

Summary Report

Impact Assessment of Skillnet Innovation Exchange





Ireland's Marketplace for Innovation

Since its launch in 2022, Skillnet Innovation Exchange has created a collaborative platform where large businesses facing digital transformation challenges are connected with innovative companies that can fast-track the solutions.

In just three years, it has generated over €5 million in SME deal flow, delivered 6,000 training days and built a nationwide partner network, creating a vibrant and sustainable innovation ecosystem.

An independent impact assessment by KHSK Economic Consultants confirms that Skillnet Innovation Exchange is delivering tangible results, supporting business growth and strengthening Ireland's competitiveness.

Measuring Impact

Skillnet Innovation Exchange has quickly become a cornerstone of Ireland's innovation ecosystem. Its model combines corporate challenge statements, SME capability building and tailored supports to accelerate the adoption of innovation. Impact has been delivered in the following ways:

- ▶ **€5 million in deal revenue** generated for SMEs through 30+ contracts signed
- ▶ **70+ innovation challenges published**, streamlining how corporates source solutions.
- ▶ **6,000 training days** delivered, with a strong focus on sales and commercial skills
- ▶ **50+ national and regional events** per annum facilitating learning and networking
- ▶ **A nationwide partner footprint**, ensuring impact is felt across every region.

Its success is not just measured in numbers. SMEs report access to growth opportunities and greater capability to engage with prospective customers. Large businesses benefit from faster access to new solutions.

In terms of national competitiveness, Irish firms are now providing services that would previously have been imported with new employment being created in Ireland.

6000
TRAINING
DAYS

1500
PARTICIPANTS

€5m
IN DEAL
REVENUE

70+
CHALLENGES
PUBLISHED

Competitive Advantage through Collaborative Innovation

Collaborative innovation promotes continuous innovation, accelerates technology adoption, supports regional economic resilience and enhances the competitiveness of Irish businesses.

SME Growth

- ▶ Access to new commercial opportunities through structured engagement with corporate buyers.
- ▶ Enhanced market understanding, supporting product development and stimulating innovation.
- ▶ Reduced cost and time required to secure new contracts.
- ▶ Talent and capability development in commercial skills and sales.
- ▶ Best practice in proposals, pitching and procurement.
- ▶ Collaboration with other SMEs, forming partnerships that expand market reach.

Corporate Innovation

- ▶ Low-risk engagement model offers a proven framework to publish challenges and engage with innovative SMEs.
- ▶ Improved understanding of the solutions marketplace and early access to emerging technologies.
- ▶ Accelerated innovation adoption, supporting digital transformation and operational efficiency.

Industry Initiatives

Digital for Sport

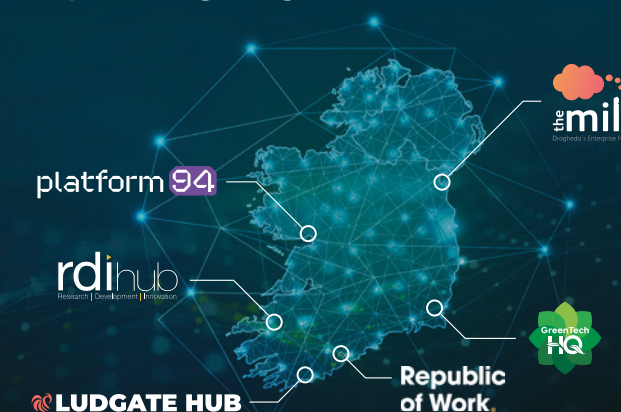
In partnership with Sport Ireland

DISCOVERY EXCHANGE

In partnership with Research Ireland

DIGITAL FOR SUSTAINABILITY

Expanding Regional Network



Policy Alignment:

Supporting national priorities in

COMPETITIVENESS

TALENT DEVELOPMENT

DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

REGIONAL GROWTH

SUSTAINABILITY

ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Deals Done

To date, Skillnet Innovation Exchange has facilitated over 30 deals. There are a number of instances where proposed solutions are working their way through the evaluation process with the likelihood of more deals. In addition, some challenges have led to ongoing collaboration between firms with numerous repeat deals. Many SMEs, having gained initial access to corporate procurement and successfully completed deals are well positioned to win repeat business. The important virtual asset that has been created in the form of the Skillnet Innovation Exchange network can continue to be leveraged to create value for members.



**Nestbox +
Nuálach Automation**
ROBOTICS & AUTOMATION



**Cycling Ireland +
Fit2Trade**
DIGITAL FOR SPORT



**Intersport Elverys +
Energy Elephant**
SUSTAINABILITY



**Astellas +
Pro-Reliability Solutions**
COMPLIANCE MANAGEMENT



**Gas Networks Ireland +
Cation Consulting**
SOFTWARE SOLUTION



**Cork County Council +
Driver Focus**
COMPLIANCE MANAGEMENT



**Expleo +
Clarke Analytics**
AI POWERED TRAINING



**Horse Sport Ireland +
Miagen**
DIGITAL FOR SPORT

*For a full list of deals and collaborations facilitated by Skillnet Innovation Exchange, see deals done at www.theinnovationexchange.ie

Future Ambition

With strong foundations and a proven model, Skillnet Innovation Exchange is ready to scale its impact further.

- ▶ **Empower more SMEs** to grow revenue, create jobs, and strengthen competitiveness.
- ▶ **Enable more corporates** to adopt innovative solutions and drive efficiencies.
- ▶ **Develop initiatives** that address industry's most pressing challenges.
- ▶ **Deepen the ecosystem** across the regions and potentially across the island of Ireland.

In just three years, Skillnet Innovation Exchange has proven that structured innovation marketplaces can drive real economic and social value. With momentum growing, and in partnership with its state and industry partners, Skillnet Innovation Exchange is well placed to help Ireland become one of the world's leading innovation hubs.



www.theinnovationexchange.ie