



Published: Fri 23 May 2025, 5:14 PM



Minister for Further and Higher Education, James Lawless, with Offaly Fianna Fáil TD Tony McCormack at this week's event in Mount Lucas.

Mount Lucas launch for modern construction upskilling platform

Skillnet MMC Accelerate, a new national online platform designed to upskill Ireland's construction workforce in Modern Methods of Construction (MMC), was launched in Mount Lucas on Wednesday by Ministers of State James Lawless and Marian Harkin.

Developed by Skillnet Ireland in partnership with the Construction IT Alliance (CitA), the platform aims to provide businesses and professionals with access to training, resources, and career pathways in order to accelerate the adoption of MMC and help meet Ireland's housing and climate targets.

The launch took place at the National Construction Training Campus in Mount Lucas, with key representatives from Skillnet Ireland, CitA and the wider construction industry in attendance.



Image 1 of 2 James Lawless, Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science, pictured at the launch event for the Skillnet MMC Accelerate platform, held in the National Construction Training Campus in Mount Lucas.

Following the Ministers' visit, Offaly TD Tony McCormack called for sustained government investment in the National Construction Training Campus.

Deputy McCormack praised the state-of-the-art facility, highlighting its key role in advancing modern construction practices in Ireland. "Mount Lucas is more than just a training centre - it's a national asset," he said.

"The work being done here is at the cutting edge of sustainable and efficient building methods. It's vital that we continue to support and invest in its development."

During the visit, Deputy McCormack and Minister for Further and Higher Education James Lawless saw firsthand the practical training and education being delivered to apprentices and upskilling workers. The campus is central to the rollout of Modern Methods of Construction (MMC), which are expected to play a major role in meeting Ireland's housing and infrastructure needs.

"With the housing crisis and climate targets in mind, Mount Lucas is perfectly positioned to lead a national shift in how we build," said McCormack. "Further investment will not only benefit Offaly, but help the entire country adopt smarter, greener building techniques."

The call for investment comes amid growing recognition of the importance of skilled trades and innovative training in meeting the challenges of the construction sector. McCormack said that supporting Mount Lucas was a strategic move that aligns with Ireland's long-term goals in housing, employment, and sustainability.

"Offaly is showing what's possible," he concluded. "Now is the time to build on that success."

Taoiseach Micheál Martin recently voiced his support for greater investment in training and upskilling construction workers at the National Construction Training Campus.

Responding to a question from Deputy McCormack in the Dáil this month, the Taoiseach agreed with the Offaly TD's call for additional funding and committed to sitting down with Deputy McCormack and the Minister for Further and Higher Education to look at how this can be delivered.

"I could not agree more with Deputy McCormack on modern methods of construction and I would be very interested in the further education sector dealing with that issue," said Micheál Martin.

"There is capacity in that sector and in Mount Lucas, in particular. I might talk to the Deputy about that later. Certainly, we should both talk to the Minister of State for Further and Higher Education, Deputy Lawless, and Minister Marian Harkin, in respect of pursuing that agenda," added the Taoiseach.

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Editor: Tadhg Carey
Address: The Junction Business Innovation Centre, Unit 19H Axis Business Park, Clara Road, Tullamore, Co. Offaly, Ireland
Phone: +353 (0) 5793 26756

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