

MINISTER MITCHELL O'CONNOR SPEECH TUDUBILN EVENT

**Taoiseach,
Ministers,
Presidents,
Ladies and Gentlemen,
I am so pleased to be here today.**

On the eighth of March, just four months ago, I wound up my speech on the Technological Universities Bill in the Seanad.

I expressed my hope that the Bill would be looked back on, as a sea change in the Higher Education landscape.

Little did I think that so soon afterwards we would be here in Grangegorman to see vision become reality!

The creation of TU Dublin is one of the most exciting and important landmarks in Irish Higher Education in decades.

In the past twelve months I have had numerous meetings with, and visits to, DIT, IT Blanchardstown and IT Tallaght.

After each one, I came away with ever increasing optimism that here were three great institutions that together would be far more than the sum of their parts.

Ireland's eighth university and Dublin's fourth has a stunning flagship campus here in Grangegorman.

It is remarkably well oriented and integrated into the city. Just over one kilometre to the city centre.

TU Dublin will draw on a history dating from the technical schools of the 1870s.

They merged in the 1990's to form the Dublin Institute of Technology.

IT Tallaght and IT Blanchardstown are both of more recent origin.

IT Tallaght is currently celebrating its 25th anniversary and IT Blanchardstown its 20th.

Both have been integral in the emergence of social and economically vibrant communities in the West and South of Dublin.

They will enjoy a new sense of connectedness, opportunity and possibilities.

The combined student population of DIT, IT Tallaght and IT Blanchardstown - almost 28,000 - will create the largest university in Ireland.

It will be within a thirty minute commute of all those living within the geographical arc stretching from Drogheda in the North, through Navan, Naas, Blessington and Bray in the South.

Today is the dawning of new era in Ireland's Higher Education history.

The higher education landscape is changing and it will be better for that change.

To help that change, the Government has announced today further funding of €4.4 million towards the continuing development of TU Dublin. This latest funding tranche is being provided by the Higher Education Authority under their 2018 higher education landscape restructuring funding call.

I now look forward to future applications for technological university designation from the Munster, South-East and Connaught-Ulster consortia.

But today is about welcoming TU Dublin which has blazed a trail.

In conclusion, I would also like to warmly congratulate the many people from all three institutes who have brought us to today's announcement.

Your extensive commitment and planning over many years has reached fruition.

Every success from here forward.

I am delighted to be introducing the final speaker this afternoon.

Tom Collins, is the chair of all three Governing bodies, being amalgamated here today,

Dublin Institute of Technology, Institute of Technology Blanchardstown and Institute of Technology Tallaght.

He has been at the forefront of the TU4 Dublin consortium.

I want to sincerely thank him for all his hard work and vision in bringing us here today, to mark the establishment of Technological University - Dublin.

Mr Tom Collins.

Go raibh míle maith agaibh.