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Michael Comer received his primary degree at the University of Ulster, a Diploma of Imperial College, the University of London and a Doctorate from the University of Natural Resources and Applied Life Sciences, Vienna. Dr Comer holds a professorship in a “joint chair” between the Ulster University and the Queen’s University, Belfast. He is also a Guest Professor at the University of Natural Resources and Applied Life Sciences, Vienna. Before his retirement in 2011 he was the Head and Managing Director of the Fighting Blindness Vision Research Institute in Dublin. He is a former acting Director of Life Sciences at the Science Foundation Ireland before taking up the position of Director of Research at the Adelaide and Meath Hospital including the National Children’s Hospital Tallaght, Dublin, a teaching hospital of Trinity College the National Universities of Ireland. He has a distinguished international career spanning more than 40 years experience in research and development in the biotech and bio medical-science spheres. Originally, a native of Belfast, Dr. Comer’s career took him via England (1972 – 1978) where he was working as a senior scientist at the Microbiological Research Establishment, Porton Down to Germany (1978 – 1996) where he rose to the position of Vice President of Biotechnological R & D at Boehringer Mannheim GmbH (now Roche), Penzberg, Upper Bavaria. Here he was responsible for several departments conducting research into diagnostics, molecular biologics and biopharmaceuticals. From this research endeavor he is named as inventor/co-inventor on several patents and author/co-author on many scientific articles and publications. He was the founding Chairman of the Animal Cell Technology Industrial Platform as well as the Chairman for the global conference of the European Society of Animal Cell Technology, in Dublin in 2009 with some thousand delegates.

On his return to Ireland in 1997 to set up a Joint Venture Bio-Pharma Company, he was also pivotal figure in the foundation of the Irish Bio-Industry Association (IBIA) where he was also the founding Chairman. In 1998 Prof Comer became Vice Chair of the Health and Life Sciences Panel, of the Government’s ‘Foresight Exercise’. The resulting recommendations of this were to initiate the establishment of Science Foundation Ireland with an R&D budget of some €650 million. He was also the first Chairman of Invest Northern Ireland’s International Expert Panel on Biotechnology. In 2001, the then Minister of Health (Tánaiste) Mary Harney appointed Prof Comer as one of the six Irish representatives to the US Ireland R&D task force that was to examine possibilities for joint North-South and US science research collaborations under the sponsorship of the United States Secretary of Health and the US Director of National Institute of Health (NIH). In May 2003, Prof Comer was appointed to Science Foundation Ireland to act in the interim capacity of Director of the Life Sciences Division, overseeing the allocation and management of funds dedicated to research in the biosciences in excess of €300 Million. This exciting initiative was to

form the basis of the Government's endeavor to improve Ireland's position in the acquisition of scientific knowledge and opinion in order to sustain a future socioeconomic advantage in Ireland's world competitiveness. He has represented the Foundation and Ireland on both national and international bodies such as the Task Force on Nanotechnology as well as an advisor to the European Commission on future research funding in Framework Programme. He has been on several expert assessment panels for scientific project proposals in Vienna and Austria as well as a member of the Strategic Advisory Committee for the EQ-VIBT/BOKU.