



Dundalk Institute of Technology, (DkIT) in collaboration with Dublin City University (DCU) is pleased to announce details of this year's Novation Enterprise Platform Programme, (NEPP). The programme is open to all graduates operating (or wishing to operate in) in the Knowledge Based and Technology sectors or are proposing the development of a novel product or service in the sector.

DkIT has been operating the NEPP programme, (which offers business persons and entrepreneurs alike 9 months of highly comprehensive business training and advice) successfully for the past ten years and this year decided to expand the opportunities being afforded to the 15 people recruited onto the programme by collaborating with DCU to provide an even greater breath of experience and opportunity.

Denis Cummins DkIT President, explains the rationale behind the collaboration. 'The Novation Enterprise Platform Programme has been very successful and over the last ten years participant businesses have achieved a cumulative sales turnover in excess of €228 million. This has been achieved with an investment from the HEA of just €1.5 million. We now want to build further on that success. Working in collaboration with DCU and Invent will afford additional, exciting and innovative networking and research opportunities for the course participants'. President Cummins goes on to remark 'Together both Institutes will be in a very strong position to encourage further growth through its participant businesses in both the home and export driven markets'

DCU President Brian McCraith expresses his delight in being involved with DkIT in the Novation programme. He says, "Since its inception DCU has been known for its collaborative engagement with industry. Because of this experience and our extensive network of contacts we have a lot to offer emerging entrepreneurs in terms of access to intellectual property and to science. Our own Invent Centre has firmly established DCU as a leading player nationally in technology transfer and commercialization. This initiative is a clear example of our commitment to entrepreneurship and we look forward to making a tangible contribution to the regional economy".

The success and track record of the DkIT Novation programme to date is clearly evident following an assessment of current and past NEPP participants. With total sales generated in excess of €68 million in 2010 (export revenues close to €20 million) and 65% of participants

who have taken part over a ten year period (2001-2010) still in business, DKIT is in a strong position to build and expand its current operation. Garrett Duffy with responsibility for the day to day running of the NEPP programme puts things in perspective, 'By the year end 2011 the programme will have generated employment in excess of 400 people. An impressive €53 million has been raised in capital funding to date and the programme has already seen 3 National winners in the highly prestigious Inter Trade Ireland Seed corn Competition, (Sean Gallagher SmartHomes Dragon's Den/Deirdre Mc Cormack Mcor Technologies and Kieran Fitzpatrick Barracuda FX). With the new DCU collaboration, Duffy believes the future looks promising, and believes we will continue to see exponential sales growth figures.

The NEPP programme which will be jointly delivered on both campuses will provide a vast range of acquired skill sets. Apart from expert business training and advice participants can expect mentoring in a very broad range of areas including business and personal coaching, co-working facilities and shared knowledge in accessing investment funding. The next Novation Enterprise Platform Programme starts in June 2011 and is open for applications. Visit <http://www.rdc.ie/nepp>

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