



# Valeo link up with **NUIG** to develop 'smart' car software

By JACQUELINE HOGGE

TUAM firm Valeo has linked up with a research group at **NUI Galway** to develop road safety software that will allow drivers to see blind spots around vehicles.

The Connaught Automotive Research (CAR) Group at the University researches topics related to automotive vision systems to help improve road safety.

The ultimate aim of such research is to develop intelligent cars that have a greater awareness of their environment and a greater ability to avoid crashes, for example.

Valeo has a presence in 27 countries around the world, with its Irish operations based in the IDA park on the Dunmore Road in Tuam.

The company, which is one of the world's leading manufacturers of automotive vision systems, recently announced a significant increase in its Research and Development activities and is currently recruiting for a number of posts.

Peter Reilly, R&D Director at Valeo Vision Systems, said the partnership with **NUIG** was already making an impact.

"Having access to a world class research group such as CAR means that we have a pool of new technology, ideas and potential employees right on our doorstep," he said.

"We already have a number of NUI postgraduates who have been involved with the

CAR Group working at our R&D offices in Tuam and they are really making an impact on our engineering capabilities."

The CAR Group comprises a team of researchers who work in close collaboration with industry on the development of the image processing systems.

Dr Martin Glavin, who leads the group with Dr Edward Jones, said the partnership with Valeo gave them a considerable advantage.

"Having a market leader as a research partner provides the CAR Group with a breadth and depth of knowledge of the requirements of industry that we might not otherwise be able to access," he said.

"We have a fantastic working relationship with Valeo Vision Systems and they have been extremely supportive of our work at **NUI Galway** over the years. Our researchers gain invaluable experience by learning about the industry first-hand from people who work in that market every day."

Dr Jones added: "Our research with Valeo allows us to exploit our expertise in signal processing and related technologies in a very relevant way. Furthermore, the fact that our Masters and PhD-level graduates are already being employed in significant numbers by companies like Valeo is a tangible example of the value of investment in University research, and with Valeo's recent announcement of 100 new jobs, we see a growing

demand for highly qualified graduates".

Over the years, the CAR Group at **NUI Galway** has received funding from Enterprise Ireland, IRCSET and directly from industry.

Dr Neil Ferguson, Acting Director of the **NUI Galway** Technology Transfer Office, says the partnership with Valeo Vision Systems is very much aligned to the University's core mission of supporting regional development.

"Valeo is an excellent example of a knowledge-intensive company who are successfully competing in a very competitive market. We hope to contribute to this success through the provision of experienced PhD graduates and innovative technologies."