The TSSG Technology Gateway Innovation Process

The Technology Gateway in the Telecommunications and Software Systems Group (TSSG) is a partnership between Waterford Institute of Technology (WIT) and Enterprise Ireland which offers supports to Irish companies through various funding and technical mechanism.

TSSG is the ICT research and development wing of WIT and employs over 90 software developers, engineers, UX/UI designers and PhD researchers. Dedicated to research in specific focus areas such as Networks & Cloud Computing, VR/AR, Artificial Intelligence, Machine learning, Data Mining and Software System Architecture and Engineering, the TSSG is one of the leading ICT research institutions in Ireland.

With over 700 project partners, TSSG researchers have their finger on the pulse with new and cutting-edge technologies in the areas of Future Health, Precision Agriculture, Smart Energy, Intelligent Transport Systems & Molecular Communications and Computing. Almost half of the projects currently active in the research centre are direct industry projects working to improve Ireland's status as a leader in tech start-ups.

Enterprise Ireland, in a bid to extend access to this expertise, have come up with ways for Irish businesses to engage with the researchers and projects in TSSG. One of the ways in which you can begin to engage with our experts is through the Innovation Voucher Programme.

Innovation Voucher Programme

The TSSG Technology Gateway and Enterprise Ireland can provide supports with a value of €20k maximising the Innovation Voucher Programme. This is a three phased programme which aims to bring you as close to a click-through-demo prototype as possible. The three phases may be used according to your business needs and is fluid to your project development roadmap. Our expert team of UX/UI designers were finalists in the 2019 UX Awards in the 'UX Achievement in Financial Services' category for a UX/UI wireframe they developed for a fintech client using the Innovation Voucher Programme. Your company can achieve the same results by following the process outlined in this article which is currently being offered online as the TSSG team continue to work remotely; the only difference is conversations and workshops are conducted via ZOOM or Teams.

Phase One:

Innovation Sprint: Using your first voucher worth €5k (you pay the VAT only) enables you to work with a panel of experts cherry-picked according to the skills required for your project. This can be done as successfully online as it is in person. A Sprint workshop can be used to brainstorm your business needs and match those needs with new technologies. (The steps taken to perform the Sprint are highlighted in the image below.)

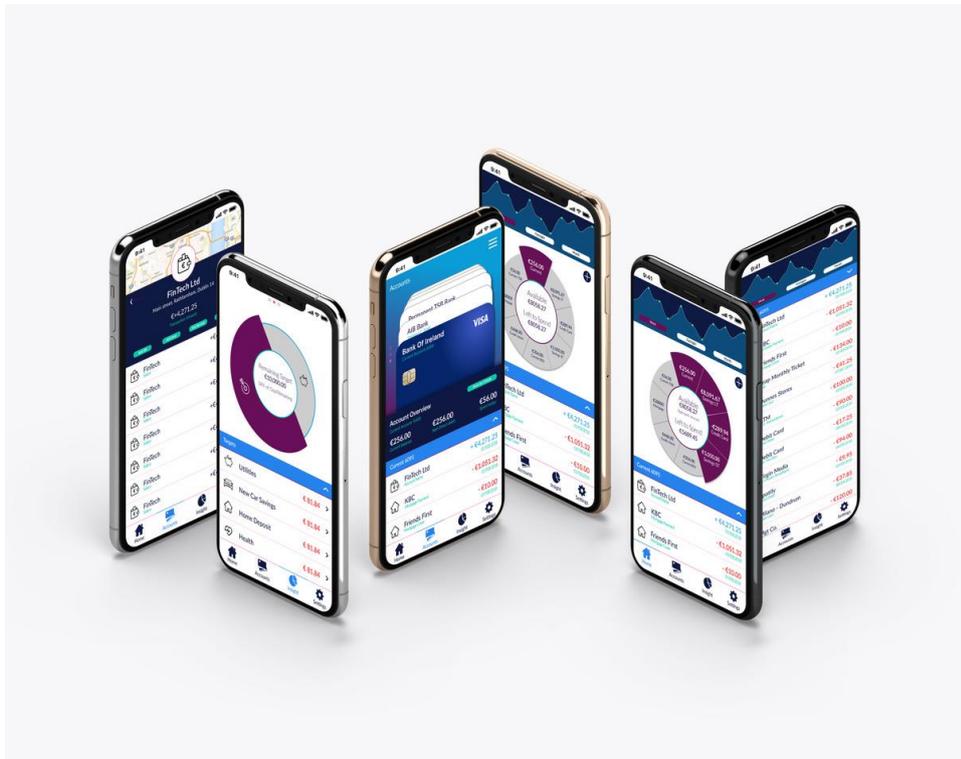### Output: Report outlining a technical strategy

Sprint team during Step 4 of the SPRINT process; brainstorming a prototype

Phase Two:

Using the second innovation voucher (worth €5K – you pay the VAT only) you can take the technical strategy and map this into a UX/UI design strategy and align the needs with that of your user.

This phase brings life to the strategy outlined in the report from phase one.

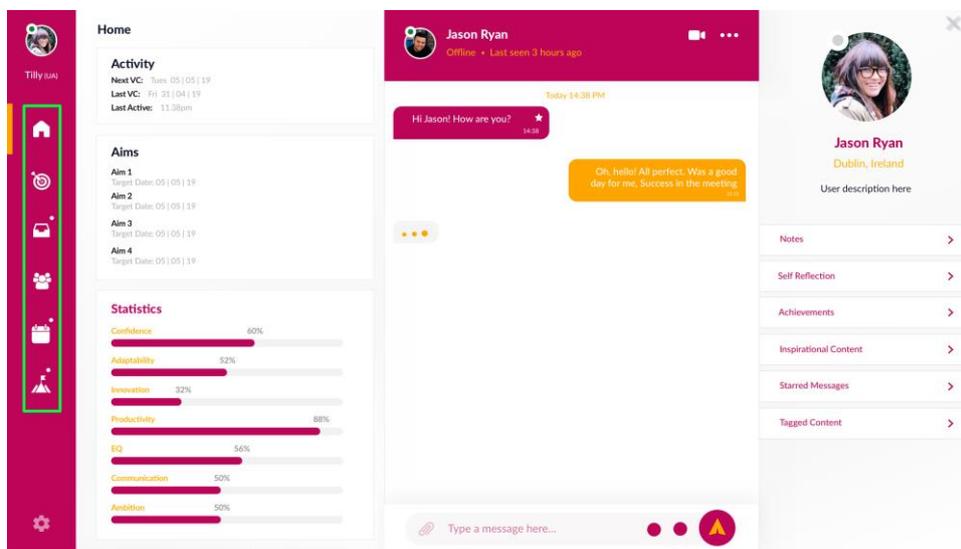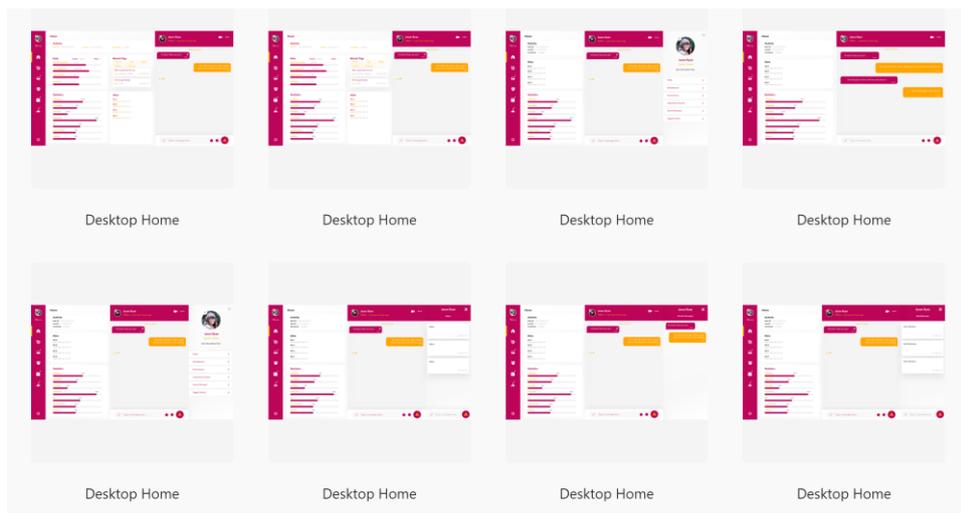**Output: UX/UI Strategy - A set of wireframes and user journeys.**

Example UX/UI Strategy

Phase Three:

Using the third and final Innovation Voucher (worth €10k, €5k matched by EI) you will receive a click-through-demo prototype of the application, dashboard, data analytic framework or whatever platform would need to be built.

Output: Demo Click Through Prototype

Shown below, the user journey can be explored by clicking though the steps to review the application and view the clients' experience.

Screenshots of the click-through-demo prototype

Next Steps

- The demo prototype is a useful tool that you can use for pitching this idea to investors or, if you are an Enterprise Ireland client, you can benefit from the Innovation Partnership Programme (IPP) in order to access funding towards building out the application. The Innovation Partnership Programme offers up to 80% funding by EI and 20% by you, the industry partner and TSSG can continue to develop your solution and realise your goal.
- To qualify for the IPP, you must:
- Have an Enterprise Ireland Development Advisor (DA) to support your application.
- Your business must be in positive EBITA to support the commercialisation of the new platform.

The Team

 For more information and for support in your application contact the TSSG Technology Gateway team who have been guiding companies through this process for many years. Miguel, Carol and Jim

will be delighted to have a friendly chat and advise you on the supports and funding options available. They can also arrange to show you a live demo of a click-through-protype.

Miguel Ponce De Leon, Technology Gateway Manager – miguelpld@tssg.org

Jim Prendergast, Business Development Executive – jprendergast@tssg.org

Carol Faughnan, Business Development Executive – cfaughnan@tssg.org