

A man in a dark suit is climbing a tall, wooden ladder that extends from the bottom left towards the top right of the frame. The ladder is set against a clear blue sky with a few wispy clouds. The man is positioned about halfway up the ladder, looking upwards. The overall image has a slightly grainy, artistic quality.

# Dublin Business Innovation Centre

Client Assistance Programme for Early  
Stage Business Start-Ups and  
Developing Businesses

*The following services are provided to selected early-stage business start-ups (businesses which have not yet traded on a regular basis).*

### **Step 1. Evaluation**

Dublin BIC assists Entrepreneurs evaluate their skills, identify any skills gaps and fully assess their business ideas with particular emphasis on marketing, finance, technology and management.

Dublin BIC assists Entrepreneurs to assist their projects' viability in the following manner:

- Initial Entrepreneurial/Business Development Counselling
- New Business Ideas Generation Workshops

### **Step 2. Feasibility Study Assistance**

Before proceeding with any new business, a detailed feasibility study should be carried out. Dublin BIC can assist the Entrepreneur:

- Assess Intellectual Property Rights
- Identify other Sources of Assistance
- Access Financial Assistance
- Prepare Applications to other Support Agencies

### **Step 3 Business Plan Guidance**

Dublin BIC accompanies selected Entrepreneurs through the various start-up stages and the Entrepreneur, far from becoming dependent on this help, learns to acquire independence and organisational skills; attention is focused primarily on developing the management capabilities of individuals.

Dublin BIC can assist Entrepreneurs with their:

- Specific New Business Idea Development
- Other Business Options

### **Step 4. Business Plan Preparation**

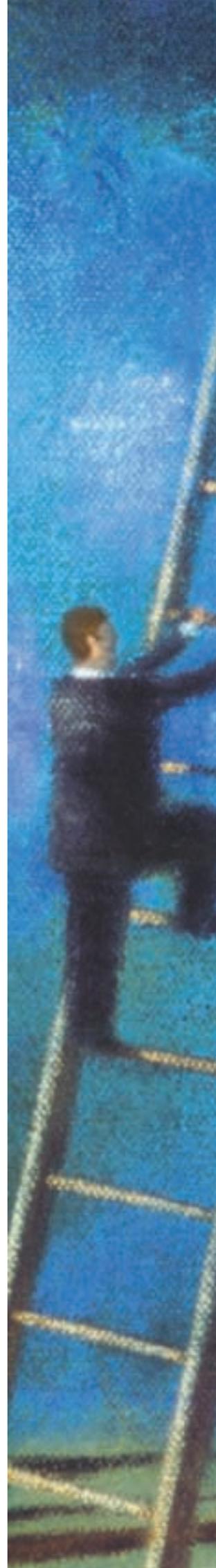
Every new or expanding business needs proper planning. Dublin BIC facilitates the use of financial planning software and offers the following business guides to assist with the preparation of a comprehensive business plan:

- Notes for Entrepreneurs - Business Plan Guide
- Notes for Entrepreneurs - Outline Business Plan Workbook

Business plan assistance provided by Dublin BIC to the Entrepreneur includes:

- Marketing
- Sales
- Production
- Distribution
- Management
- Finance
- Business Plan Review

*Quality market research is vital to a well prepared business plan and is the benchmark upon which the business plan is judged.*



## Step 5. Introduction to Finance

Dublin BIC can assist the Entrepreneur to identify and access business finance. The following guide will assist Entrepreneurs in their search for finance.

- Notes for Entrepreneurs - Dealing with Investors

Funding for small businesses comes primarily from State Agencies and the Private Sector. Dublin BIC provides advice on making effective applications for finance to various agencies and to the Enterprise Support Units of the main banks.

Dublin BIC provides access to the following:

- Dublin Investor Register Service (managed by Dublin BIC)
- Dublin Seed Capital Fund (managed by Dublin BIC)
- Business Innovation Fund (closely linked with Dublin BIC)
- Other Funding Agencies

*In all cases, a viable, well prepared business plan is required.*

*Once the enterprise commences to trade on a regular basis, Dublin BIC through its after-care service assists the Entrepreneur by offering business development counselling as follows:*

## Step 6. After Care (ongoing business monitoring assistance)

- a) Business Expansion Assistance
- b) Provision of Incubation Centre Facilities
- c) Search for International Partners and Technology Transfer Programme
- d) Monitoring
- e) Assistance with Accessing Second Round Investment

### **a) Business Expansion Assistance**

Business planning, strategy, research and assistance.

Dublin BIC assists the expanding business to identify new objectives as the need arises and can assist the Entrepreneur by providing Business Development Workshops, Mentor Programmes and one-on-one counselling in the following areas:

- Marketing Assistance

In the second stage of development, Dublin BIC offers international marketing assistance to the Entrepreneur by providing access to the European Business and Innovation Centre Network of 140 BICs throughout Europe. In addition, various ongoing networking and business opportunity events are organised during the year.

- Financial Assistance

Dublin BIC assists expanding enterprises prepare financial plans and identify sources of finance for their second stage of development.

## **b) Incubation Centre**

Dublin BIC manages the Guinness Enterprise Centre, on behalf of the Dublin Enterprise & Technology Centre Ltd. Located in Dublin City, it can accommodate up to seventy seven enterprises with fully serviced office space. The support services, business/management development, hi-tech wide band Internet access and networking facilities provide the entrepreneur with a solid platform for starting and growing a business.

The following services are provided:

- Office accommodation; desk, telephone, access to secretarial services
- Business address/telephone answering service
- Business development counselling
- Access to video conferencing facilities
- Access to broad-band Internet

A reception area, boardroom and conference rooms with a capacity for seating sixty people are also available for clients' use. A coffee shop/restaurant is located on the ground floor.

*See Dublin BIC's Incubation Centre leaflet for full range of services.*

## **c) Search for International Partners & Technology Transfer Programme**

Technology Transfer describes the overall process of seeking out, acquiring, licensing, selling and implementing new or upgraded technology to accelerate the growth of the business.

Dublin BIC's International Partnership & Technology Transfer Programme provides access to the local, regional and European network of Business Innovation Centres, thus accelerating early-stage start-up companies trading overseas.

*See Dublin BIC's International Partnership & Technology Transfer Programme leaflet for full range of services.*

## **d) Monitoring**

Dublin BIC monitors the progress of the business as it develops.

Dublin BIC:

- Meets with clients at least once a year to review strategies and progress
- Assists clients establish their ever-changing needs
- Provides specific expertise for short periods as required
- Provides access to business/management training

## **e) Access to Second/Third Round Investment**

The Dublin Seed Capital Fund assists Entrepreneurs identify and access second/third round venture capital funds. The Fund can also act as a lead investor in co-investments involving larger investment amounts.

*Once identified, client needs/requirements become the focus for Dublin BIC assistance and a relationship is entered into which grows as the business develops.*

*D*ublin BIC assists and provides advice to selected early - stage innovative and technological based business ideas/projects.

The Dublin BIC was established in 1987 with private, public and EU support. It can assist Entrepreneurs find practical solutions to problems in a responsive non-bureaucratic way.

These activities complement the assistance and services provided by the state agencies and the private sector. 70% of start-up companies assisted by Dublin BIC continue to be in business after a three year period.

Dublin BIC accompanies selected Entrepreneurs through the various start-up stages and continues to assist the business through the first three/five years by offering strategic business development planning assistance, access to second round finance through the services of the Dublin Seed Capital Fund and provision of high quality, high tech office accommodation in the Guinness Enterprise Centre.



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