



Media Release

13th December 2006

Cork City Enterprise Board urges small business to avail of the latest Government-backed supports.

Dave Cody, CEO at Cork City Enterprise Board, today welcomed the approval of new support initiatives to help small businesses which were recently announced by The Minister for Enterprise, Trade & Employment, Minister Micheal Martin TD, and urged small business in Cork City to avail of these new subsidies to develop their businesses further.

The new initiatives are as follows:

Innovation Vouchers scheme.

The Innovation Vouchers proposal is designed to stimulate innovative activity and generate a culture of innovation within the small business sector. The initiative will enable small enterprises to work with knowledge institutions such as universities, institutes of technology and other research bodies to assist them (the enterprises) in researching or developing ideas, either new ideas or enhancements to existing operations, thereby enabling their businesses to grow. Arrangements for the scheme, which forms part of the overall implementation of the Government's Strategy for Science, Technology and Innovation, are now at late stage of finalisation and should be available to businesses through the Cork City Enterprise Boards and Boards throughout the country early in 2007.

ICT (Information & Communications Technology) Audits programme.

The scheme will, over the next 3 years, enable several thousand small businesses to undergo a highly subsidised ICT Audit of their existing systems. At the end of each subsidised audit, the business will be presented with a short, clear action-oriented and realistic strategy aimed at developing and deploying appropriate ICT skills, systems, hardware and software within the business with the objective of delivering real and sustainable competitive advantage. The scheme will be complemented with a number of seminars at venues throughout the country for interested companies that will outline how new information and communications technologies can benefit their businesses.

'We will shortly be administering these initiatives and would encourage companies in the Cork City to focus on their needs and we will be happy to assist them avail of these schemes. This is a fantastic opportunity for small business to embrace, and get the best from, innovation and new technology, with the help of Government funding' said Mr. Cody.

For further information on these schemes or to arrange an interview with Dave Cody, CEO of Cork City Enterprise Board please call:

Mary Hopkins

Hopkins Communications Cork

021 4272200: 087 2540804 email: mary@hopkinscommunications.ie

notes.....

[Editors Notes](#)

* Cork City Enterprise Board is one of 35 County and City Enterprise Boards (CEBs) that were established in 1993 to provide a source of support for small businesses with 10 employees or fewer. The function of the Boards is to develop indigenous enterprise potential and to stimulate economic activity at local level. The Boards provide a single point of contact at local level for new and established small businesses. Subject to certain eligibility criteria, enterprises may qualify for support from the CEBs in the form of feasibility, employment and capital grants. In addition, the CEBs deliver a comprehensive range of development and support programmes designed to help, new and existing enterprises to operate effectively and efficiently so as to last and grow.

* Most of the funding for the CEBs is provided by the Exchequer under the National Development Plan, 2000 – 2006 and the European Union.

* Each Enterprise Board operates as a stand-alone limited company whose operations are performed on the basis of an operating agreement between it and the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment.

* The Chairman of the Cork City Enterprise Board is Nora Cronin of Cronin's Coaches, Cork, and Board members are drawn from the Cork area. Prior to Board approval grant applications are assessed by an Evaluation Committee which includes representatives from 2 major financial institutions, a credit union , The Marketing Institute, Enterprise Ireland, Local Authority, Cork Chamber of Commerce and an Accountant.

* Recent entrepreneurial initiatives supported by the Cork City Enterprise Board included:
Refundable Capital Grant for a bakery enterprise to facilitate growth
Feasibility study and subsequent equity investment for an electronics engineering graduate project to facilitate an inter-nationally traded project.
Business Mentor for an in-coming work placement/business solutions company to facilitate business growth.
Employment Grant for an Architectural Glass Manufacturer to facilitate business growth.
Management Development Programmes for software developer to grow his knowledge skills to strengthen his company.

For further information please call:

Mary Hopkins

Hopkins Communications Cork

021 4272200; 087 2540804

mary@hopkinscommunications.ie