

WINNERS OF 2019 ULSTER BANK HACKATHON ANNOUNCED

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

Over 200 coders, designers, and entrepreneurs gathered for a weekend of innovation, competition and fun

15 April 2019: Projects on student banking, financial advice in home settings and digital ways to bank were announced as winners of Ulster Bank's 2019 Hackathon at Dogpatch Labs in Dublin's CHQ last night.

Ulster Bank's 2019 Hackathon, in partnership with Dogpatch Labs, kicked off on Friday (12th April) and was aimed at creating better services for banking customers. Over 200 coders, designers, and entrepreneurs gathered in Dogpatch Labs over the weekend, 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, was fully subscribed and had attendees from 15 countries.

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

The Ulster Bank hackathon, which has been running since 2015, has gone from strength to strength, with the number attending increasing year on year.

Attendees worked in teams to develop concepts to improve the banking experience and 'hack' these together to create working prototypes to benefit customers. The teams had access to a host of supports over the weekend, including the newly-launched Ulster Bank API sandbox, which gives the opportunity to rapidly test prototypes in a mimicked production environment. Mentoring sessions throughout the weekend were an added benefit for attendees, who could ask questions and gain insight from an array of engineering and industry experts from Microsoft, IBM, Nile and ViewsDX. Participants also had access to pitching workshops, so that they could not only imagine and create ground-breaking solutions, but also pitch these to the judging panel.

The Hackathon included a category for Ulster Bank staff to apply disruptive ideas and technologies to the Bank, challenging them to think like an entrepreneur or start up. This forms part of Ulster Bank's intrapreneurship programme Startup, aimed at fostering and implementing entrepreneurship within the Bank.

The event culminated in competitive public pitches to the judging panel, which was made up of Ulster Bank's Joe Heneghan, Damien Daly and Amelia Casey, as well as Patrick Walsh, Dogpatch Labs and Claire Fitzpatrick from Consensus.

The winning teams from the event are:

1. External category: LoanDog

An app to help students applying for a loan and make loan repayments using transactional data and APIs combined with analysis from social media.

2. Consultant Category: Home2Home

Allowing customers to access personal financial advice from their home.

3. Internal staff category (Startup): Way-to-Pay

Calculating the real cost of writing cheques and providing new digital ways to pay

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

“They say two heads are better than one, so this weekend we put over 200 heads together to come up with new ways to create better services for our customers. I’m delighted to say that some of the country’s most brilliant coders, designers, and entrepreneurs came together for a weekend packed full of innovation, competition and fun. At Ulster Bank we are strong supporters of innovation and I’m delighted to say that once again this year the Hackathon produced some really strong ideas, which have the potential to deliver better, industry-leading services for our customers. I want to thank everyone who took part in this brilliant and inspiring weekend for sharing your ideas and abilities.

As well as bringing together coders and developers from outside of banking, the annual Hackathon is also a key step in our ‘intrapreneurship’ Startup programme, aimed at fostering and implementing entrepreneurship within the Bank. Importantly, it allows Ulster Bank staff to apply disruptive ideas and technologies to the organisation where they work every day. This weekend I witnessed some of the most insightful and creative ideas coming from our own people and was proud to see their commitment to finding new ways to improve the banking experience for our customers.”

Patrick Walsh MD of Dogpatch Labs said:

“Here at Dogpatch Labs we’re committed to supporting and accelerating the development of Ireland’s startup community and we were delighted to once again host the Ulster Bank Hackathon, which has become a cornerstone event in the calendar of the Irish FinTech ecosystem.

Congratulations to all the winners of this year’s event. Over the weekend, we gathered expertise from around the world and the competition has been intense. Ireland is growing every year as a centre for innovation in Fintech and the more companies that embrace this development in a collaborative and positive way, the more ground-breaking and exciting the outcomes will be for customers.”

For more information visit: 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 were able to avail of some pitch training and mentor sessions both at the event and following the event, for the successful projects.
- The goal is to provide an environment which fosters intensive innovative thinking and entrepreneurship for new service provision to bank customers.

- The event is a partnership between Ulster Bank and Dogpatch Labs.