

Marine Renewables Proposal as Catalyst for Delivering MERC Vision

ERI@MERC PRTL1 5 bid, May 2009

The ERI@MERC PRTL1 5 proposal is under development for submission and review by the HEA. This proposal represents the first phase of delivering the national infrastructure associated with the MERC vision. The proposal is led by UCC with partners from CIT, NMCI, Port of Cork, Bord Gais, IDA, Sustainable Energy Ireland, Irish Naval Service, Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources, Queens University Belfast and University College Dublin.

The ERI@MERC PRTL1 5 proposal will provide the **national R&D infrastructure** to support the development potential of the Maritime Renewable Energy Sectors. This adds value to existing PRTL12 investment by extending the ERI to a strategic location, **Ringaskiddy**, on a site adjacent to the NMCI, providing an opportunity to share infrastructure (e.g. lecture theatres, car parking, catering) as well as maximising research synergies between **UCC, CIT/NMCI**.

The proposal to create the ERI@MERc Research Building will integrate the Hydraulics and Maritime Research Centre (**HMRC**), Coastal and Marine Resources Centre (**CMRC**) and Sustainable Energy Research Group (**SERG**). Space will be created for 125 researchers, including 65 new PhD and research spaces, including space for **PERL & UCD's** Electricity Research Centre. Researchers will collaborate on scientific programmes that meet national objectives for ocean energy, renewable energy storage and grid integration and the development of maritime sectors.

This proposal will create a state-of-the-art **National Ocean Energy Test Facility (NOETF)** incorporating the enhanced HMRC wave tanks which were included in **SSTI** as an important national scale facility. The proposal addresses European and National policies aimed at the development of maritime resources (Sea Change, Ocean Energy Strategy) and contributes to **SSTI** PhD targets by providing **4th level training**. Links will be made to emerging structured PhD programmes (Energy and Marine) and to the QUB facility at Portaferry.

Industry partnerships (e.g. **EI Competence Centres**) will be fostered within the new facility to support commercialisation of ideas and technology transfer. The **IDA** will promote ERI@MERC as **a national flagship R&D location** to prospective FDI clients to create high level employment. Research activities will underpin the 'new green deal' outlined in *'Building Ireland's Smart Economy'*