

InterTradelreland success speaks for itself.

InterTradelreland was set up six years ago by the governments of Ireland and the UK with the aim of increasing business co-operation across the island to the mutual benefit of both economies.

Of course, the bottom line for any business person is: "What exactly can InterTradelreland do for me?" and here the organisation's track record in tangible support is unquestionable.

The Acumen sales and marketing support programme

helps to stimulate cross-border trade by helping small businesses to identify and develop new contacts, achieve sales and build new sustainable business. It has helped 238 companies to create 216 new jobs and secured an increase in €30m in cross-border sales since 2003.

IT OFFERS:

Consultancy Support – 50% of the cost of the consultancy up to a maximum of €8,500, with Acumen paying 4,250 and the company paying the balance (the consultancy period can be spread over a six to 12 month period).

Salary Support – assisting with the employment of a dedicated sales person in the target market over a one-year period by funding 50% of the first year's taxable salary up to a maximum of ?17,000.

Prospector Support – 50% of the total cost of a Prospector assignment lasting no longer than 12 months, up to a maximum of €8,500 with a net contribution of €4,250. The make-up of the support can be 50% of recruitment/selection advertising eligible costs up to €2,125 and 50%

for product familiarisation and market canvass costs up to €2,125.

FUSION, the technology transfer programme, has helped 200 companies develop new products and processes and generated more than €43m of additional business by developing partnerships between companies with a technology need on one side of the border, and colleges or universities that can provide the required specialist expertise, on the other side. This figure is expected to increase significantly as projects complete and realise their full potential over the coming years.

A high calibre graduate is then employed by the company to spearhead a project for a period of up to two years. The graduate acts as the link and agent of technology transfer between the university and the company.

InterTradelreland will provide a support package worth up to €71,625 towards the costs of carrying out a technology related project which is central to a company's development needs.

Innova supports cross-border research and development co-operation and has helped eight company partnerships create products, processes or services projected to yield multi-million pound results.

Eligible projects can fall into two categories: industrial research and pre-development activities. Industrial research involves acquiring new knowledge that may be useful in developing new products, processes or services. Pre-development activities involve using industrial research to plan new or improved products, processes or services. Individual companies or companies acting in collaboration with companies in the other jurisdiction can apply for support. InterTradelreland may provide grant aid of up to €195,000 per company, with rates complying with the relevant EU R&D guidelines.

InterTradelreland also supports the development of all-island business networks, helps early stage/start ups to raise equity finance and improves the ability of companies to tender for public sector business North and South work approximately €17 billion annually.



Ross Campbell, co-owner of CyberColloids Ltd of Cork and Sarah Hotchkiss. Pic: Patrick Hogan / Provision

Each year, around 350 companies participate in our all-island business development programmes to improve their competitive performance. The total trade and business development value reported by them since 2003 is ?156m.

The economic benefits of working together in Ireland to increase efficiency and global competitiveness are now generally welcomed and accepted – InterTradelreland is at the vanguard of making that possible for businesses across the island.

Ross Campbell, co-owner of CyberColloids Ltd of Cork, says:

"FUSION has been invaluable to our business. We have availed of opportunities that small companies would not usually have the resources to pursue.

"As a researcher of food thickeners and gelling agents, we work with producers world-wide. We had our own idea we wished to investigate, which was to look at what was left after we had extracted the natural gelling agents from seaweed - were there any useful bi-products in the remaining algae?"

"We didn't have the capability to dedicate a team member to look at this, or the budget for a new start. The FUSION programme offered us the solution. We were partnered with the Northern Ireland Centre for Food and Health (NICHE) at the University of Ulster, and advertised for a graduate for the two year project."

After their original graduate left, the company re-advertised and took on Sarah Hotchkiss, an expert in this field, having gained a Phd. in Australia focusing on the biology of seaweed. FUSION were very accommodating of this change and extended CyberCollid's funding until March 2008.

"Sarah is a dedicated employee who even spends Bank Holidays in the lab - her choice, not mine!" says Ross. "She has brought us to the point where we can take the business in new directions.

"We have the confidence to talk not only of textures, but also of

the nutritional aspects of thickeners. We have even gained some new work from current clients and hope to attract further customers.

"I would strongly recommend the FUSION programme to other small businesses. We have engaged so well with NICHE that we look upon them as part of our virtual team.

"Thanks to the programme, we do not feel like a small company in Ireland, we feel like we have grown up and can stand up in the world-wide arena and shout about what we do."

For more information on all InterTradelreland's programmes and networks, please contact

tel: 048 3083 4119

or email

info@intertradeireland.com.



InterTradelreland