

Applications invited for one-year enterprise programme in Midlands

Centre provides support and incubation facilities for start-up enterprise

APPLICATIONS have been invited from the Midlands Innovation and Research Centre at Athlone Institute of Technology (AIT) for a new, one year programme with a training grant of €6,600 from the Department of Education and Science and specifically designed for entrepreneurs and those in the business 'start-up' process with a knowledge-based business idea.

With a mission to drive economic growth in the midlands counties, the Midlands Innovation and Research Centre has supported 24 start-ups since 2003 and provides 'incubation facilities' for innovative and knowledge-based enterprise, as well as the enterprise programme for entrepreneurs and start-ups, and it makes available the resources and expertise of the Institute to support client companies.

Starting in January, 2007, the Midlands and West Enterprise Programme (MWE) being made available by the Midlands Innovation and Research Centre "will provide entrepreneurs with the business skills, networks, facilities and supports necessary to navigate the business start-up process".

BUSINESS IDEA

Michael Lonergan, Manager of the Midlands Innovation and Research Centre, points out that "if you are a prospective entrepreneur with industry experience and an innovative business idea, the MWE will provide you with the

business skills and support necessary to transform your idea into a successful business".

Participants should have an innovative, knowledge-based idea which has growth and export potential.

Mr Lonergan told 'Topic' that applicants should, but need not necessarily be, graduates at diploma level or higher.

Participants are asked to have a number of years' industry experience "and have the enthusiasm and drive necessary to develop and grow a successful business".

FUNDING

In addition to participants receiving a training grant of €6,600 from the Department of Education and Science, they may also apply to Enterprise Ireland for CORD funding, which could provide up to 50% of the previous year's salary.

In advancing economic growth in the midlands, the Midlands Innovation and Research Centre (MIRC) at Athlone Institute of Technology strives to accelerate the development of knowledge-based start-ups not only through incubation and business support, but, in addition, by extending support to companies located outside the Centre which could benefit from links with itself and with AIT, both located at Dublin Road, Athlone.

MORE DETAILS

Mr Lonergan looks forward to hearing from those who believe they could benefit from embarking on the new enterpriser pro-

gramme, MWE, in January, 2007.

"Whether you are a prospective entrepreneur, an existing company committed to ongoing innovation, or an academic interested in commercialising your research, the MIRC is open to you", commented Mr Lonergan, who can be contacted at 090-6471882 or mlonergan@ait.ie.



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