

## Future Voices: How Ireland's PhDs will Enable National Recovery



*From left to right: Mr. Aebhric McGibney Dublin Chamber of Commerce and Panel member, Mr. Aidan Quilligan, TCD PhD student and Future Voices Competition 2011 Runner up, Baroness Nuala O'Loan (Panel Chair), Mr. Ciarán O'Carroll, NUIM PhD Student and Future Voices Competition 2011 Winner, Mr. Tom Boland, Higher Education Authority and panel member, Mr. Peter Finnegan, Dublin City Council and panel member.*

To exhibit the research of the PhD students in the Dublin Region Higher Education Alliance (DRHEA) Graduate Education partnership and the potential impact of their research on the Ireland's national recovery, the DRHEA Future Voices Competition was launched in June 2011.

PhD students from all disciplines were invited to submit an abstract and a poster outlining how their research will enable national recovery. There were 67 applications from the participating institutions of the DRHEA Graduate Education Strand. The applications were assessed on the quality of the abstract and poster, the relevance to the theme of national recovery, and the originality of the submission. 10 applications were shortlisted.

Opened by Minister for Education and Skills, Mr Ruairi Quinn on Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> September in Bedford hall, Dublin Castle, the 10 shortlisted applicants made 3-minute presentations of their work to an Assessment Panel chaired by Baroness Nuala O'Loan. The other members of the panel were Mr Tom Boland (Higher Education Authority), Mr Aebhric McGibney (Dublin Chamber of Commerce) and Mr Peter Finnegan (Dublin City Council). The student posters were also available for viewing in the Balcony room adjacent to the main auditorium

The panel has to assess the quality of the poster, the quality of the 3 minute presentation and the potential impact of the research on national recovery.



Left to right: Mr Ciarán O'Carroll, winner of the Future Voices Competition 2011 and Mr Ruairi Quinn, Minister for Education and Skills

The winner was Ciarán O'Carroll a PhD student in the Department of chemistry NUI, Maynooth with his presentation entitled *Crustaceans: What have they done for us lately?* Mr O Carroll received the first prize of €500 and an Apple iPad. The runner up was Mr Aidan Quilligan, a PhD student in the Department of Civil, Structural and Environmental Engineering, Trinity College Dublin with his presentation entitled '*Feasibility of Concrete Wind Turbine Towers*'. Mr Quilligan received a prize of an Apple iPad.

Funded by the Higher Education Authority's Strategic innovation Fund, the overall aim of the DRHEA Graduate Education Strand is to radically reposition the Dublin region as an international centre for graduate and in particular, doctoral education, by combining the strengths of the participating institutions, namely University College Dublin, Dublin City University, National University of Ireland Maynooth, Trinity College Dublin, Dublin Institute of Technology, Institute of Technology Tallaght.

The 10 shortlisted candidates were Aidan Quilligan (TCD), Aisling Sheridan (UCD), Ciarán O'Carroll (NUIM), Caitriona Logue (UCD), Graham O'Neill (UCD), Joseph Doyle ( TCD), Lucy Corcoran and Christine Power (TCD), Paul Harris (TCD), Sarah-Jane Cullinane (DCU) and William Sheridan (TCD).



Strategic Innovation Fund (SIF): innovation, reform and quality enhancement

