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## PRESS ARTICLE

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### **THE NORTH WEST LEADS THE WAY IN PROMOTING THE BENEFITS OF CLUSTERING**

Two organisations in the North West – the **IT QUARTER** and **NORIBIC** have together demonstrated the value and benefits of clustering.

Dermot McDermot, Chairman **IT Quarter**, strongly believes that collaborative networks and a cluster development strategy have already led to the creation of a stronger, self-reliant economy. Dermot stated, "**We have achieved significant results since launching the IT Quarter less than one year ago. We have:-**

- **Leveraged approximately £850k additional financial intervention for the sectoral clusters.**
- **We have assisted in the development of sectoral action plans**
- **We have developed additional cross-disciplinary/sectoral clusters, facilitated various collaborative cross-border opportunities**
- **Provided a soon to be launched web site which has an innovative skills database which will allow for individuals and organisations to match skills."**

The key objective of the IT Quarter is to '*inform, inspire and interconnect*' IT organisations in the North West with the local, national and international industry markets. "**The IT Quarter has set a standard for IT here, providing leadership, strategic guidance and practical solutions to improve the management and operation of IT services in the region,"** Dermot continued. "**This is only the beginning. The continuous work of the IT Quarter will facilitate a platform for**

**knowledge-sharing, stimulating innovation and wealth creation, which will in turn invoke a steadfast confidence across the global marketplace in the IT sector within Ireland North West.”**

Niall O’Somachain, of NORIBIC said, **“The IT Quarter represents a cluster of excellence in IT within the North West from Letterkenny through to Coleraine. The work of the IT Quarter, by engaging in business partnerships, seeking strategic alliances and pushing the boundaries of innovation, will help diversify local economic development activity and maintain Northern Ireland’s reputation as an attractive place to invest and live. NORIBIC has worked closely with the IT Quarter to identify common themes such as market opportunities and obstacles, to develop networking opportunities, have conducted market research on clients, competitors, suppliers, relevant legislation, business opportunities and economic trends and have offered signposting to other business support services. ”**

Terry Kavanagh, Managing Director of Foyle Technologies and member of the IT Quarter, commenting on the leading position of the North West, said, **“Clustering and networks are proven models of business in which collaboration results in increased competitiveness – no more so than in the fast moving ICT sector. However, we have capitalised on the benefits of collaboration and on behalf of the IT Quarter, I would call upon all companies involved in the ICT sector in the North West to engage with us to improve our existing support for clustering and collaborative networking.”**

## **Notes to Editors**

### **IT Quarter**

The IT Quarter’s objective is to generate wealth in the North West’s economy through supporting the development of high growth, globally competitive and export focused businesses, by encouraging individuals and companies to

innovate resulting in more high quality new businesses, further growth of existing businesses and the North West winning inward investment.

The new website will have a skills database section, which will offer advice on training and recruiting within in the world of IT. This will be launched in August.

ITquarter is an employer-led network, facilitated through NORIBIC's ClusterNet programme and Momentum's North West Regional Development Executive, along with Derry City Council, Coleraine Borough Council, BiTC and Invest Northern Ireland. The Forum currently encompasses five district council areas within the North West. These include, Derry, Coleraine, Strabane, Magherafelt and Limavady.

**For further information**

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