



“How Best Should I Spend This Tax Money?”

Government Funding for Optical Technologies

Enterprise Ireland, an EU research funding organization promoting technology commercialization, chose Egret Technologies to assist with its grant review and selection process. For several years Egret Technologies has been asked to rank leading-edge optical research to identify promising technologies for further funding and commercial development.

Situation: Enterprise Ireland, a European Union government agency responsible for promoting national business growth in Ireland, awards technology development grants to support commercialization. As part of its charter, each year the agency evaluates and ranks innovative scientific proposals coming from public research institutions, universities, business and entrepreneurs, and has provided more than €100 million in commercialization grants during the past five years. In a similar process to that used by the National Science Foundation in the United States, winning proposals that will spark economic development within Ireland can receive grants ranging from €200,000 to €600,000 over a period of 18 to 36 months from its Commercialization Fund.

For several years, Egret Technologies has been retained to adjudicate and referee the proposal selection process for these grants. Many of the proposals come from academic institutions and the research of their Ph. D. staff that are also working closely with incubator programs and emerging firms.

Solution: Enterprise Ireland asked Egret Technologies to lead the proposal selection process due to its:

- track record launching innovative commercial products
- expertise in engineering and the research areas under consideration
- global industry expertise ensuring Irish competitiveness



- academic background at the doctorate level
- objective, unbiased role to support the research agenda and goals

“Turning Innovation into Profit” Results: Egret Technologies is honored to provide a critical role to help identify commercially promising innovation to receive funding. Egret Technologies’ team has reviewed numerous proposals and has recommended grants for exciting commercial opportunities including:

- Liquid Crystal Optical Fiber Switches - Funding of a new spatial switching application for this mature low-cost technology in high-capacity optical communications networks was recommended. The novel application involves routing light through a configurable liquid crystal matrix creating a powerful optical “on/off” switching capability.
- Low-Cost Hazardous Gas and Substance Sensors - “Green” initiatives are gaining speed in new building and renovation

construction. The availability of very low-cost sensors to detect harmful substances in chemical or biological products in industrial settings or public locations (e.g. performance venues, transportation terminals, medical facilities) is a significant commercial opportunity.

Dr. Kevin Donnelly, Senior Research Office at Enterprise Ireland said, “Ireland has a keen interest in developing the highest quality knowledge economy. We need a critical commercial eye and a world view to insure competitiveness, and using Egret Technologies as an advisor on the commercialization fund helps this.”

The transition of novel technology from concept to viable commercial products that in turn fosters economic prosperity is a goal to which Egret Technologies is totally committed.

Egret Technologies is a superior electronic design partner to global vendors of technology products. We are an innovative, solution-driven, US-based engineering design firm specializing in optical, electronic, and mechanical hardware, as well as embedded software systems. We provide concept development, product design and project engineering. Contact Egret Technologies at (954) 518-9645 or Innovate@EgretTechnologies.com