



# Cosmetics Innovation Forum

## Science, Brand and Business

*Hear from industry experts, investors and retail buyers. Gain insights on formulation, R&D, IP, branding, regulations and distribution.*

[Event Brochure](#)

Thursday, 23 April 2026, 9:00 AM - 3:30 PM  
Hodson Bay Hotel, Athlone, Ireland



Rialtas na hÉireann  
Government of Ireland



Arna chomhchistiú ag  
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**Enterprise Ireland**

# Cosmetics Innovation Forum

Science, Brand and Business

A full-day in-person event organised by the Centre for Applied Bioscience Research (CABR) and Enterprise Ireland (EI), where you will hear insights from industry experts, investors and established cosmetic businesses on building and growing a successful cosmetic business in Ireland.

Join us to hear from expert panels, presentations and interviews on topics such as natural ingredient sourcing, formulation and manufacturing, intellectual property protection, research and development pathways, brand building, regulatory compliance, making credible cosmetic claims, and retail readiness.

The event will bring together cosmetic businesses at all stages of growth, industry experts, state business support agencies and investors to share practical guidance and real-world experience. Through panel discussions, presentations and networking opportunities, attendees will gain actionable insights on developing and scaling their cosmetic businesses.

Whether you are an early-stage or established cosmetic brand, this event will provide valuable insights to support your business growth.



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**Enterprise**  
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**MTU**  
Ollscoil Teicneolaíochta na Mumhan  
Munster Technological University



**TUS**  
Ollscoil Teicneolaíochta na Sionainne:  
Lár Tíre, An tIarthar Láir  
Technological University of the Shannon:  
Midlands Midwest

# Event Schedule

09:00 AM - 09:15 AM

## Welcome

- Dr Liam Brown (*Vice President Research, Development and Innovation, Technological University of the Shannon: Midlands Midwest (TUS)*)
- Rachael James (*Senior Client Adviser, Enterprise Ireland*)

09:15 AM - 09:45 AM

## Panel Discussion: Ingredient Selection and Natural Extract Development

Panel Chair: Dr Hande Ermis (*Senior Business Development Scientist, CABR*)

- Feebee Foran (*Founder, Forager*)
- Sinead O'Keeffe (*Founder, BioClover*)
- Tracey Ryan (*Co-Founder & Head of R&D, Doctrine Skincare*)
- Chris Mitchell (*Co-Founder & CEO, Green Angel*)

09:45 AM - 10:05 AM

## Formulation and Manufacturing of Cosmetics Products

- Siobhán Wilson (*Business Development Manager, Ultrapure Laboratories*)

10:05 AM - 10:30 AM

## Interview: Cosmetic Distribution

- Kieran Walsh (*Founder & CEO, National Beauty Distribution*)

10:30 AM - 11:00 AM

## Investing in Cosmetics: A Venture Capital (VC) Perspective

- Ciara Byrne (*Founder, Vestra Partners*)

11:00 AM - 11:30 AM

## Coffee & Networking

# Event Schedule

11:30 AM - 12:00 PM

## Intellectual Property Protection for Cosmetics Businesses

- Joe Doyle (*Intellectual Property Manager, Enterprise Ireland*)

11:55 AM - 12:25 PM

## Panel Discussion: Research and Development Pathways

Panel Chair: Dr Niall Burke (*Senior Business Development Scientist, CABR*)

- Dr Emer Gilligan (*External Affairs Director, WaterWipes*)
- Clare Devereux (*Founder & Trichologist, Hair Health Essentials*)
- David Cox (*CEO, Fragrances of Ireland*)

12:25 PM - 12:55 PM

## Building a Values-Based Brand: The Ella & Jo Story

- Niamh Ryan (*CEO & Co-Founder, Ella & Jo*)

12:55 PM - 01:40 PM

## Lunch & Networking

01:40 PM - 02:00 PM

## B Corp Certification Journey: VOYA

- Andrew Darmody (*General Manager, VOYA*)

02:00 PM - 02:20 PM

## Cosmetics Regulatory Outlook in 2026

- Rian Morris (*Sustainability & Chemicals Policy Lead, ICDA, IBEC*)

02:20 PM - 02:50 PM

## Cosmetic Claims & Scientific Communication: Translating Science into High Impact and Credible Consumer Messages

- David Jameson (*Product Scientific Communication Manager, Oriflame R&D*)

# Agenda

02:50 PM - 03:30 PM

**Buyer Insight Panel: Being Retail Ready**

*Details to be confirmed*

03:30 PM

**Close**

# Sessions & Speakers

## Welcome



Dr Liam Brown is a Vice President of Research, Development and Innovation at TUS.

With significant experience across both the public and private sectors, Dr Liam Brown specialises in the strategic development and operational management of research, development, innovation, and community and enterprise engagement.

**Dr Liam Brown**  
Vice President Research,  
Development and Innovation,  
TUS



Rachael James is a Senior Client Adviser with Enterprise Ireland and lead for the Health & Beauty sector, supporting Irish companies to innovate, grow and scale globally. She has over 20 years' experience working directly with senior teams, across multiple sectors, from early development to global scale.

Rachael supports clients' ambitious growth plans by providing access to Enterprise Ireland's full range of products and services, and she works closely with EI's Consumer Global Team to develop promotional programmes that profile Ireland as a source of authentic, innovative and sustainable Health & Beauty products.

**Rachael James**  
Senior Client Adviser,  
Enterprise Ireland

# Sessions & Speakers

## Panel Discussion: Ingredient Selection and Natural Extract Development

Exploring natural ingredient sourcing, extraction methods and sustainability considerations for cosmetic formulations.

### Panel Moderator:



**Dr Hande Ermis**  
Senior Business Development  
Scientist, CABR

Dr Hande Ermis is a Senior Business Development Scientist at the Centre for Applied Bioscience Research (CABR). Dr Ermis is a bioengineer and environmental engineer with strong expertise in microalgae biotechnology, wastewater treatment, and bio-based sustainability solutions.

Dr Hande Ermis holds a PhD in Environmental Engineering and has led both academic and industry-focused research projects in microalgae cultivation, bioprocess development, and environmental remediation.



**Feebee Foran**  
Founder, Forager

Feebee Foran is an award-winning herbalist, educator, and founder of Forager Skincare, a skincare brand inspired by wild plants foraged in the Dublin Mountains. Drawing on traditional herbal knowledge, her products are rooted in nature, Irish folklore, and the healing properties of native plants.

Feebee is the resident forager on Ireland AM, where she presents a regular segment sharing seasonal foraging tips, plant lore, and practical herbal remedies. A keynote speaker and nature educator, she is known for engaging storytelling that reconnects audiences with the Irish landscape and the rich traditions woven through its wild plants.

# Event Details

## Panel Discussion: Ingredient Selection and Natural Extract Development



**Sinead O'Keeffe**  
Founder, BioClover

Sinead O'Keeffe is a cosmetic chemist, beauty educator, and founder of Tiger Academy, an education and consultancy platform supporting beauty professionals with advanced training and compliance knowledge, and BioClover, Ireland's first agro-biotech ingredient company based on her family farm in Ireland.

Sinead's work bridges practical beauty expertise, cosmetic science, and ingredient innovation, bringing together the worlds of salon practice, formulation, and sustainable biotechnology.



**Tracey Ryan**  
Co-Founder & Head of R&D,  
Doctrine Skincare

Tracey Ryan is a cosmetic chemist, herbal scientist, and co-founder of Doctrine Skincare, a science-led Irish brand that blends high-performance actives with a luxurious, sensory experience.

With over a decade of experience in the skincare industry and an HDip in Sustainability and Climate Action, Tracey champions honesty and transparency in beauty, creating products with purpose.



**Chris Mitchell**  
Co-Founder & CEO,  
Green Angel

Chris Mitchell is co-Founder and CEO of Green Angel, a luxury Irish skincare brand established in 2006. With years of experience in the cosmetics industry, Chris has extensive experience in business planning, retail, sales, marketing, and product development.

Green Angel products harness the benefits of mineral-rich seaweed from Irish coastal waters, combining the ancient therapies of aromatherapy and thalassotherapy to deliver an uplifting and indulgent skincare experience.

# Event Details

## Formulation and Manufacturing of Cosmetics Products

Insights into cosmetic formulation development and manufacturing processes, from concept to production.



**Siobhán Wilson**  
Business Development  
Manager,  
Ultrapure Laboratories

Siobhán Wilson is a strategic growth specialist with over 12 years of experience in cosmetics & new product development along with experience in the FMCG sectors. Currently at Ultrapure Laboratories and Contract Formulations as Business Development & Key Account Manager, Siobhán focuses on bringing their clients ideas to life by guiding initial concepts through the entire manufacturing journey to a shelf-ready, finished product.

Her career is marked by a strong track record of strategic account management and brand expansion, having previously managed significant portfolios at Cosmetic Creations, global brands including ghd Hair and Nestlé Ireland.

# Event Details

## Interview: Cosmetic Distribution

Join Dr Tim Yeomans (Centre Manager, CABR) in conversation with Kieran Walsh (Founder & CEO, National Beauty Distribution) on understanding distribution channels, building relationships with distributors and scaling your market reach.

### Moderator:



**Dr Tim Yeomans**  
Centre Manager, CABR

Dr Tim Yeomans has been working as a Centre Manager for the Centre for Applied Bioscience Research (CABR) since 2011, within this role he is responsible for on-going engagement with industry, scientific direction of the Centre as well as commercialisation of research.

Dr Tim Yeomans completed his PhD in Microbiology at University College Cork. Tim has previously held the position of Postdoctoral Fellow in the National Centre for Medical Genetics, Crumlin and the Dublin Dental School and Hospital.



**Kieran Walsh**  
Founder & CEO,  
National Beauty Distribution

Kieran Walsh founded National Beauty Distribution (NBD) in 2011. As CEO, he has led the business from €1 million to over €26 million in annual turnover over an eight-year period, while building a team of 80 across the country. A specialist in digital and influencer marketing since its infancy in 2012, he continues to help NBD remain at the forefront of that channel.

He has negotiated distribution contracts for market-leading brands such as KEVIN.MURPHY, ELEVEN Australia, asap Skin Products, K18, and most recently the Estée Lauder Group for AVEDA, as well as Davines and Color Wow.

# Event Details

## Investing in Cosmetics: A Venture Capital (VC) Perspective

What venture capital investors look for in cosmetics businesses, funding stages, and preparing for investment.



**Ciara Byrne**  
Founder, Vestra Partners

Ciara Byrne's career spans pioneering digital growth at Google, leading transformative initiatives at Condé Nast, and currently advancing beauty innovators through Vestra Partners. Her diverse career path weaves together strategic innovation, leadership in global fashion and media, and a dedication to supporting entrepreneurs, positioning her as a pivotal force in fostering long-term business growth.

As founder of Vestra Partners, Ciara applies her expertise to support early-stage beauty, wellness, and personal care brands with international potential.

## Intellectual Property Protection for Cosmetics Businesses

An overview of the role of IP in starting and growing innovative companies and the economic benefits of domestic IP-led business activity.



**Joe Doyle**  
Intellectual Property (IP)  
Manager, Enterprise Ireland

Joe Doyle is IP Manager with Enterprise Ireland (EI), where he manages the EI IP Strategy support programme, which helps start-ups and SMEs to make better use of IP to grow their businesses.

He also provides guidance on IP awareness and innovation and IP policy, sits on the NSAI National Innovation Management advisory committee, and since 2023 has been ranked among the top 300 IP strategists globally in the IAM Strategy 300 publication. His background is in scientific R&D and the commercialisation of university IP.

# Event Details

## Panel Discussion: Research and Development Pathways

Panel featuring cosmetics companies at different stages of R&D support, including contract research, as well as Enterprise Ireland's Innovation Voucher recipients and Innovation Partnership participants, discussing their experiences and outcomes.

### Panel Moderator:



**Dr Niall Burke**

Senior Business Development Scientist, CABR

Dr Niall Burke holds the role of Senior Business Development Scientist and Principal Investigator with the Centre for Applied Bioscience Research (CABR) at MTU.

Dr Burke completed his PhD in Cardiovascular Sciences at the Hatter Cardiovascular Institute of University College London, while researching the role of mitochondrial dynamics in cardiac ischaemia-reperfusion injury.



**Dr Emer Gilligan**

External Affairs Director, WaterWipes

Dr Emer Gilligan is the External Affairs Director at WaterWipes and leads a team responsible for product safety & regulatory compliance, medical & scientific product claims and research, and consumer care. This supports the global distribution of products, providing safe and effective skincare for consumers.

She has over 15 years' experience in the cosmetics industry where she has worked in a variety of product safety and compliance roles whilst also being heavily involved with researching skincare needs and cosmetics ingredients, with a focus on ingredient safety, function and impact on the skin.

# Event Details

## Panel Discussion: Research and Development Pathways



**Clare Devereux**  
Founder & Trichologist,  
Hair Health Essentials

Clare Devereux is an international trichologist and hair specialist working between Dublin and London. Known for her personalised approach to hair and scalp health, Clare's work sits at the intersection of science, identity, and confidence, helping women navigate the changes in hair that often accompany stress, hormonal shifts, illness, and major life transitions.

Clare is the founder of Hair Health Essentials, focused on restoring hair health through carefully formulated products and personalised hair care strategies. Through her work, Clare continues to advocate for a more thoughtful approach to hair health, one that recognises that hair is not simply cosmetic, but closely tied to confidence, identity, and wellbeing.



**David Cox**  
CEO, *Fragrances of Ireland*

David Cox is the CEO of Fragrances of Ireland Ltd, the producers of "Inis the Energy of the Sea", their fragrance and cosmetics brand that was launched in 1999 and now has over 5,000 retail stockists across the USA, Canada, UK, Germany, Ireland and Australia as well as a growing B2C following.

# Event Details

## Building a Values-Based Brand: The Ella & Jo Story

Learn how Ella & Jo's values-based branding has created fierce customer loyalty, clear strategic focus and enabled growth from the west of Ireland to 50 countries worldwide.



**Niamh Ryan**  
CEO & Co-Founder,  
Ella & Jo

Niamh Ryan, CEO and Co-Founder of Ella & Jo, is an advanced skin therapist and wellness advocate with over 15 years of experience in the international beauty sector, having trained to an expert level with some of the biggest international skincare brands on the market.

Based in the West of Ireland with her four children, Niamh spearheads Ella & Jo with her business partner Charlene, bringing joy and wellness into women's everyday lives with their award-winning products, formulations, and joy for life.

## B Corp Certification Journey: VOYA

An overview of VOYA's journey to B Corp certification and how it aligns with the brand's sustainability-led strategy.



**Andrew Darmody**  
General Manager - Commercial  
and Operations, VOYA

Andrew Darmody is General Manager - Commercial and Operations at VOYA, the award-winning Irish organic and sustainable skincare brand. With a proven track record in driving process improvement, operational excellence and sustainable growth, he has been instrumental in shaping VOYA's customer-centric approach and strengthening its position in the luxury spa and wellness market.

Holding a strong academic background in business and management, Andrew's career has focused on building high-performing teams, streamlining operations and delivering strategic commercial outcomes.

# Event Details

## Cosmetics Regulatory Outlook in 2026

An overview of the current regulatory environment for the cosmetics industry in Ireland, highlighting immediate priorities and challenges amidst an unprecedented wave of incoming EU regulations.



**Rian Morris**  
Sustainability & Chemicals  
Policy Lead, Ibec

Rian Morris leads the Irish Cosmetics and Detergents Association (ICDA), which sits within Ibec, Ireland's main industry representation body. With a background in research and development, Rian specialises in chemicals and sustainability policy.

In his role at the ICDA, he champions the interests of both domestic and multinational cosmetics brands in Ireland, helping them navigate complex compliance requirements and advocating on their behalf for practical, workable regulation.

## Cosmetic Claims & Scientific Communication: Translating Science into High Impact and Credible Consumer Messages

How to balance scientific evidence, regulatory requirements and consumer communication when developing credible cosmetic claims.



**David Jameson**  
Product Scientific  
Communication Manager,  
Oriflame R&D

David Jameson is Product Scientific Communication Manager at Oriflame R&D. He brings more than 15 years of experience in cosmetic science, specialising in clinical testing, skin physiology and product evaluation.

A published researcher and patent holder, David excels at translating complex scientific data into accessible insights for marketing and sales teams. His expertise ensures that product claims are substantiated and effectively communicated.

# Event Details

## Meet the Buyer Panel: Being Retail Ready

Expert retail buyers discussing what they look for in cosmetic brands, from packaging and positioning to pricing and retail readiness.

*Details to be confirmed*

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