

Dún Laoghaire's Digital Transformation

Summary of the Action Plan for the creation
of the Digital Dún Laoghaire Cluster



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An initiative of Dún Laoghaire Business Improvement District



**Mary Mitchell
O'Connor TD**

Minister for Jobs,
Enterprise and Innovation
Honorary Patron to
Digital Dún Laoghaire

I warmly welcome the Action Plan for the creation of the Digital Dún Laoghaire Cluster. Earlier this year, I published the Action Plan for Jobs 2017. It sets out in detail the actions to be taken by all Government Departments and State agencies this year to support job creation. The Plan focused on new opportunities arising from the digitalisation of the economy and society. I believe strongly that the successful transition to a digital economy is essential for boosting a more inclusive and sustainable growth for our towns, cities and regions.

The best way to support job creation in towns and villages across the country is to support agencies and grassroots up organisations within each region to build on the particular strengths and assets of their area and create new job strategies and projects. Digital Dún Laoghaire is such an organisation and I am delighted to be Honorary Patron to this exciting initiative.

Dún Laoghaire is an ideal location for a digital cluster. 56% of the labour force in Dún Laoghaire Rathdown (DLR) County is composed of the professional, managerial and technical workers necessary to create strong scaling digital companies. The town itself has unparalleled public transport links, a supportive County Council and the Dún Laoghaire Business Improvement District (BID). It is the second largest location for start-ups in the Dublin region and over 70 digital companies are already located here.

My own Department's agencies have played their role in the growth of the digital sector in the county with 389 Enterprise Ireland and 38 IDA supported companies located in DLR. In addition, as a result of direct intervention by the Local Enterprise Office DLR, there was a net gain of 166 jobs in the county in 2016. I congratulate the Digital Dún Laoghaire steering group for their strategy to digitally transform Dún Laoghaire into the Digital, Creative and Technology Hub for the region.

This strategy has the potential to futureproof the town through building its digital ecosystem and the companies this supports. In turn these companies have the potential to create in excess of 450 jobs over the course of the next two years. I wish the team behind this Action Plan ongoing success in transforming Dún Laoghaire.



Anthony Quigley

Chairman of the Dún Laoghaire
Business Improvement District

Our strategy is to ensure that Dún Laoghaire continues to be one of Ireland's most progressive and entrepreneurial towns. As a digital centre, we are now in a position to attract both high growth SME's and corporate organisations to base themselves in the area. The goal of Digital Dún Laoghaire is to build on this strength and to further develop an even stronger cluster of digital companies, bringing with it increased employment, innovation and urban renewal.

This Action Plan articulates how we can help businesses to grow and scale by capitalising on the ongoing revolution that the digital economy brings, along with the many advantages that Dún Laoghaire has to offer to the business community.



THE FIRST 12 MONTHS

DIGITAL
DUN LAOGHAIRE

Our goal is to help Dun Laoghaire Town become a digital hub for jobs, innovation and urban rejuvenation

An initiative of DÚN LAOGHAIRE TOWN

OUR OUTPUTS

EVENTS

9 events with over 550 attendees

THE OFFICIAL LAUNCH

September 2016



Minister Mitchell O'Connor speaks at the official launch of Digital Dun Laoghaire in the Lexicon



The launch discussion panel comprised senior representatives from DLRCC, Enterprise Ireland, BOI, Pulsate and the IEDR

MEETUPS IN STARBUCKS

JANUARY TOPIC

New Year
New Start
New Business
How to get started



THE PANEL



"I've moved back to Dun Laoghaire from the States recently and this meetup was really helpful to connect me with startup supports"

Susan McKeown

FEBRUARY TOPIC

How bank funding can support the growth of your digital business



THE PANEL



"Excellent event as I am working on growing my new digital business and it was great to hear the insights of these experts."

Stefano Ceresa

MARCH TOPIC

Why 'good' design is essential to growing your digital business



John Moore
CEO, Clickworks



David Smith
MD, Head of Faculty Tech, IADT



Brian Cleary
MD, BOI Payment Acceptance

THE PANEL

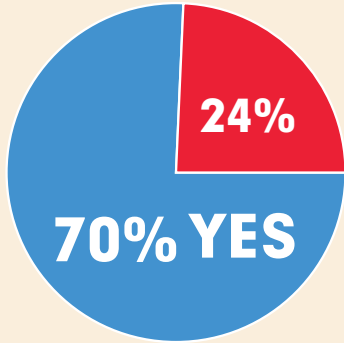


"It's great to see the growing profile of Dun Laoghaire as a destination for design."

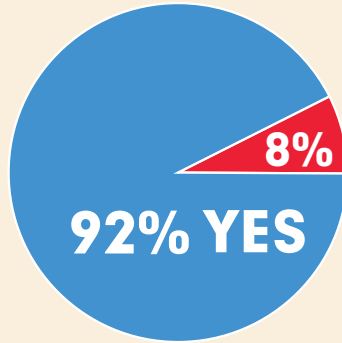
Barry O'Connor

SUPPORT FROM DIGITAL COMPANIES IN THE TOWN

Are you aware of the Digital Dun Laoghaire initiative?



Do you feel Digital Dun Laoghaire could be helpful to growing your company?



Digital Dún Laoghaire Cluster Survey (2016)

COMMUNITY BUILDING

NEW  **Coder Dojo Launched**



NEWS **MENTIONS IN THE MEDIA**
10 including
IRISH TECH NEWS
BizPlus
BUSINESS WORLD

STRATEGIC PLANS

"Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County Council will identify and promote Dún Laoghaire town as a new Digital, Creative and Technology Hub for the region in partnership with Digital Dún Laoghaire, Dún Laoghaire BID & IADT."

Dublin Regional Enterprise Strategy 2017-2019



"Our action plan targets achievable game changing projects that will accelerate our town's transformation to a digital hub for our region."

Action Plan for the Digital Dun Laoghaire Cluster March 2017



OUR INPUTS



12 steering group meetings in the DLR Lexicon

Guest speakers included



Steering Group Members



Inspiration



“Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County Council will identify and promote Dún Laoghaire town as a new Digital, Creative and Technology Hub for the region in partnership with Digital Dún Laoghaire, Dún Laoghaire BID & IADT.”
Dublin Regional Enterprise Strategy 2017-2019

Executive Summary

The Digital Dún Laoghaire initiative was established by the Dún Laoghaire Business Improvement District in 2016 with the objective of putting digital entrepreneurship at the heart of the urban regeneration of Dún Laoghaire town. Based on a strong collaboration of the town’s public and private sector stakeholders the Digital Dún Laoghaire steering group is working to create the conditions for businesses to grow and generate increased innovation, digital business activity and jobs in our town.

We are entering the era of digital transformation, what many experts have called the next industrial revolution. Digital is one of Ireland’s fastest growing sectors of the economy and is increasingly the unifying force behind all industries. From retail to medical, financial to educational, increasing levels of activity of all types are becoming digital rather than physical. This rapidly changing landscape brings challenges and opportunities for our town. The challenge of ever increasing amounts of retail being done virtually is coming at the same time that software automation of business processes is reducing the footfall of staff formerly working in business activities in the town. Insurance brokers, travel agents, banking, even driving in to town to pay your bills at the local electricity or county council office has all but disappeared from our routine reasons to visit town centres.

A collaborative, cross industry response to these challenges has been hampered to date by a lack of a coordinated response from the digital companies located in Dún Laoghaire. The formation of business activities into strong clusters is proven to improve the chances of success for the hub (in terms of job creation, attraction of talent and new companies) and the companies in it (in terms of profitability and market share). Those regions that successfully embrace the digital agenda, and the proven benefits of economic clusters, will be the leaders in this new ‘Internet of Everything’ era. The scale of the opportunity digital offers is clear from the experience of other localities that have put digital entrepreneurship at the heart of their strategy for urban renewal. International success stories include Tech City in London and Dundee in Scotland while examples nearer to home include Skibbereen’s Ludgate Centre and Galway’s rapidly growing digital cluster.

Despite recent challenges to the town centre, Dún Laoghaire has served as a focal point for the greater Dublin region for almost two centuries. When assessing Dún Laoghaire’s potential

to form a digital cluster it has the advantages of being part of a city in terms of public transport links, close proximity to an intense concentration of the world’s most influential international technology corporations, value for money in the available office space, strong local services and the right blend of highly skilled staff in the locality. Added to this it has the quality of life benefits of being one of Ireland’s top maritime towns with the iconic DLR LexIcon building at its heart.

With the support of key stakeholders such as the Dún Laoghaire BID, Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County Council and IADT, the existing foot print of 70+ digital companies in the town can rapidly grow both in size and number as the projects in this action plan are implemented. This growth has the potential to create in excess of 450 new jobs in the coming 24 months.

We must be ambitious at a time when the geopolitical landscape is undergoing upheaval in the US and the EU post Brexit and set ourselves the goal of becoming the innovation hub for the south side of the Dublin region. Our strategy seeks to position Dún Laoghaire as a pivotal hub for commerce and innovation for the region. In this document we detail an action plan which includes a number of projects that will directly support the growth of a strong digital cluster. This cluster will help improve the quality of life in Dún Laoghaire town for its businesses and residents. Thanks to the significant spillover benefits associated with clusters it will embrace the entire community providing a balanced outcome for all stakeholders in our town.

We look forward to working with these stakeholders to futureproof Dún Laoghaire as a hub for jobs and innovation, a town that fosters the ambitions of all sectors of our community. In time we hope Dún Laoghaire will again become a port of entry for Ireland, a 21st century destination for tech scaleups making their first entry into the European Market from a supportive base in our town.

This document is a summary report of the detailed strategy document agreed by our Digital Dún Laoghaire steering group in March 2017.

Eoin Costello
Sven Spollen-Behren

Introduction to the Digital Dún Laoghaire initiative

The goal of Digital Dún Laoghaire is to support the growth ambitions of digital entrepreneurs in Dún Laoghaire through the creation of a strong digital cluster connecting the digital entrepreneurs of the town with each other and the resources of the town and region.

The key objective in formulating the Digital Dún Laoghaire strategy for the creation of a strong digital cluster in Dún Laoghaire Town is to encourage firms to work collectively to promote and help generate increased digital business activity in the town.

This proposed action plan focuses on helping digital businesses to scale in our town based on leveraging strong connections with the corporates and research institutes in our locality. By capitalising on the many inherent advantages available in the locality it is expected that the cluster will be well positioned to take advantage of the digital business revolution that is currently taking place globally.

THE OBJECTIVES OF DIGITAL DÚN LAOGHAIRE

- Objective 1. Increasing Dún Laoghaire's profile as a digital town.*
- Objective 2. Attracting digital companies to Dún Laoghaire.*
- Objective 3. Supporting the growth of digital companies in the town through building a digital cluster for the jobs, innovation and urban renewal this will create.*
- Objective 4. Implementing the Strategy/Actions/Organisation necessary to support the successful delivery of the above objectives.*

The economic challenges Dún Laoghaire faces

2017 sees increasing reach of economic forces that will increasingly shape the sustainability and vibrancy of town centres like Dún Laoghaire. These forces fall under a number of headings listed below:

1. Increasing amounts of retail are being done online instead of in shops - Any consumer with a smartphone now has the ability to make purchases anywhere from suppliers in every part of the world. Shopping is becoming increasingly mobile because two-thirds of Irish people now own a smartphone and tablet penetration in Ireland is at 40%. The IE Domain Registry's 'Digital Health Index' Q4 2016 (a quarterly research report that seeks to provide comprehensive analysis of the quantity and quality of digital assets, like websites and social media profiles, owned by

Irish SMEs) revealed an increasing willingness by Irish consumers to spend online with 2 in 5 people said they are spending more online today than over the past two years.

However according to the IE Domain Registry only 28% of Irish SMEs can process payments on their website despite Ireland's €9 billion Irish e-commerce market and predicted €100m online spend between Black Friday and Cyber Monday 2016. Irish SMEs' low engagement in e-commerce makes it difficult for Irish consumers to 'Buy Irish'.

2. Increasing numbers of jobs traditionally located in towns disappearing through automation - In 2011 Marc Andreessen noted that more and more major businesses and industries from movies to agriculture to national defence are being run on software and delivered as online services. A study from Oxford University on the Impacts of Future Technology looked at 700 of the most common occupations and ranked them from 0 (no risk of automation) to 1 (very high risk of automation) and found that millions of workers in the UK are in danger of being replaced by computers and robotics. When one looks at a number of the highest risk areas these are often activities that are currently located in towns like Dún Laoghaire and generate footfall and jobs in the town.

3. Rapidly increasing rate of change in businesses processes brought about by 'Digital Revolution' - A significant proportion of businesses in Dún Laoghaire are engaged in the provision of professional services such as legal and accounting services, sectors which are judged by experts to be the next areas that will be vulnerable to digital disruption. The banks are a good example of the rapidly changing digital business models that technology is forcing on the long established industries. While the banking mission remains unchanged, the industry itself has had to significantly rethink how to fulfil that mission due to the digital revolution. Digital disruption of traditional businesses is now faster, easier and cheaper than ever and the speed of process is accelerating exponentially. The implications of this for Dún Laoghaire's businesses are that they need to be helped to be well positioned for the rapid changes taking place in the coming years.

4. Most digital companies in the town are currently operating in silos with a lack of connectivity to potential partners -

The first survey of digital companies to be carried out in Dún Laoghaire by Digital Dún Laoghaire closed on September 26th 2016 and received 25 responses. Entitled the Digital Dún Laoghaire Cluster Survey (2016) its goal was to help the cluster project better understand the current status of digital companies in the town and how the stakeholders on the Digital Dún Laoghaire steering group can collaborate to help digital businesses thrive in Dún Laoghaire.

One of the survey questions focussed on the current engagement levels between digital companies in the town. The findings were that this is currently relatively low, 7 respondents indicated that they are only aware of 2 other digital companies in the town. Furthermore the majority of respondents currently do business with just '1 other company' in the town. The implications of this are that the digital sector in Dún Laoghaire is currently missing out on the benefits that accrue from a strong business cluster such as the higher success rate and the access to talent which arises from complementary businesses being located in the same locality.

Why set the goal of Dún Laoghaire becoming a Digital Hub?

Academic research conducted by the Institute for Strategy and Competitiveness at Harvard Business School indicates that areas with strong clusters produce more economic growth, more jobs, stronger wage growth, increased entrepreneurial activity, and more intellectual property than other areas. The National Competitiveness Council notes in 'Ireland's Competitiveness Scorecard 2016' that regions successful in facilitating industry clusters "have been found to achieve higher levels of productivity, innovation, employment and prosperity."

Looking at the individual benefits of clustering in more detail they include:

- Concentrations of interconnected companies or institutions makes it easier to get the right kind of talent.
- Firms located in a cluster have a 40% higher success rate.
- More companies with alignment to the specialisation of the cluster are attracted to locate in the region.
- Increased productivity through specialised inputs, access to information, synergies, and access to public goods.
- Increased company income.
- Increased market share.
- More rapid innovation and knowledge transfer through cooperative research and competitive striving.
- New business formation filling in niches and expanding the boundaries of the cluster map.

Based on a review of the literature the following factors are common elements in the development of successful, sustainable clusters:

- A cluster needs a vision and a strategy based around a set of unique core skills that can be intangible such as the work of Origin Green. Origin Green is Ireland's national sustainability programme utilised by its verified members from leading Irish food & drink producers to demonstrate to international customers their commitment to sustaining natural resources. The vision and strategy should focus on factors that can't be replicated by other regions.
- The cluster should focus on sectors and parts of the value chain aligned with the long-term local or regional economic development agenda. A focused strategy is not only necessary to define the key business sectors but also to identify their respective value chain focus areas and development phases.
- Beyond defining the sectors of focus, the efforts of the cluster should be concentrated in parts of the value chain of the sector where the region has built, or can build, a competitive advantage and sustain it in the foreseeable future.

The Digital Dún Laoghaire Cluster Survey (2016) found that there is strong support for the objective of creating a digital cluster in the town. In response to the question seeking their engagement in the development of a cluster the respondents recognised that being in a cluster is good for their business (64%) making it easier to recruit talent (48%) and gain new customers (44%).

The creation of a growing digital cluster will help attract talent and new businesses to the town in sectors that Irish government policy is seeking to support. Equally the spillover benefits to disadvantaged areas of the town have the potential to accrue through increased spending in the area, increased jobs and increased corporate social responsibility (CSR) activity by the new companies attracted to the town.

Dún Laoghaire Town's Strengths when viewing its potential to become a cluster

*"Dún Laoghaire Rathdown is the Dublin regions' second largest location for startups."
Dublin Regional Enterprise Strategy – 2017 - 2019*

Based on research by Digital Dún Laoghaire the town has a strong footprint of existing digital businesses. As noted earlier research in 2016 found Dún Laoghaire has in excess of 70 digital related companies located in the Dún Laoghaire Business Improvement District territory which represents approximately 10% of the total number of businesses in the town.

The Dublin Regional Enterprise Strategy notes that startup activity in Dublin is growing significantly, particularly for technology related activity the vast majority of startups are located within the Dublin City Council area (72%), followed by Dún Laoghaire Rathdown (12%). Dún Laoghaire Rathdown has a significant proportion of Dublin startups in sectors such as sales (50%), energy (46%), biotech (38%), apps (32%), and cloud computing (29%).

Of the 37 companies that were examined in more detail by the Digital Dún Laoghaire Cluster initiative they were found to fall into the following sectors:

Digital companies located in Dun Laoghaire May 2016	
Creative Design Agencies	7
Analytics	6
Software as a Service	6
Digital Marketing	5
Enterprise Software	5
Customer Service/Interactive SMS	2
Ecommerce companies	2
Life Sciences/Health	2
Telecoms Solutions	2

Source - Digital Dún Laoghaire Cluster Research – May 2016

Is the digital sector in Dún Laoghaire town growing?

The majority of respondents to the Digital Dún Laoghaire Cluster Survey (2016) are growth orientated (96%). It is clear that strengthening the digital cluster in Dún Laoghaire will result in more jobs as respondents said they plan to create 450 new jobs in the town over the next two years. 4.35% of the companies surveyed indicated that they intended to create between 20 and 50 new jobs over the 24 month period to 2018, with 27% indicating they would be creating between 6 and 10 new jobs.

Potential areas of unique competence for the Digital Dún Laoghaire Cluster

*"If we strike first and strike hard we can gain market share across the EU for our e-commerce companies."
Ian Dodson, Digital Marketing Institute*

The forthcoming DLR Local Enterprise Development Plan 2017 -2020, places significant emphasis on the importance of the digital sector to the local economy. As noted by the Enterprise Ireland Strategic Plan for 2017 - 2020, to maximise the value of clusters to the economy they must focus on smart specialisations based on unique local competences. The Dún Laoghaire based Digital Marketing Institute (DMI) states that Ireland has been identified in a report commissioned by Google as being among the front-runners in Europe to benefit from removing barriers and standardising the market. DMI believe that with Ireland's share of the economy that comes from e-business already exceeding the European average this should be a significant growth sector that Ireland targets. DMI cites successful online ecommerce companies such as MicksGarage, for example, a business that has gone from selling car parts out of Ballymount to being a Europe-wide player with the infrastructure and, more critically, ambition to operate at that scale.

Based on the detailed analysis of the 37 companies examined in more detail by Digital Dún Laoghaire in 2016 the activities of the majority fall largely into the following areas:

- Creative design
- Onboarding/Customer Success
- User Experience
- Digital Marketing/Growth Hacking
- Analytics

Accordingly, and subject to more in-depth research, the Dún Laoghaire town footprint of digital companies appears to break down into the areas of Design, Analytics, Business Intelligence and Data Management. Taken as a whole these currently disparate activities have the potential to form into a cluster with a specialisation in Customer Experience, an essential area key to the success of online ecommerce companies such as MicksGarage.

This potential specialisation has the possibility of being further strengthened by the presence in the town of the Digital Marketing Institute and the IE Domain Registry (whose mandate includes the goal of encouraging more businesses to trade effectively online). This specialisation would directly complement the two large digital clusters of Silicon Docks and Sandyford by becoming part of their value chain particularly in working with high growth digital scaleups that the Multinationals would like to work with as customers.



Dún Laoghaire town is located between two of Europe's largest digital clusters

Our Action Plan for the creation of the Digital Dún Laoghaire Cluster

The key characteristics of successful clusters are density and velocity. Density is the physical proximity of the key stakeholders of a mature ecosystem while velocity is how quickly growth companies can scale through the ecosystem without encountering undue obstacles or delays. As time to market for the development of virtual products and services shortens the nexus between the fundamental pillars of successful cluster ecosystems becomes ever more important.

In seeking to create a strong digital cluster in Dún Laoghaire we must seek to build the density of growth resources available to digital companies located in the town.

"Our goal is to build the digital cluster in the town and promote it. Once we understand what we want the unique competence of the cluster to be we need to target game changing projects. We need a strategy to plot the next level and how to get there."

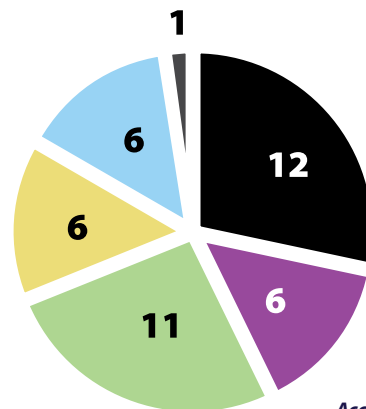
Dearbhla Lawson, Director of Economic, Community and Cultural Development, DDL/DL BID

What help do the companies in our town need that a strong digital cluster can provide?

Insights from a number of surveys are useful in order to better understand the challenges faced by entrepreneurs in the proposed digital cluster of Dún Laoghaire. Startup Ireland conducted research in 2015 in conjunction with Amarach Research to better understand why startups find it difficult to scale their businesses in Ireland. Based on responses from over 400 Irish entrepreneurs it was identified that the biggest challenge they face is accessing the supports, clients and funding they need to scale successfully. Reflecting the lack of engagement by large corporates in Ireland with entrepreneurs and startups, only 1 in 10 of the respondents replied that they had benefited from support/engagement from a large corporate in seeking to grow their business.

In respect of the challenges faced by digital companies in Dún Laoghaire there were many similarities to the findings by Startup Ireland. In terms of the threats to the growth of digital companies in Dún Laoghaire the biggest challenges to this growth are access to new customers (48%), access to talent (48%), access to scaling supports (44%), access to suitable office space (24%) and to funding (24%).

The Biggest Challenges to Company Growth in the next 2 Years



- Access to new customers 12 responses**
- Access to funding 6 responses**
- Access to supports for scaling my business 11 responses**
- Access to talent 6 responses**
- Access to suitable office space 6 responses**
- Other 1 responses**

Source - Digital Dún Laoghaire Cluster Research – May 2016

The same research found that the key threats to the development the cluster of digital companies are companies potentially leaving Dún Laoghaire in the future as a result of lack of suitable office space (32%), rent increases (20%) and lack of talent to support the growth of digital companies (15%).

The Framework for the Digital Dún Laoghaire Cluster Action Plan

In order to take consideration of the key stakeholders in the potential Digital Dún Laoghaire cluster we have distilled the key needs and aims of the digital companies in the town, the aims of the Digital Dún Laoghaire project and the alignment of these goals with the proposed action plan.

Recapping on the objectives of the Digital Dún Laoghaire initiative these are summarised as:

- Objective 1. Increasing Dún Laoghaire's profile as a digital town.
- Objective 2. Attracting digital companies to Dún Laoghaire.
- Objective 3. Supporting the growth of digital companies in the town through building a digital cluster for the jobs, innovation and urban renewal this will create.
- Objective 4. Implementing the Strategy/Actions/Organisation necessary to support the successful delivery of the above objectives.

Therefore each of these top level objectives forms the framework for the action plan outlined below. The individual actions are based on addressing the threats to growth of companies in the cluster as well as the specific objectives of the various stakeholders as outlined in their current strategic plans.

Action Plan For The Digital Transformation of Dún Laoghaire Town



Our goal is to help Dún Laoghaire Town become a digital hub for jobs, innovation and urban rejuvenation



“Our 2017 action plan targets achievable game changing projects that will accelerate our town’s transformation to a digital hub for our region.”

Digital Dún Laoghaire Steering Group

WHY DIGITAL?

- It is one of the fastest growing sectors of the economy
- ICT and Technology has high levels of job creation
- Significant spillover benefits to traditional businesses in the town

Objective 1 - Increasing Dún Laoghaire’s profile as a digital town



CONFERENCE



DDL Newsletter



CoderDojo

COMMUNITY BUILDING

Objective 2 – Attract digital companies to Dún Laoghaire



Incubation space in partnership with Bank of Ireland



Digital innovation lab



Universal Lease to unlock unused space

Objective 3 - Supporting the growth of digital companies in the town through building a digital cluster



Monthly networking events



Closer alignment with LEO DLR activities



Annual Cluster Survey

Action Plan for the Creation of the Digital Dún Laoghaire (DDL) Cluster

1. DDL Objective 1 - Increasing Dún Laoghaire's profile as a digital town.

#	Action	Purpose	Lead	Partners	Time Frame
1.1	Social Media footprint	Develop and implement a digital media strategy that supports the objectives of Digital Dún Laoghaire.	DDL/DL BID	DDL Steering Group Members	Already Commenced
1.2	DDL Newsletter	Build awareness of Dún Laoghaire as a digital town by highlighting events, job announcements by DL digital companies, new digital companies opening in DL, initiatives/ delegation visits to DL.	DDL/DL BID	DDL Steering Group Members	Already Commenced
1.3	Microsite for Digital Dún Laoghaire	Implement and grow Digital Dún Laoghaire website including online database and company directory.	DDL/DL BID	DDL Steering Group Members	Already Commenced
1.4	Create a marketing and branding plan for the cluster.	Branding, logo and slogan which complements the cluster strategy.	DDL/DL BID	DDL Steering Group Members	Short Term
1.5	Annual Conference for the digital industry in Dún Laoghaire.	Focus on showcasing the digital businesses, job opportunities and start-up/scale-up collaboration in support of the needs of the cluster companies.	DDL/DL BID	DDL Steering Group Members	Already Commenced
1.6	Annual awards ceremony	Highlight best practice in the digital companies in the cluster, provide profile to cluster companies and provide event focal point to encourage more companies to locate in DL.	DDL/DL BID	DDL Steering Group Members	Medium Term

2. DDL Objective 2 – Actions in support of attracting digital companies to Dún Laoghaire.

#	Action	Purpose	Lead	Partners	Time Frame
2.1	Guide to what supports are available for scaling digital companies and for small businesses to leverage the opportunities of digital transformation.	Publish a 'digital digest' (online and print version) and guide to Digital Transformation for Small Businesses with information on all relevant supports, advice, grants, etc. available in DLR to support the growth of local companies.	DDL/DL BID	DDL Steering Group Members	Short Term
2.2	Open focal point incubation space in the town	Seek to open with a private sector partner a co-working/ incubation centre in the town to act as the central landing point for relevant high growth start-ups and focal point for relevant activities.	DDL/DL BID	DDL Steering Group Members	In progress, a location has been identified.
2.3	New Frontiers startup programme	Seek to support the expansion of the New Frontiers programme located in the IADT Media Cube to create an increased pipeline of high growth digital companies in the locality.	IADT Media Cube	DDL/DL BID	Medium Term
2.4	Scope potential and where viable develop a proposal for the creation of a digital innovation space/lab	The proposed cluster would benefit from the creative design expertise of a Digital Innovation Lab. The establishment of a lab with the potential for participation by the LexIcon Lab, IADT and other relevant academic institutions would have the potential to enhance the reputation of Dún Laoghaire as a digital hub town (Source - Vision2020).	DLRCoCo	DDL/DL BID	Medium Term
2.5	Develop a blueprint that can be used for the conversion of previously underutilised or derelict space in the town to flexible co-working space	Development of a standard lease/business plan usable for disused premises which could potentially help address the shortage of office space for digital companies in the town. Raise awareness of DLRCoCo Vacant Commercial premises incentives and supports.	DL BID	DDL/DL BID	Medium Term
2.6	Recruit internationally for a soft landing programme	Many regions have established soft landing programmes to attract targeted international startups to their cities to work with corporates located there (examples include the Boston Mass Challenge, 1776 Challenge or the Startup Chile global challenge).	DDL/DL BID	DDL Steering Group Members	Long Term

3. DDL Objective 3 - Supporting the growth of digital companies in the town through building a digital cluster

#	Action	Purpose	Lead	Partners	Time Frame
3.1	Run regular networking events	To better connect the existing digital companies in the town and to broaden the network beyond the town.	DDL/DL BID	DDL Steering Group Members	Commenced, 8 events held to date.
3.2	Promote and raise awareness of LEO supports in relation to Digital business	Explore collaborative initiatives with LEO DLR to raise awareness of relevant supports so that more companies in the cluster avail of their services.	DDL/DL BID	LEO DLR	Short Term
3.3	Specialist customised programmes for digital companies in the cluster	To create deeper levels of intercompany collaboration and capability development through cluster-wide training and projects such as collaboratively addressing new market opportunities internationally. Also provide services relevant to the development of the cluster through programmes and training for cluster members with a focus on capability building (talent development in key skill areas) and knowledge sharing.	Short Term	DDL/DL BID	Medium Term
3.4	Organise a DDL update seminar	Along the lines of the DDL Launch showcasing the success of DDL targeting 160 attendees, 3 speakers + panel discussion.	DDL/DL BID	DDL Steering Group Members	Short Term
3.5	Annual Cluster Survey	Helps identify the obstacles digital companies in DL experience to scaling thereby providing informed insights on the obstacles the DDL cluster project needs to address.	DDL/DL BID	DDL Steering Group Members	Already Commenced
3.6	Establish a Digital Dún Laoghaire CoderDojo	Bring digital community together to support the next generation of coders through creating a Digital Dún Laoghaire CoderDojo in DLR LexIcon building.	DDL/DL BID	DDL Steering Group Members	Already Commenced
3.7	Mapping of physical location of digital companies	Map the number of relevant digital businesses in the designation location in order to understand the density of companies located in the designated area.	DDL/DL BID	DDL Steering Group Members	Mapping done through DDL, live map on the website.

3.8	Mapping of company specialisations in the cluster	Approach relevant academic institutions, such as IADT, to conduct research on the potential to develop a Customer Experience cluster in Dún Laoghaire.	DDL/DL BID	DDL Steering Group Members	Short Term
3.9	Support other business sectors in the town to leverage the web	Run a series of workshops for other sectors in Dún Laoghaire (such as retail, professional services and tourism) along the theme of digital transformation thereby enabling those sectors to benefit from the digital focus of the cluster emerging in the town. Follow these sector specific workshops with clinics for participant companies.	DDL/DL BID	DDL Steering Group Members	Short Term
3.10	Initiate industry engagement initiatives	Creating industry engagement through one-off events (Startup Weekends, Challenges, Hackathons or hack days) is often the first step to creating longer term collaborations. These tend to be good starting points to drive internal culture change towards external, collaborative engagement by exposing employees to the network of the region and often provide new perspectives of emerging business trends and technologies.	DDL/DL BID	Sandyford BID, DDL Steering Group Members, DLR LexIcon, IADT	Medium Term
3.11	Enterprise Ireland Cluster initiative	Seek to put DDL in a strong position to compete for funding in the next funding call by advancing the work of developing the cluster.	DDL/DL BID	DDL Steering Group Members	Medium Term
3.12	Town Hall meeting to advance this Action Plan	Create collaborative engagement with stakeholders to tackle the challenges and develop solutions to underpin the actions contained in this Action Plan.	DDL/DL BID	DDL Steering Group Members	Short Term
3.13	Cross county initiatives of scale to strengthen the cluster	Holding events/initiatives that address the needs of the cluster companies (office space, attracting talent and finding new customers) on a county wide scale such as Jobs Mashups, property showcase events, investor days etc.	DDL/DL BID	DDL Steering Group Members	Medium Term

4. DDL Objective 4 - Implementing the Strategy/Actions/Organisation necessary to support the successful delivery of the above objectives.

#	Action	Purpose	Lead	Partners	Time Frame
4.1	Action Plan for the creation of a strong Digital Dún Laoghaire Cluster	To provide an integrated strategy for helping more digital companies scale successfully from Dún Laoghaire.	DDL/DL BID	DDL Steering Group Members	Completed
4.2	Managing DDL steering group monthly meetings	Keep the DDL project performing in line with objectives of the project and driving the objectives of the Action Plan for the DDL Cluster.	DDL/DL BID	DDL Steering Group Members	In Progress, the steering group has met 14 times to date.
4.3	Seek to link up with Sandyford BID to create digitalDLR.	Examine the potential to collaborate with other BID associations such as Sandyford BID with a view to co-developing a website at digitaldlr.com with a web-based platform with company profiles and business directories, an improved interactive map, job offers, a corporate events database	DDL/DL BID	DDL Steering Group Members	Medium Term
4.4	Examine the experience of other cluster associations	Based on international research there is a positive correlation between the active management of clusters and their resulting success therefore this would suggest that there is a clear role for an initiative such as Digital Dún Laoghaire to lead the town's cluster development project into the future. International cluster associations include Tech Oregon while examples from Ireland include IT @ Cork and Information Technology Association of Galway (ITAG).	DDL/DL BID	DDL Steering Group Members	Medium Term



CONTACT DETAILS

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