IVA is to promote enterprise skills among primary and second level students using new technologies for learning. The project activities are firmly embedded in the curriculum and collaborative practice on the part of both teachers and students are central to the overall learning experience.

Speaking at the event, Paula O'Dwyer, JBC Projects Manager said: "Technology is a crucial component of teaching and learning for the 21st century and ICT is an enabler for economic growth, development and competitiveness. The showcase event forms part of a rigorous evaluation being undertaken of teachers' and pupils' perception of the quality of learning and collaborative experience".

"Collaboration at this level will lead to greater student mobility in the future with students gaining a better understanding of the opportunities to live, work and study that exist on both sides of the border. A vibrant all-island economy will be built on a culture of collaboration, creativity, entrepreneurship and innovation", she said.

Roger Austin, Dissolving Boundaries Programme Director Northern Ireland said: "We have very much valued the support of JBC for this part of the Dissolving Boundaries programme; the use of mac laptops and digital video cameras has added a new dimension to the work we have been doing with the Departments of Education in Belfast and Dublin since 1999".

"Teachers and students have made a very good start to this two year scheme with the help of local entrepreneurs and showing how cross-border business teams can develop new ideas and bring them to the market place", he said.

Angela Rickard, Dissolving Boundaries Programme Director Republic of Ireland said: "One of the key elements of the programme is teacher professional development. Today's event shows that with even a small amount of support and encouragement teachers will use technology very creatively in their classrooms. Pupils' imaginations are ignited and the result is a very effective and enjoyable learning experience for both pupils and teachers".

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Note to Editors:

The Dissolving Boundaries Programme is funded jointly by the Department of Education and Science, Dublin and the Department of Education in Northern Ireland and managed by the School of Education, University of Ulster and the Education Department, NUI Maynooth. Dissolving Boundaries has ten years' experience of successfully managing Information and Communications (ICT) based projects in primary, post primary and special schools. The programme is designed to enable young people to use ICT to work together, and through this process, to improve their ICT skills, develop a deeper understanding of the topics studied and a better appreciation of cultural similarities and differences. Since 1999 some 500 schools, 600 teachers and thousands of pupils have been involved in the programme.