

## **Tánaiste Launches National Code of Practice for Managing Intellectual Property from Publicly Funded Research**

### **“Turning Research into Wealth”**

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Tánaiste and Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment, Ms. Mary Harney T.D. today (7 April 2004) launched Ireland’s first **National Code of Practice for Managing Intellectual Property from Publicly Funded Research**, which was developed by the Irish Council for Science Technology and Innovation (ICSTI).

The Code addresses each aspect of the management and transfer of research and development results from universities, institutes of technology and public research institutions to the commercial market place. In particular, it stresses the need for a real commitment from public research organisations and funders to the timely exploitation of research and to ensuring that the necessary resources and expertise are provided for commercialisation.

"Our substantial research investments will generate many new discoveries and applications with commercial and industrial potential. Our aim must be to excel at translating these ideas and applications into the wealth generating commercial world and boost our competitiveness", the Tánaiste said.

ICSTI’s objective in developing the Code of Practice is to provide certainty, consistency and confidence to researchers, industry, public research organisations, research funders and the investment sector in the national approach to the commercialisation of 100% publicly funded research.

The Government has committed over €2.48 billion to research in the National Development Plan, 2000-2006. A radical change is required to ensure that the maximum socio-economic benefits are achieved from this investment through

developing a framework for systematically identifying, protecting and commercialising intellectual property (IP) from publicly funded research. The commercialisation of research is currently below international comparator countries. In 1999, Ireland held approximately 13 patents per million population compared to Finland (75 per million), Denmark (45 per million) and the EU, the US and Japan at 35, 52 and 90 per million respectively.

“Transparent and consistent procedures for managing intellectual property are key to transferring the knowledge generated in our public research organisations to industry and therefore to commercial reality” the Tánaiste added.

Dr. Walsh commented that by building a robust framework for managing and commercialising intellectual property, Ireland has an excellent opportunity to develop its reputation and be seen as a particularly attractive location in which to do research. He highlighted the fact that the National Code of Practice for Managing Intellectual Property from Publicly Funded Research is the first step in a process designed to strengthen Ireland’s commercialisation framework. He also highlighted the fact that the quest for greater socio-economic benefits from publicly funded research has led the US and other EU countries to examine their IP management systems and it is timely that Ireland should now provide clarity with regard to its approach.

“The Code of Practice for 100% Publicly Funded Research provides the framework within which the results from the significant recent investment in research under the NDP can be effectively exploited in Ireland. It is critical that all public research organisations and funding bodies now adopt the Code and take appropriate steps to ensure its implementation”, added Dr Walsh.

At the Launch, the Tánaiste announced that she has requested that the Council embark immediately on the next phase of work to develop guidelines for the management of intellectual property from public-private co-funded research in consultation with industry, research funding bodies, public research organisations and the financial community and to report before the end of this year.

Specifically the Code provides guidance on the following areas:

- **IP Management Strategy:** Universities, Institutes of Technology and public research organisations should have a written policy on technology transfer and commercialisation of research;
- **Technology Transfer Offices (TTOs):** TTOs should be an integral part of universities and research organisations and should be charged with advising on marketing and negotiating commercialisation opportunities;
- **Identification and Disclosure of IP:** Formal and informal procedures should be established in research organisations to ensure the timely identification, disclosure and evaluation of research with commercial opportunities;
- **Protection and Ownership of IP:** Where intellectual property is to be protected, this should be done in a timely manner and ownership should be vested in the research organisation. The Code emphasises that the protection of intellectual property (IP) is merely a step in the commercialisation process and is not an end in itself;
- **Commercialisation:** Technology transfer should happen in a timely manner through partnership between the technology transfer office, relevant inventors and commercial partners;
- **Sharing of benefits:** Each institution should have a published incentives policy, including provisions for sharing of benefits with inventors.