

Imagineering Quarter backs Culture Bid

The Imagineering Quarter – where the creative arts and digital technologies come together – is backing the Derry/Londonderry bid for UK City of Culture 2013.

Paul Mc Kevitt, Professor of Digital Multimedia and member of the Computer Science Research Institute (CSRI), said: “The Imagineering Quarter is a physical and virtual quarter within the city which is engaged in digital creativity research. Alongside academics, staff and students from Ulster’s CSRI, participants include stakeholders from the local education, business development, creative/cultural venues and private sectors.

“Relevant to the Quarter is ongoing research and industrial collaboration of academics from all Ulster campuses in the area of digital creativity covering a wide range of topics such as mobile creativity, animation, spoken dialogue technology, computer games for rehabilitation and imagineering digital creativity.”

To coincide with the recent submission of the Derry/Londonderry bid for UK City of Culture 2013, a recent workshop – ‘The Imagineering Quarter: Desperately Seeking Digital Creativity’ – sponsored by Derry City Council and Seagate Technology, provided an opportunity to showcase some of the cutting-edge software technologies and research being developed across Ulster’s Jordanstown, Coleraine and Magee campuses.

The workshop, which attracted over 70 business people, academics and cultural sector advocates included panel sessions on ‘Monetizing Imagineering Industry’ and ‘Genesis of the Imagineering

Quarter’, chaired by Anton Hutton and Professor Mc Kevitt respectively.

Professor Mc Kevitt explained: “Since its inception in 2004, Ulster’s CSRI has undertaken research across a wide range of disciplines. This workshop was the ideal forum for showcasing our digital creativity research and with software demonstrations, we were able to highlight the vast array of technologies now available.

“Staff and PhD students within the CSRI have been working on creative technologies with wide-ranging applications. These include SoFI: song form intelligence for audio repair on non robust wireless networks; Steganoflage: digital steganography for secure hidden messages; PlayPhysics: emotional games learning environments for teaching physics; MemoryLane: mobile digital storytelling companions for older people; and SceneMaker: automatic visualisation of screenplays.

“This work has received funding from Invest NI Proof of Concept and Ulster’s Office of Innovation Proof of Principle programmes, obtained the Hi-Tech category award, Northern Ireland Science Park (NISP) 25K Awards in 2009 with top 10 short-listing for 2010 and has led to four UK and international patents pending.”

Exploiting the strong links between London and Derry/Londonderry, as articulated in the city’s bid for UK City of Culture 2013, the workshop keynote speaker and special guest was Professor Geraint Wiggins, Department of Computing at Goldsmiths’ College, University of London. Like Ulster, Goldsmiths’ is a leader in the area of creative arts and technologies and Pat Loughrey, an Ulster alumnus

From left: Dr Barney Toal, NORIBIC; Matt Peachey, Derry City Council; Mark Nagurski, Own Brand Media Ltd; Anton Hutton, School of Creative Arts and EyeSpyFX Ltd; Professor Geraint Wiggins, Goldsmiths’ College, University of London; and Professor Paul Mc Kevitt

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and former Director of BBC Nations & Regions, was recently appointed 12th Warden of Goldsmiths’ College.

Professor Mc Kevitt added: “The UK Government will soon announce the winner of the UK City of Culture 2013. It is clear that creative technologies have a key role to play in attracting inward investment and therefore animating a city. The Imagineering Quarter wishes the bid well.”



Inside Links:

For further detail on The Imagineering Quarter visit www.infm.ulst.ac.uk/~paul/imagineering-quarter/ and to find out more about the UK City of Culture 2013 bid, visit www.cityofculture2013.com/