

Offaly entrepreneurs wanted for Athlone IT start-up programme

The Midlands Innovation and Research Centre (MIRC) at Athlone Institute of Technology and Enterprise Ireland are now recruiting for the next Midlands & West Enterprise Programme commencing in March 2008.

The Midlands & West Enterprise Programme (MWEP) is a one-year business incubation programme that provides entrepreneurs with the business skills, networks, facilities and supports necessary to navigate the business start-up process. Eligible participants may apply to Enterprise Ireland for funding which could provide up to 50% of previous year's

salary.

The MIRC and Enterprise Ireland are now inviting applications for MWEP 2008. Participants should have an innovative business idea with growth and export potential. They should be graduates (diploma level or higher) with a number of years' industry experience or experienced business managers and have the enthusiasm and drive necessary to develop and grow a successful business.

Ten high potential entrepreneurs from the Midlands are participating on the current MWEP - products being developed include pharmaceutical gels, multi-



Dr Paul Tomkins, Head of Science at AIT, and Sean Hoolan, Erin Energy.

media software, a biodegradable plastic, telecoms software and a bearingless motor.

Edenderry-based Sean Hoolan's company, Erin Energy, is researching and developing innovative renewable energy solutions including a high-yielding thermal solar panel. According to Sean Hoolan, "As a start up company, the MWEP provides us with state of the art facilities and

a comprehensive business support programme while Athlone Institute of Technology provides a ready-made research capability for the development of our technology. In addition to mentoring, training and facilities, the networking opportunities are invaluable towards validating and growing the business value proposition."

According to Enterprise Ireland Regional Director,

Barry Egan, "If you are a prospective entrepreneur with industry experience and an innovative business idea, the MWEP will provide you with the business skills and support necessary to transform your idea into a successful business."

For more information, please contact MIRC Manager Michael Lonergan at 090-6471882 or see www.mirc.ie.



Midlands Innovation and Research Centre (MIRC) at Athlone IT.