Bridging the Gap: Towards Effective Knowledge Transfer between Institutes of Technology and Industry

Aimee Brennan, Athlone Institute of Technology, Ireland

Abstract. Knowledge transfer between HEIs and industry in Ireland occurs at a low level (Forfás, 2007). In light of these facts this research takes an investigational approach in to knowledge transfer practices between Institutes of Technology (IoTs) and industry in Ireland in order to assess the current trends, benefits and barriers experienced by the main stakeholders. Knowledge transfer is defined, for the purposes of this study, using the European Commission definition: 'Knowledge Transfer involves the processes for capturing, collecting and sharing explicit and tacit knowledge, including skills and competence. It includes both commercial and non-commercial activities such as research collaborations, consultancy, licencing, spin-off creation, researcher mobility and publications.'(European Commission, 2007).

A good example of the processes of knowledge transfer is the idea generated by Harvard computer science student Mark Zuckerberg of the now internationally successful social networking site, Facebook (Fig 1). The creation of an idea and the subsequent transfer of knowledge involved in this area lead Zuckerberg to connect 800 million people through the site. He has since become the 14th richest person in America at 27 years old despite being a Harvard dropout (Forbes, 2012).