



Building Locally
Competing Globally

Product and Process Development Programme

Supporting businesses to develop innovative new
products and processes

February 2008

Introduction

Our Product and Process Development Programme is one of three key programmes through which Invest NI encourages and supports our clients to undertake the development of market-led products, or new manufacturing or production processes.

How will it help me?

The programme offers specialist advice and also financial support as follows.

Business size	Invest NI support	Subsequent Invest NI support
Up to 50	Up to 40 per cent assistance towards eligible and reasonable costs to a maximum of £35,000	40 per cent assistance on the same basis as described above

The financial support may be used towards a range of costs that could be incurred as part of a development project, which can include:

- salaries of staff involved in the project;
- materials consumed during the manufacture of the prototype during testing;
- fees relating to the employment of external expertise (consultants) or subcontractors;
- materials consumed during the manufacture of a prototype or during the testing of a new production process;

- fees relating to exploring and protecting intellectual property including trademarks, patents and copyrights; and
- travel costs for market research and product testing including travel to trade fairs or exhibitions, potential customers for project definition purposes, test locations or sources of expertise.

How does it work?

The product or process proposed in the application must be new to the business.

Up to three applications can be considered at the same time, provided the business can demonstrate that it has the resources to provide the balance of funding for each project and that there is a specific need to progress this way. There are three key stages to the programme:

Project Identification

The opportunity to develop a new product or process can be identified through our Business Health Check, or through less formal or routine discussions with your Client Executive.

Client Briefing

The briefing stage involves a Technology Executive visiting you to explain the programme guidelines and provide advisory support for completing the application form.

Processing the Application

Once the application form is received, the Technology Executive and Client Executive will appraise the project in terms of its technical and economic impact, and you may be required to justify the scale of costs envisaged.



Reasonable project costs are likely to be the subject of negotiation with your Technology Executive and businesses can expect to be asked to justify the scale of costs envisaged.

Once costs have been agreed, your business will be informed of Invest NI's funding decision and a project start date will be agreed.

Support can only be considered for costs that will be incurred in the future. Retrospective funding will not be considered.

In every case, the business will need to demonstrate the availability of the balance of funding for the project.

Who is eligible?

The programme is available to all Invest NI clients with fewer than 50 employees following a referral and agreement with your Client Executive.

Becoming an Invest NI client

To qualify as an Invest NI client company, your business must meet certain criteria.

You should typically be from the manufacturing or international tradeable sectors and be able to demonstrate that currently, or over the next three years, your business will have:

- total sales of over £100,000 a year;
- sales outside Northern Ireland of greater than 25 per cent of turnover or greater than £250,000 a year; and
- the capability and willingness to work with Invest NI.

If you are not an Invest NI client, but can satisfy the above criteria and would like to become one, please contact the Invest NI office in your area.

Full details can be found at www.investni.com.

Contact

Please contact your Client Executive if you feel your business will benefit from this service. Alternatively you can also contact:

John McAleavey or Michelle Milevsky
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Invest Northern Ireland
Bedford Square
Bedford Street
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nibusinessinfo.co.uk

Invest NI has launched a new online information and support facility, **nibusinessinfo.co.uk**

This web site provides all Northern Ireland businesses and entrepreneurs with free access to an extensive source of essential business information.

nibusinessinfo.co.uk provides 24x7 advice, information, guidance and signposting, with over 5,000 fact sheets and over 70 interactive tools on offer. Every aspect of setting up and running a business is covered, from the earliest days of developing a business idea to the legal issues involved in selling a business concern.

nibusinessinfo.co.uk also features case studies showing how local businesses have handled particular business challenges.

nibusinessinfo.co.uk provides you with a single point of access for all your business information needs, freeing up time for to concentrate on running operations.