

PRESS RELEASE - Fingal's Open Data Used By Winning Team

Donabate resident part of team that uses Fingal Open Data to win Ireland's first Open Data 18 hr Challenge

BizFit, a website that utilises demographic and other open data to match a business with its optimum location, has won Ireland's first Open Data 18 hr Challenge held at NDRC in the Digital Hub, Dublin. Gary Leeson of Riomhaire Research from Donabate was part of a six person team of designers and developers, whose winning idea was judged as being a clear example of how the release of previously inaccessible Government data can deliver a nascent commercial opportunity. The runners up were 'Just Park' an app that uses open data to help define cost effective and convenient parking based on location and 'Distil' a tool that enables developers to refine, purify and filter open data.

The Open Data Challenge follows on the work started by Fingal County Council with their pioneering Fingal Open Data initiative to open up Government Data for use by Citizens and Businesses. The event was organised by NDRC's Inventorium programme in partnership with Fingal County Council, Dublin City Council, Microsoft and the Irish Internet Association. Over 80 developers, designers and entrepreneurs competed to create viable business ideas using open data provided by Fingal County and Dublin City Councils. Over 18 hours, numerous ideas were generated with final competition boiling down to ten ideas, which used a range of open data sets from heritage information, to live environmental pollution and trafficking feeds, utility and energy consumption data.

Speaking about the event, Dr. Teresa Dillon of NDRC's Inventorium programme and a member of Enterprise Ireland's National Cross Industry Working Group on Open Data said: "Its clear that with the right tools and freer access to data, there is the potential for ideas led business growth. We hope an initiative such as this

sends a message to other Councils and Government bodies that open data is a resource and as such it has economic potential."

Dominic Byrne of Fingal County Council said: "We are delighted to see Fingal data being used to develop potential business opportunities. This demonstrates the value of opening up Government data and we hope to see the development of many more innovative applications of Open Data. Bizfit's idea will help businesses to identify where they should locate based on demographic analysis. This has the potential to be a great help to small and medium size companies."

Note to Editor:

Open Data is Public Sector Data which is published in open formats and is accessible and readily available to all. This allows reuse in new and unforeseen ways and allows new business opportunities to reuse public sector data for online services, mobile applications, analytics etc. Open Data improves transparency and increases citizen engagement and participation.

Fingal Open Data website was the first Open Data website in the country launched in November 2010. It includes over 70 datasets in categories of Arts, Culture & Heritage; Citizen Participation; Demographics; Economy; Education; Environment; Housing; Public Health; Recreation; Technology; Transportation & Infrastructure; Zoning & Land Use

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