# Over 220 coders, designers, and entrepreneurs to converge on Dogpatch Labs for Ulster Bank's Hackathon 2019

## Ireland's largest Fintech Hackathon is aimed at creating better services for banking customers

**8th April 2019**: Ulster Bank's 2019 Hackathon, in partnership with Dogpatch Labs, will kick off this Friday (12th April), aimed at creating better services for banking customers. Over 220 coders, designers, and entrepreneurs will gather in the spirit of hacking the future of financial innovation, to help both the Bank and customers. The 54-hour FinTech Hackathon, now Ireland's largest, is already fully subscribed.

The brief this year is to deliver innovative solutions to enable "Everyday Banking and Collaboration".

Attendees will work in teams over 54 hours to develop concepts to improve the banking experience and 'hack' these together to create working prototypes to benefit customers. The teams will have access to a host of supports at Dogpatch Labs, including the newly-launched Ulster Bank API sandbox, which gives the opportunity to rapidly test prototypes in a mimicked production environment. In addition an array of mentors, from engineering to industry experts will be available to support, from Microsoft, IBM, Nile and ViewsDX. Participants will also have access to pitching workshops, so that they can not only imagine and create ground-breaking solutions, but also pitch these to the judging panel.

The Hackathon includes a category for Ulster Bank staff to apply disruptive ideas and technologies to the organisation where they work every day, challenging them to think like a start-up or industry disruptor. This forms part of Ulster Bank's 'intrapreneurship' programme Startup, aimed at fostering and implementing entrepreneurship within the Bank.

The event culminates in competitive pitches to the judging panel, which is made up of Ulster Bank's Joe Heneghan, Damien Daly and Amelia Casey, as well as Patrick Walsh, Founder, Dogpatch Labs and other external experts. Prizes will be awarded to the winning team.

Commenting Joe Heneghan, Chief Administrative Officer, Ulster Bank said:

*"Ulster Bank is a strong supporter of innovation and we're all really looking forward to the annual Hackathon, which we hope will once again lead to better services for our customers. I'm pleased to say that a real entrepreneurial culture now exists within Ulster Bank and the annual Hackathon is a key step in our Startup 'intrapreneurship' programme, which is aimed at fostering and implementing entrepreneurship, so that our staff can find new ways to improve services for our customers".*

Patrick Walsh, Founder of Dogpatch Labs, said:

*"Dogpatch Labs is delighted to be hosting another year of the Ulster Bank Hackathon, which has become a cornerstone event in the calendar of the Irish FinTech ecosystem. For entrepreneurs this is a unique opportunity to connect senior leadership from Ulster Bank and also RBS, which is one of the largest banks in the UK. This year also is on track for the largest staff sign up to date, which is a great indicator of the cultural shift within Ulster Bank itself and how the organisation as a whole is embracing innovation."*

For more information visit: [dogpatchlabs.com/ulsterbankhackathon/](dogpatchlabs.com/ulsterbankhackathon/)

**ENDS**

**Notes to Editors:**

- A Hackathon brings a group of people from a number of disciplines together to 'hack' out new ideas and bring them to a certain stage to pitch to a multi-disciplinary panel of experts.
- The process is two-fold and as well as creating ideas, participants will be able to avail of some pitch training and mentor sessions both at the event and following the event, for the successful projects.
- This process uses no real customer data, the project will create a 'sandbox' of dummy data specially constructed by the project to emulate real situations, to use in the development phase.
- The goal is to provide an environment which fosters intensive innovative thinking and entrepreneurship for new service provision to bank customers.
- Over the weekend teams will have access to a host of supports at Dogpatch Labs, including engineering support and industry mentors. Participants will have access to Ulster Bank's new Sandbox developer portal, a sandbox API to make it possible for third parties to securely access dummy data and test their applications, so that new services and innovative solutions can be created for our customers. This represents an exciting new direction for banking services, and Ulster Bank is proud to be providing this portal, which will open a range of new innovative solutions for customers. Teams are also given UI Path licenses to develop automation solutions and the full Microsoft cloud platform will be made available. Microsoft Technical experts will also be on hand throughout the weekend, allowing teams to rapidly configure business–ready prototypes. There will also be support from Nile and ViewsDX and pitching workshops to help participants develop and create concepts, but also learn how to communicate their ideas to the judges.
- The event is a partnership between Ulster Bank and Dogpatch Labs.