

Kainos Group chief takes Ardlinn executive title

The inaugural Ardlinn Executive of the Month has been named as Brendan Mooney, chief executive of Kainos Group Plc, the Belfast-headquartered digital giant employing 1,060 people in 13 offices worldwide.

Selected for his contribution to the continued growth of one of the leading technology companies on the island of Ireland, Mooney is the first of 12 C-Suite executives who will be shortlisted for the Ardlinn Executive of the Year award in the coming months. Mooney joined Kainos in 1989, having graduated from Ulster University with a degree in Computer Science and progressed quickly through the ranks, taking on his current position at the company's helm in 2001.

"Brendan is an inspirational leader who has grown Kainos from a small company into a global business employing over 1,000 people across Ireland, Britain, Europe and the US," said Aine Brolly, founder and director of Ardlinn, the executive search arm of Cpl Resources Plc.

"Since taking the helm in 2001, he has demonstrated exceptional qualities, scaling a pioneering business to achieve outstanding commercial success. In the process, he has nurtured and developed local talent, which has supported the company's

position as an innovator in the field of digital technology."

She continued: "We are delighted to recognise his achievements and believe it is important that the business community supports and champions the significant contribution executives like Brendan play in building a sustainable Irish economy." The Ardlinn Executive of the Year Award aims to bring to light the crucial role played by top-level executives, like Brendan Mooney, in positioning the country as an FDI leader on the global stage and home to many high-growth indigenous firms.

The overall winner will be



Brendan is an inspirational leader who has grown Kainos from a small company into a global business employing over 1,000 people

announced at a special event in November 2018, with Ibec chief executive Danny McCoy acting as external adviser.

"Brendan Mooney has shown that scaling a business that is both world class and achieving a global footprint is possible from the island of Ireland," said McCoy.

"He and colleagues have combined talent with technology to deliver strong added value for customers whilst making substantial contributions to the wider society in which they operate."

Mooney began his career at Kainos in technical roles before progressing into pre-sales and project management positions following a move to the company's Dublin office in 1994. Six years later, he returned to Belfast to begin preparing for his current role as chief executive.

"Brendan Mooney is typical of many of the leading executives driving business growth in Ireland today," said Elaine O'Regan, spokesperson for *The Sunday Business Post*. "He has aligned his own career development with the strategic growth of the company he now leads, building on his technical skills over the years through valuable commercial and managerial experience."

Mooney himself sees further growth in the pipeline for Kainos in the months ahead.

"I am very pleased to re-



Elaine O'Regan (far right) interviewed the first Ardlinn Exec award winner Brendan Mooney, CEO of Kainos. Brendan is pictured with Aine Brolly CEO of Ardlinn (centre) and Elaine O'Regan at the Kainos Offices in Belfast, Northern Ireland
Arthur Allison/Pacemaker

ceive the first Ardlinn Executive of the Month Award on behalf of the entire company," he said.

"We are an ambitious company. We have grown a lot over the last few years and, for me, there is an opportunity for us to double again in size to over 2,000 people in a reasonably short period of time. When you hire talented ambitious people, you have got to give them the opportunity to develop those talents and to see their ambitions realised. For us, it's about continuing to grow and deliver to both our customers and our staff."

For more info on Ardlinn, log on to ardlinn.com

Winning insights

Brendan Mooney, chief executive of Kainos Plc and Ardlinn Executive of the Month:

"I studied Computer Science at Ulster University and joined Kainos in 1989, two years after it had been set up. My late father had bought a computer for the house in 1982 and that was really the point at which I went from playing computer games to looking at how you could go about creating programmes. I fell in

love with it.

"I was in a class of 28 at Ulster University and 24 of us had to emigrate in order to get jobs. That's very different to today where there is almost full employment for graduates. I see millennial graduates as better versions of ourselves. They are coming out with a good bit of knowledge and a real desire to change the world and make it a better place. That's something we as an employer look to harness and develop. I'm not involved in technology now as much as I used to be. I still find the technology aspect great, but how

you build the culture of an organisation is equally interesting.

"Support is important. Often as chief executive, you're thought of as knowing everything and having all the answers. That's never the case. I've had a lot of help over the years from Kainos co-founders Frank Graham and John Lillywhite. I've also used professional coaches and I have done a number of executive education programmes. I always like to be in a room where at least three-quarters of the people there are much better and have

much more impressive organisations than mine. You can learn so much from your peer group."