



Advisory Council for Science
Technology and Innovation
An Comhairle Eolaíochta

Press Release

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International collaboration can help us achieve our national science and technology goals

**Advisory Science Council launches report on Ireland's international
engagement in science, technology and innovation**

The Advisory Science Council, the Government's high level advisory group on science, technology and innovation policy, today (17th December 2008) published a report outlining the need to engage strategically in international science, technology and innovation networks.

Speaking at the launch of the report, Dr Jimmy Devins, T.D. and Minister for Science, Technology and Innovation commented, "As a small country, we must use international programmes and networks to help us achieve the targets set out in the *Strategy for Science, Technology and Innovation* (STI). It is clear - Ireland will benefit from being well connected internationally in science, technology and innovation. We will gain from having trained researchers coming to work and live in Ireland and Irish researchers and technologists will benefit from spending time abroad adding to their stock of knowledge."

"The Irish Government has invested significantly in building our science and technology capabilities and this investment is now at a level that will enable our research community to participate in a meaningful way in international networks. This will help raise the visibility of Irish science and technology abroad and will also help to bring about a more sustainable funding model for STI in Ireland," concluded Minister Devins.

The Advisory Science Council, in this latest report and in previous reports, has outlined the benefits from international mobility of researchers. Foreign experience and involvement in international networks play an important part in career development for researchers and they bring significant benefits to the country as a whole. The report, *Ireland's International Engagement in Science, Technology and Innovation*, has found that the Irish STI system has had a relatively strong inward flow of researchers. More than 40 per cent of researchers in the centres

reviewed in the study are from outside Ireland. There are, however, indications of barriers to the outward mobility of Irish researchers and in the long-term, these could have a significant negative impact on the Irish STI system.

The Advisory Science Council stresses the importance of leveraging STI linkages for enterprise. "It is important that companies in both the manufacturing and the services sectors have access to leading edge research, technology and innovation solutions, wherever these may be located. We need to ensure that companies use the programmes and supports available in a strategic way." said Mary Cryan, Chairman of the Advisory Science Council.

In its report, the Council has made recommendations across the following areas:

- Coordination of international STI engagements across Government Departments and agencies;
- European research programmes and the European Research Area;
- STI linkages with countries outside Europe;
- Ireland's membership of international research organisations;
- International mobility of researchers;
- The role of Ireland's embassies and the overseas offices of Enterprise Ireland and IDA Ireland in contributing to STI goals.

The Council calls on STI funders, institutions and industry groups to consider the specific manner in which they are encouraging researchers and enterprises to access international networks and use international funding to finance their research and innovation efforts.

The Council report presents a set of guidelines for developing an internationalisation strategy and calls on research groups to apply these guidelines to become more strategic in their approach.

The full report and guidelines can be downloaded at www.sciencecouncil.ie