

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.



Doru Boblea and Jimmy Roche, owner of Roche Manufacturing Ltd of Claregalway

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.

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.

Jimmy Roche, owner of Roche Manufacturing Ltd of Claregalway, says:

"We have had a FUSION graduate in place since September 2006 and his work has been instrumental in helping drive our export business forward.

"We design and manufacture machinery for the pre-cast concrete industry and successfully supply customers across Ireland and Northern Ireland, however we knew there was a global market we could tap into.

"Our FUSION graduate, Doru Boblea, has a Masters in Mechanical Engineering and is working towards a Phd. He was the perfect choice to engage in our project - to research CE directives to ensure all the machinery we produce meets set European standards and to introduce a computer aided design department into the company."

Roche were partnered with the North West Institute of Further and

Higher Education, who have lent their expertise to the project. An excellent resource and always on hand to help, Roche have found their relationship with the Institute invaluable.

"We are moving to new premises locally in a few weeks time and tripling our production capability," says Jimmy. "This will allow Doru to have the space and resources to fully implement the design department.

"It will also formalise our procedures and provide customers with full engineering specifications and costings of custom-built machinery before it is manufactured. Doru is already working to this system, which has already proved successful. Our turnover has increased since he introduced more formalised models as the design and manufacture process has sped up significantly.

"I have been involved with many programmes through the years and I honestly have to say that FUSION stands out. It has provided my company with real benefits and is extremely professionally run. I would encourage other small to medium enterprises to contact the team."

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

tel: 048 3083 4119

or email

info@intertradeireland.com



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