

# Screen your baby's health

**E**NZOLVE Technologies, based at the UCD Innovation and Technology Transfer Centre, recently launched a novel newborn screening test for phenylketonuria (PKU), an inherited metabolic disorder that results in severe mental retardation if treatment is not started within the first few weeks of life.

The company, co-founded by Paul C Engel and Suren Aghajanian as a spin-out from UCD's School of Biomolecular and Biomedical Science, has designed and developed its novel diagnostic test over the past two years.

The PKU test is the first in a suite of products, called NeoScreenPak, which Enzolve Technologies is developing to screen for metabolic disorders in babies. Enzolve says NeoScreenPak tests are simpler, faster,

more reliable, convenient and cost-effective than tests available on the market. The company has secured investment from Enterprise Ireland to produce the screening kits for emerging international markets.

"Securing funding from Enterprise Ireland, matching input from private investors, has been key in furthering this commercialisation process," said Mr Aghajanian. "We've had interest from China, Russia and South America, all huge markets, and they are only at the beginning of the process of making neonate screening standard practice."

The simplicity and relatively low cost of these kits should make them particularly attractive in countries such as India, China, Brazil and Egypt, which are just starting to screen their babies on a large scale.

In relation to the current economic environment he says: "It should not have any significant affect upon our particular sector... The investment issue has caused us some delays, but we will soon be doubling our employment to eight highly qualified PhD people."

Having come to UCD 15 years ago, Mr Aghajanian, who is now an Irish citizen, sees major economic potential in the general area of academia and industry: "I have found Ireland a very receptive environment for entrepreneurship and believe its agencies and support funding provide a strong base to develop good business."

**Name:** Suren Aghajanian  
**Country of origin:** Armenia  
**Company:** Enzolve Technologies  
**Activity:** Pharma bio R&D of diagnostic product for neo-natal infants  
**Location:** Dublin

