



## E-Zine N° 3 June 2004

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### Background of the I<sup>3</sup> project

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The I<sup>3</sup> project – “The Innovation and Incubation Initiative” is a pilot project co-financed under the Leonardo da Vinci programme.

The I<sup>3</sup> project aims to address the needs of Business Innovation Centres (BICs) and Business Incubators (BIs) in relation to competitiveness and quality management by providing information and web based training to business incubator personnel. The project will provide the staff and management of BICs and BIs with information and training focusing specifically on the different types of support needed by **High growth SMEs** or **High Potential Start-Ups (HPSUs)** located in these centres.

The project was set up in order to boost the performance of business incubators by increasing the level of information and training available to their personnel. As the project developed however it was decided to expand the target audience to include business advisors and this is highlighted elsewhere in the E-Zine.

To reach this objective the project is going through the following stages:

- ✳ Undertaking a thorough analysis of the training needs of target groups including incubated companies;
- ✳ Developing a multimedia training tool based on the results of the research conducted on training needs, comprising an online training tool, a directory of best practices, case studies, and a platform for the exchange of information;
- ✳ Carrying out an in-depth evaluation on the processes adopted throughout the project.

The project involves 8 partners from 5 different countries;

#### National partners:

- IRELAND : WESTBIC
- SPAIN: Instituto de Empresa
- GREECE: Atlantis Consulting
- LITHUANIA: Kaunas University of Technology – Regional Business Incubator
- NORTHERN IRELAND (UK): Initiative Economic Development
- NORTHERN IRELAND (UK): Omagh Enterprise Company Ltd

#### European partners:

- European Business and Innovation Centre Network (EBN)
- European Business Angel Network (EBAN)

EBAN and EBN are European organisations with their head offices located in Brussels.

The project extends over a period of 24 months.

## **Editorial**

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The third I<sup>3</sup> meeting was hosted on March 25 and 26 by the Instituto de Empresa in Madrid. The aim of the meeting was twofold: for the Instituto, which is responsible for the development of the content of the training tool, to explain the work achieved and the next steps; for the partners, to understand the methodology used by the Instituto and the work ahead for each one of them.

The project is completing its second phase, namely the development of the training tool.

The content developed by Instituto, with the support of the 7 other partners, is very ambitious and at this stage the partnership is very satisfied with the learning methodology developed for the incubator manager and by the quality of the information contained in the modules completed.

The third issue of the E-Zine looks closely at European projects concerned with intellectual property issues, identified in the Training Need Analysis (conducted in the beginning of the project) as a crucial field in which incubator managers needed training, and consequently has become one of the "learning modules" developed for the online training tool.

Readers should be aware that I<sup>3</sup> partners welcome feedback from non-members.

## **Synopsis of the I<sup>3</sup> meeting held in Madrid**

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The partners reviewed the work that had been undertaken since the last meeting held in Kaunas (Lithuania) in July 2003.

The discussion was centred around the definite approval of the working modules developed by Instituto de Empresa that would both address areas of interest to the High Growth Potential Start-Up (HPSU) and follow a life-cycle model (from concept to commercialisation) as agreed in Kaunas.

Instituto de Empresa had the opportunity to present the work done so far and how the number and content of the modules had been refined in the course of the discussions with the partners and also through those held during a meeting between Instituto de Empresa, the project coordinator (WESTBIC) and the partner responsible for Technical Realisation (Initiative Economic Development) in Dublin in December 2003.

The meeting in Madrid helped the Instituto de Empresa to finalise the input needed from the partners and the content of the training tool.

Discussions were held on the issue of pilot testing and a strategy designed in order to implement the pilot testing after the technical realisation is complete. While the partners all had different opinions and ideas on how the pilot testing could be carried out, it was decided that only one method would be used for purposes of clarity and feedback on the course content. The evaluation method would involve a full test with tutorial support whereby participants could provide feedback on the different aspects of the tool including content, layout, navigation, accessibility, and would allow the partner responsible for technical realisation to address the problem areas.

At least 5 UK and 4 organisations from each of the other partner countries will participate in the pilot test.

***Do not hesitate to contact us should you be interested in participating in the pilot testing of our training tool!***

### **I<sup>3</sup>: Where are we now?**

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Currently the work of the I-Cubed network is focused on the finalisation of the material for the training tool and its technical realisation. Instituto de Empresa has developed with the support of the rest of the partners an architecture for the training modules.

The training tool is articulated around 3 different modules reflecting the different stages of development of the incubatee company:

Module 1: Identifying promising prospects and supporting the creation of high-growth SMEs – HGSME - (pre-incubation stage);

Module 2: Supporting the early stages of the HGSME;

Module 3: Assisting the growth and consolidation of the HGSME.

Each module is composed of several “sub-modules” addressing specific issues and problems faced by the HGSME.

Each sub-module includes one or several “case studies” illustrating the point made with a real-life or story case, as well as exercises, tips, links...

Partners had responsibility for providing feedback on the content and layout developed by the Instituto as well as on the case studies and exercises in order to enhance their comprehensiveness and efficiency for the incubator manager who will be using the training tool.

All the partners are satisfied that the material is well developed and corresponds to the needs expressed by the interviewees in the Training Needs Analysis.

## What are the next steps?

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Initiative Economic Development is responsible for the adaptation of the content developed by Instituto de Empresa into the most user-friendly and attractive format for the potential user. The next step will be the pilot testing, following precise guidelines on how it should be conducted and which results are sought by Omagh Enterprise in cooperation with the rest of the partners.

## Related projects

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### *Thematic Monitoring Conference in Cyprus*

The Leonardo da Vinci National Agencies of the Netherlands, Greece, Norway, Spain, Bulgaria, Cyprus, the Czech Republic and Romania in association with the European Commission DG Education and Culture and the Socrates, Leonardo & Youth Technical Assistance Office recently organised a conference on the **“Development of skills within companies, particularly SMEs”**.

The Conference took place on the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> of May 2004 on the beautiful island of Cyprus and was attended by WESTBIC, the lead partner of the I<sup>3</sup> project.

The conference operated on the basis of moderated workshops that focused on the exchange of knowledge and experiences, with the aim of contributing to the creation of an improved experience for SMEs in European programmes especially those in the areas of Vocational Training.

#### Areas discussed in the various workshops included:

Development of Skills: the Empowerment of SMEs in Dynamic Sectors, Anticipation of Training Needs in Restructuring Industries, The Involvement of Intermediaries in the Development of Skills in Companies, Development of training products, Organisation of (in-company) training, Cooperation in training, Investing in employability, Training for profit and Training promoters and facilitators of SMEs.

The I<sup>3</sup> project was nominated by the Irish National Agency to act as a lead project in the workshop on The Involvement of Intermediaries in the Development of Skills in Companies.

In addition to attending the workshops and presentations made by other delegates, WESTBIC met with Mr. Pantelis Dimitriou of First Element Ventures Ltd. who are partners in the Business Incubator Management Training Institute Project.

This pilot project, which was highlighted in the second I<sup>3</sup> e-zine, is partially funded by the Leonardo da Vinci programme. The Business Incubator Management Training Institute is designed to provide the Incubator sector with academic training but especially practical, everyday management tools needed to successfully design and operate business incubators and enable them to realise their full growth potential, keeping always in mind that the ultimate goal is the creation of viable new SMEs within a sustainable incubator business model. In addition to conventional intensive training seminars, this training tool shall comprise instructive contents, methodologies, materials and tools especially adapted to

distance- learning through new technologies. It shall combine self-learning on-line / off-line methods. Such a programme is not offered anywhere in Europe at the present.

It is hoped that both the I<sup>3</sup> and the Business Incubator Management Training Institute Project will be able to work together on common issues in the near future.

### **LIIP**

Linking Innovation and Industrial Property (LIIP) is a project financed by the European Commission, which pursues the development of a European network of contact points for the promotion of innovation around industrial property. One of the major objectives of this project is to increase awareness and knowledge on Industrial Property issues and the patent-system by the creation of dedicated material targeted to Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), research centres, universities, independent inventors, professional associations and organisations active in innovation support. For this purpose, two specific tools have been developed in the framework of the LIIP project: a Good Practice Guide (see publications section below) and an IP-Multimedia Toolbox.

5 European countries are involved: Luxembourg, Italy, Ireland, Greece, and Spain:

- 5 national patent offices;
- 7 organisations active in local innovation promotion and assistance;
- 1 company specialised in the production of interactive multimedia tools applied to intellectual property.

For more information, contact [joelle.feiereisen@tudor.lu](mailto:joelle.feiereisen@tudor.lu)

### **Institute for Business Advisors**

The Institute of Business Counsellors was formed in June 1989 by senior Business Counsellors in the UK Government's Small Firms Service. The Institute was designed to meet the demand for professional standards and accreditation in the practice of business counselling.

In 1994 with the support of DTI, IBC joined with the National Federation of Enterprise Agencies and Durham University Business School to accredit and promote Training Courses in Small Business Support. A comprehensive list of accredited Courses is published each year.

In 1997, to reflect the developing and changing needs of business and support services, the Institute changed its name to The Institute of Business Advisors (IBA). The work of Institute members now reaches far beyond the original counselling role, with substantial involvement in business development and NVQ assessment.

IBA is now the recognised professional body responsible for the accreditation and continuing development of Business Advisers, Business Counsellors, Business Mentors, Trainers and support staff helping small firms worldwide.

The following core IBA Training Programmes have been mapped against the new Business Adviser standards:

- Business Counselling - A foundation (BC1)
- Developing Business Counselling Skills (BC2)
- Advanced Business Advisory Skills (ABAS)

- Marketing for Business Advisers (BMA)
- Finance for Business Advisers (FBA)
- Business Mentoring (BM)

More information on: [www.iba.org.uk](http://www.iba.org.uk)

### **3E Program**

Program 3E offers modular training products and services in the field of intellectual property (IP) and mainly patents. It is directed to a wide range of users: technology industry professionals, academia, and IP professionals. It aims at providing the users with a theoretical teaching and a practical approach on how to acquire, exploit and defend IP rights in the context of legal systems and business perspectives. This program requires no legal background. Also, both products and services are in French and/or in English.

The products include training materials suitable for various forms of teaching, such as courses, workshops, presentations, self-learning, and distance learning. The products use diverse pedagogic methods such as handbooks, worksheets, simulation materials, case studies, and role-play kits. The services include courses, workshops, presentations and distance learning programs, which use the products of Program 3E as support materials. Both products and services can be tailored to the users' specific needs, from training modules that are grouped in four categories: basic, advanced, workshop, and test. Also, the users may elect for standard products and services such as a patent awareness course, a workshop/ simulation on patent strategy, and The Visual European Patent Convention (VEPC).

Program 3E has been conceived and developed since 1996 from a legal education and a work experience in Europe and America as a patent engineer (private practice, industry), IP consultant and licensing associate. This program is also nourished from a training experience in the field of patents started in 1997. Further information on Program 3E is available at [www.program3e.com](http://www.program3e.com), or contact Arnaud Gasnier at [arnaud.gasnier@program3e.com](mailto:arnaud.gasnier@program3e.com).

### **Worldwide Incubator Network**

The Worldwide Incubation Network represents a unique opportunity for incubating companies to network across the globe.



Developed by Scottish Enterprise, the Welsh Development Agency and the Pacific Incubation Network, the network connects over 2,000 technology companies currently based in business incubators managed by the above agencies. It has been designed to access critical information and contacts, which may otherwise be inaccessible or unaffordable. The network uses a web-based resource, which links all the participating incubators together into one Global network.

The opportunities and potential offered by the network are extensive and include: -

#### ***For Incubating Companies:***

- Provision of a framework for active networking
- Access to global market information
- Access to global Opportunities for joint ventures, partnerships and collaborations
- Access to Global business opportunities
- Increased opportunities for commercialisation of technology

- Increased opportunities for research and development
- Reduced 'time to launch' for new products or services
- Provision of the means to potentially seek larger contracts
- Opportunities for new clients, new partners and new knowledge.
- Access to Global best practice
- Increased likelihood of business success during the first critical years
- Creation and sustainability of new high value add employment

***For Economic Development Agencies:***

Benefits as outlined above for incubating companies plus;

- Provision of a significant 'added value service' to enhance present and future incubator provision
- Development of a Global Learning Network in incubation and client management
- Increased rates of commercialisation of technology as well as research and development
- Provision of instant access to global best practice in the fields of business and technology incubation,
- Encouragement of entrepreneurship
- Improved survival rates among incubating companies
- Increased rate of internationalisation for incubating organisations
- Increased numbers of joint ventures, partnerships and collaborations that will drive economic prosperity.
- Development of best practice in incubation management
- The establishment of similar communities in different marketplaces around the world
- Team building opportunity promoting strong management culture

***For Incubation Managers:***

Benefits as outlined above for Incubating Companies and Economic Development Agencies plus;

- Provision of a vehicle to tap into world best practice in incubation management
- Access to business and technical advice and introductions to a range of qualified service providers, potential mentors and financial resources
- Provision of a communication vehicle, with other business incubation managers from around the world, to discuss and resolve issues and / or opportunities
- Provision of a vehicle to provide a global network of contacts relevant to business incubation e.g. Venture Capital
- Potential to provide a source of new incubation clients
- Assistance in driving participating incubation facilities towards world-class status.

For more information, contact John Meiklejohn, Director of Strategem at [jmeiklejohn@strategem.co.uk](mailto:jmeiklejohn@strategem.co.uk), + Tel: +44 141 331 2991; Fax: +44 141 332 4982 [www.strategem.co.uk](http://www.strategem.co.uk).

## *Enterprise Ireland – Training for Incubation/Enterprise Centres*

Enterprise Ireland is the national organisation entrusted with the responsibility for supporting the growth of Irish Industry. Enterprise Ireland works with its client companies to help build their competitiveness and accelerate their growth. Within Enterprise Ireland's brief is a programme to develop campus based incubation centres in Institutes of Technology and they are currently looking at training supports and skills needs of the managers of these and other enterprise centres when they become operational. While their work is still at the early planning stages they are very interested in the development of projects such as I<sup>3</sup> and we look forward to co-operating with them in the future.

For more information on Enterprise Ireland: [www.enterprise-ireland.ie](http://www.enterprise-ireland.ie)

## **Useful Links**

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### Europe:

[www.ipr-helpdesk.org](http://www.ipr-helpdesk.org) (IPR helpdesk)

<http://ep.espacenet.com> (Free patent database)

[http://oami.eu.int/search/trademark/la/en\\_tm\\_search.cfm](http://oami.eu.int/search/trademark/la/en_tm_search.cfm) (Community Trade Mark Database)

### UK

[www.eldis.org/ipr](http://www.eldis.org/ipr) (Intellectual Property Rights)

## **Publications**

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### *DG Enterprise Consultation Document*

DG Enterprise has published in the beginning of the year a Consultation document for a Community support programme for entrepreneurship and enterprise competitiveness (2006-2010) succeeding the current MAP for enterprise and entrepreneurship in particular for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) (2001-2005) ". Although the consultation was resumed on May 10<sup>th</sup> 2004, it is interesting to follow the results of this consultation, especially with regards to the financial instruments proposed in the "Start-Up Facility". In the consultation document, page 16:

"The Start-up Scheme (equity) and the Seed Capital Action (grants to recruit additional managers) would continue targeting early stage innovative SMEs that have been established for less than five years. Both schemes would remain within the same rules as under the current multi-annual programme. ***ETF Start-up invests in specialised Venture Capital (VC) funds and business incubators.*** The targeted innovative SMEs must have been established for less than five years before the first investment of the VC fund. The maximum participation of ETF Start-up is maximum 25% of the total equity capital after the closing of the VC fund. ETF Start-up always shares risk and rewards with private equity investors. In addition, the Seed Capital Action may provide a grant for each additional staff member recruited by a VC fund. The new VC fund staff members must be capable to assess applications presented by SMEs".

To follow the evolutions concerning the next SPEC:

[http://europa.eu.int/comm/enterprise/enterprise\\_policy/spec/](http://europa.eu.int/comm/enterprise/enterprise_policy/spec/)

## **LIIP Good Practice Guide on Intellectual property**

This Good Practice Guide is mainly directed at SMEs, which develop products as part of their manufacturing or service producing activities. Nevertheless, this brochure will be of particular interest to any person or institution whose work is related to R&D, technology trend analysis, technology promotion, technology evaluation and technology transfer.

This Good Practice Guide contains a set of 10 pragmatic good practice recommendations for companies, especially SMEs, aimed at highlighting the importance of intellectual property to companies' business strategy. The recommendations are complemented by 5 case studies, which illustrate different situations related to IP rights, that SMEs may encounter. Finally, the annexes contain useful reference information about IP issues.

Reading this Guide will provide useful insights about IP concepts, benefits of IP rights, patent procedures and patent information. In other words, this Guide is intended to show the enormous potential that IP offers to SMEs in terms of legal protection, technical information and market research. Readers of the guide should note that IP legislation varies from country to country

The content of this Guide is further developed in a multimedia toolbox, which includes general IP information, country specific information about IP rights and an interactive auditing tool, which will assist you in evaluating the IP practices of your organisation.

For more information, contact [joelle.feiereisen@tudor.lu](mailto:joelle.feiereisen@tudor.lu)

### **Next I-Cubed Event**

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<b>Date</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Location</b>
20-21 September 2004	Fourth Partner Meeting	Tessaloniki, Greece

## Do you want to be actively involved in this project?

If you are interested in the training and resource tools being developed in this project, we welcome your involvement in a number of ways:

- Provide feedback on the TNA results
- Provide information on your requirements (both incubator personnel and start-up companies)
- Test the prototypes of training and resource tools and provide feedback
- Participate in training, information and dissemination events

Please contact the I<sup>3</sup> partner in your country or contact EBN or EBAN for other European countries:

### National contact points:

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