

**Regional OPs 2007-13:  
Draft Implementation Plan 1.1.3**

<b>Operational Programme</b>	S&E Regional OP 2007-2013
<b>Priority</b>	Innovation and the Knowledge Economy
<b>Intervention/Theme</b>	Development of the Region's RTDI Capacity
<b>Sub-Theme</b>	Incubation Centre Development
<b>Categorisation Code</b>	02
<b>ERDF Certifying Body</b>	Department of Finance
<b>Managing Authority</b>	S&E Regional Assembly
<b>Intermediary Body</b>	Enterprise Ireland
<b>Public Beneficiary Body</b>	Universities and Institutes of Technology
<b>Grant Rate</b>	Up to 100%.
<b>EU Co-financing Rate</b>	40%

**Description of the Intervention (including eligible works)**

This Intervention is concerned with the provision of supports and business space within the environment of a third level institution that will advance the development of emerging high potential start-ups.

**Objectives**

The programme aims to accelerate the development of high potential start-up companies through a combination of business support services, infrastructure and access to the expertise of the host third level institution. As such, its objectives can be seen as three-fold:

- Fostering entrepreneurship and campus company activity
- Providing a route to commercialisation of research underway in the higher education institutions,
- Supporting balanced regional development.

**Responsibilities of Intermediary Body**

Enterprise Ireland will manage this initiative through its campus incubation unit (within the Research & Innovation Business Unit) which, in collaboration with the agency's Policy Department is responsible for the design of the scheme, project selection and related information and publicity. It works closely with the agency's Finance Department in the administration and financial management of payments to the public beneficiary bodies. Enterprise Ireland is responsible for the selection/evaluation processes and ongoing monitoring of projects during the funding period. In so doing, Enterprise Ireland ensures that a clear audit trail exists for external independent auditing of projects.

Consideration of horizontal principles is undertaken between the Campus Incubation Unit, IRC management and the agency's Policy Department.

Enterprise Ireland has entered into an administrative agreement with the Managing Authority which will set out the respective roles and responsibilities of each.

### **Responsibilities of the Public Beneficiary Body**

The public beneficiary bodies will be responsible for the maintenance and operation of the centres. They will also be responsible for management of the incubation process, including appropriate tenancy policies and development of links between the host institution and client companies. The IoT's responsibilities will also be in the areas of design/procurement of incubation space, grant administration, financial management and control, the scoping and submission of applications, the certification of eligible expenditure, compliance with issues such as public procurement & tax clearance along with providing expert advice on commercialisation through the technology transfer office. This support will be provided in conjunction with mirroring support from Enterprise Ireland's Research & Innovation Business Unit.

### **Contribution to (prioritised) Horizontal Themes**

Gender Equality Principle:

This initiative is a competitive programme whereby awards are made on the merits of individual applications. Thus the gender split within the programme is reflective of the existing gender split within colleges. However, gender specific data is collated by the intermediary body. Applicant colleges will be required to consider equality issues in line with the Equality Authority's guidelines when applying for funding as stated in the programme guide documentation.

### **Project Selection**

#### Selection Process

An open call will be launched for the extension of incubation facilities in the universities and Institutes of Technology. Applications received will be assessed by a combination of internal and external evaluators and brought to the relevant Committee of the Intermediary Body (the Industrial Research and Commercialisation Committee) for approval. This committee is composed of senior members of Enterprise Ireland, the Department of Enterprise Trade and Employment, the Department of Agriculture, the IDA, senior academics and independent industrial experts and members of the business community.

Where required, applications will be then submitted to the Board of the Intermediary Body.

#### Selection Criteria

Applications received will be assessed on the basis of:

- Track record to date
- Value for money
- Commitment of the host institution
- Contribution to balanced regional development

### **Performance Indicators**

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Baseline</b>	<b>Midterm</b>	<b>Final</b>
<i>No. of business incubation centres in place/ extended</i>	9	12	16
<i>No of companies in centres</i>	62	125	165
<i>No of employees in these companies</i>	284	460	520

### **Financial Management**

The gross public expenditure in respect of projects funded under this measure will be provided annually in the estimates of the Implementing Body (Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment), from SubHead F1 of the Department's Vote. Enterprise Ireland draws its funding from the Office of Science, Technology and Innovation of D/ETE. Grants in respect of projects approved under the selection procedures outlined above will be paid to institutions by Enterprise Ireland in arrears, on the basis of certified returns of expenditure. Grants will include the ERDF contribution, which will be reclaimed by the Certifying Authority for the benefit of the Exchequer. Claims, once approved and certified, in respect of ERDF assistance will be submitted to the Commission by the Certifying Authority (please see flow chart attached).

The public beneficiary body will be required to have in place separate accounting arrangements in respect of project expenditure under the sub-measure. Roles and responsibilities will be formally documented at all levels of the control chain, i.e. the Certify Authority, Managing Authority, Intermediary Body and project management. Documentation is required specifying the duties, tasks and implementation arrangements for personnel involved. Written statements of the tasks and responsibilities at each level will document specifically the degree of detail required in assignment and completion of tasks.

#### Document Retention

In accordance with Article 90 of the General Regulation (EC) 1083/2006, the Intermediary Body and Public Beneficiary Bodies will ensure that all supporting documents regarding expenditure, verification checks, certification and audits on the interventions concerned are kept available for the EU Commission and Court of Auditors for a period of three years following the closure of the Operational Programme.

### **Monitoring and Reporting arrangements**

The necessary reports will be provided in the required formats that are to be agreed with the Managing Authority. A dedicated unit within Enterprise Ireland be responsible for the compilation of data and reporting. These actions will be facilitated by a recently upgraded, dedicated IT system.

### **Information and Publicity**

The contribution of the EU Structural Funds 2007-2013 will be acknowledged in all brochures, promotional material, press releases, publicity activity, advertisements, signage, applications forms, annual reports, letters of offer, etc., by use of appropriate logo and text references. A dedicated commercialisation communications unit within Enterprise Ireland will be responsible for continued promotion of the scheme and commercialisation in general. This may include advertisement campaigns, road shows, and dedicated websites.

### **North/South Co-operation** (where appropriate)

The measure focuses on investment in infrastructure within Ireland. Efforts will be made to network incubator management with equivalent groups in the North

## Annex 2

### Steps to gender equality in the 2007 -2013 planning period

#### Policy development

- ✓ Include gender equality as a policy objective in relevant areas, particularly in human resources measures, community and rural development, business.
- ✓ Undertake gender impact assessment, where appropriate, to ensure that the different needs of women and men are reflected .
- ✓ Work with gender equality experts to identify best practice.
- ✓ Consult with client groups on meeting needs and ensure that both men and women's concerns are addressed;
- ✓ Check if budgets provide for special needs issues such as childcare, transport, etc., and ideally provide some flexibility to ensure that the activity supports Government objectives on gender equality, e.g. be in a position to respond to requests for part-time provision.;
- ✓ Allocate a portion of mainstream budgets for specific actions on gender equality and for innovation;

#### Monitoring

- ✓ Develop meaningful indicators to track gender equality outcomes, results and impacts.
- ✓ Set gender equality targets where appropriate. These need to be related to the baseline position (not necessarily 50:50)
- ✓ Ensure gender equality is included in all evaluations and surveys.
- ✓ Promote gender balance on relevant committees and, if necessary, allocate a place/places to the unrepresented gender. See Unit's guide: *'How to promote gender balance in decision-making'*

#### Delivery

- ✓ .Allocate specific responsibility for gender equality to a named individual
- ✓ Ensure gender equality is included in project selection criteria
  - See unit guide *'how to incorporate equal opportunities into project selection criteria'*
- ✓ Promote equality of access for women and men in practical ways by identifying and removing barriers to their participation. e.g.
  - information, publicity and communication
  - flexible provision and delivery
  - childcare supports
  - transport and facilities

- ✓ Put named actions in place to ensure that both women and men will benefit equally;
- ✓ Consider if additional progression supports are needed for particular group