



Press Release – Immediate Release

Skin and Wound Healing Research Expert and Entrepreneur Receives 2025 NovaUCD Innovation Award

Dublin, Ireland, 10 April 2025, Professor Wenxin Wang, a leading skin and wound healing research expert and entrepreneur, and a Research Ireland Principal Investigator at the UCD Charles Institute of Dermatology, UCD School of Medicine, has been named the recipient of the 2025 NovaUCD Innovation Award.

This Award recognises excellence in innovation or of successes achieved in the commercialisation of UCD research, or other intellectual activity, by the Awardee over a number of years.

Professor Wang was presented with his Award by Professor Orla Feely, President, University College Dublin (UCD) during the annual presentation of the NovaUCD Innovation Awards which took place at the UCD University Club.

Professor Wang's academic and research expertise is focused on areas of biomaterials, stem cell and gene therapy for the treatments of skin wounds, cartilage/bone regeneration, including dental tissue regeneration.

On receiving the 2025 NovaUCD Innovation Award, Professor Wenxin Wang, said, "I am delighted to receive this Award from NovaUCD as my dream and passion is always within innovation and scientific discovery, using my talents with an ultimate goal of translating my scientific discovery into real-world applications to benefit humankind. In the years ahead I will keep pursuing this life mission of mine."

Professor Wang's intellectual property portfolio includes 12 invention disclosures to NovaUCD, being a named inventor on 30+ patents during his career, and launching and commercialising multiple developed technologies onto the market.



He is also a serial entrepreneur and the founder of three start-up companies, including Vornia, which was acquired by Ashland in 2018, Bláfar, and Branca Bunús a UCD spin-out biotech company which he founded in 2019.

Branca Bunús is focused on developing and commercialising polymer-based gene therapies for patients suffering from genetic disorders.

Branca Bunús has secured multiple patents, European Medicines Agency orphan drug designation, and ISO 9001:2015 certification, positioning the company as a leader in non-viral gene delivery field. The company which currently employs a staff of 7 recently relocated from NovaUCD to Cherrywood as part of its strategy to grow and scale.

Professor Wang has also developed strong links with industry partners, which includes collaborating with Amryt Pharma, Curran Scientific Ltd and DEBRA Ireland on an €8+ million DTIF funded project. This project focused on the development of a disruptive gene therapy platform to replace viruses in the treatment of genetic conditions, such as EB (Epidermolysis Bullosa), using a new polymer-based delivery platform.

Professor Wang has published over 250 peer-reviewed scientific journal papers and is also a strong advocate in supporting the next generation of researchers and innovators as he has supervised and graduated 27 PhD students and mentored over 25 postdoctoral researchers.

The annual NovaUCD Innovation Awards highlight successes made in areas of knowledge transfer, consultancy, entrepreneurship and the promotion of an innovation culture, by members of the UCD research, innovation and entrepreneurial community.

Speaking at the event Professor Orla Feely, UCD, President, said, "UCD is committed to delivering impact from our leading research and innovation across a broad range of disciplines. The NovaUCD Innovation Awards, which have become a key annual event, recognise the achievements of our research, innovation and entrepreneurial communities and demonstrate our strength in developing talent and creating and applying knowledge to deliver impact.



I congratulate all who have received this year's Awards and wish the Awardees every future success as they continue to deliver impact in Ireland and further afield through their commercialisation, consultancy, entrepreneurial and innovation activities."

A total of 7 Awards were presented by Professor Feely and the other Awardees are;

2025 NovaUCD Invention of the Year Award: Dr Emer Doheny, UCD School of Electrical and Electronic Engineering and Dr Jayne Carberry, UCD School of Medicine

2025 NovaUCD Spin-out of the Year Award: LaNua Medical, co-founders, Tom Fitzmaurice, Dr Cormac Farrelly, UCD School of Medicine, Dr Eoin O'Cearbhaill and Sajjad Amiri, UCD School of Mechanical and Materials Engineering

2025 NovaUCD Consultancy of the Year Award: Dr Siobhan Mullan, UCD School of Veterinary Medicine

2025 NovaUCD Licence of the Year Award: Professor Peter Kennedy, UCD School of Electrical and Electronic Engineering

2025 NovaUCD CEO of the Year Award: Mike McGearty, Meili

2025 NovaUCD Innovation Champion of the Year Award: Professor Kevin O'Connor, BiOrbic, Research Ireland Centre for Bioeconomy and UCD School of Biomolecular and Biomedical Science.

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