
The winners from the NovaUCD Innovation Awards

NovaUCD has announced the winners of their annual innovation awards, with seven awards being presented.

Dr Martin O'Reilly and Julian Eberle of Output Sports and Bobby Healy of Manna, the drone delivery 'as-a-service' company, were among those recognised for their achievements throughout 2019 at the NovaUCD Innovation Awards.

The NovaUCD Innovation Awards were due to take place in March, but organisers were forced to cancel the event due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

A total of seven awards were presented during a virtual event, including the main 2019 NovaUCD Innovation Award, highlighting the successes made in areas of commercialisation, consultancy, entrepreneurship and the promotion of an innovation culture, by members of the UCD community.

"I would like to congratulate all those who have received NovaUCD 2019 Innovation Awards," said professor Orla Feely, UCD vice-president for Research, Innovation and Impact.

"These Awards were established to recognise and highlight the successes being made by members of our research and entrepreneurial community across the University. I wish them all continuing success in the years ahead as they continue to deliver impact for the economy and society through their commercialisation, consultancy, entrepreneurial and innovation activities."

The winners

Co-founder of SiriusXT, Dr Fergal O'Reilly, collected the main 2019 NovaUCD Innovation Award, which recognises excellence in innovation and the successes achieved in the commercialisation of UCD research or other intellectual activity over a number of years. He has worked as a researcher in the UCD School of Physics since 2005.

SiriusXT, a UCD School of Physics spin-out company, has created the first commercial, laboratory-based, soft x-ray microscope which can produce high resolution 3D images of cells and tissue that cannot be produced any other way.

The microscopes are being marketed primarily to researchers working in disease research and drug discovery and can be used by disease researchers, pharmaceutical companies, biotechnologists and clinicians to aid the understanding of disease pathways, protein-drug interactions and bio-engineering processes.

<https://youtu.be/WHQpe8tU69Y>

"I am delighted and deeply honoured to receive the 2019 NovaUCD Innovation Award," said Dr O'Reilly. "I am extraordinarily lucky to be part of a group of colleagues in the UCD Spectroscopy Group, UCD School of Physics and in UCD generally who make our combined efforts in soft x-ray research such a productive pleasure."

The award-winning company has raised over €10 million in grant and equity funding to date.

Output Sports took home the NovaUCD Spin-out of the Year Award. Output Sports has developed Output // Capture, an end-to-end solution that can test multiple components of athletic performance and track training programmes with a single wearable sensor.

<https://youtu.be/DFKqge47rHc>

By the end of 2019, Output Sports prototypes were being used by over 40 professional teams including international and Premier League football teams, professional rugby organisations and Olympic athletes in Ireland, the UK and USA. In March, the company closed a €1.3 million seed funding round.

The 2019 NovaUCD Invention of the Year Award went to professor Madeleine Lowery, from the School of Electronic and Electrical Engineering. Her invention is a new approach to rate the decline in motor function for neuro-degenerative disorders such as Parkinson's and Huntington's disease.

<https://youtu.be/wh9NfqR29Po>

It utilises a discreet wearable device incorporating digital signal processing to accurately measure and characterise finger tapping movement in patients, which are currently commonly assessed visually to assess motor function.

The recipient of the NovaUCD Founder of the Year Award was Bobby Healy, founder and CEO of Manna, the drone delivery 'as-a-service' company, who in 2019 closed a \$5.2 million (€4.6 million) seed funding round, led by US-based Dynamo VC.

<https://youtu.be/FmxkqQwq47s>

On receiving the award, Bobby Healy said; "It is a pleasure to receive this recognition from such an

esteemed institution as UCD. Manna is indeed a highly innovative business, and a team-led business, so I graciously accept this recognition on behalf of the whole founding team in Ireland and Wales.”

Other winners included professor Suzi Jarvis, claiming the Innovation Champion of the Year Award, professor Eoin Casey and Dr Eoin Syron, who won the Licence of the Year Award, and associate professor Francesco Pilla, who picked up the Consultancy of the Year Award.

By Stephen Larkin

Published: 26 June, 2020