CAMPUS INCUBATION PROGRAMME

Marine Campus Incubation Centre Competitive Call 2016

GENERAL GUIDELINES
1. Introduction
In 2012, the Inter-Departmental Marine Coordination Group, on behalf of the Government, published ‘Harnessing Our Ocean Wealth - An Integrated Marine Plan for Ireland’. The plan sets out the Government’s Vision, High-Level Goals, and Key ‘Enabling’ Actions to put in place the appropriate policy, governance and business climate to enable Ireland’s marine potential to be realised.

In developing the plan, the Government set ambitious targets for Ireland’s ocean economy, including doubling the value of our ocean wealth to 2.4% of GDP by 2030. Furthermore, in light of market opportunities identified by the task force, the Government has set a 2020 target of exceeding €6.4bn in annual turnover, drawn from a diverse range of marine sectors.

The Marine Development Task Force highlighted the need for projects to demonstrate Ireland’s intent and capability for increased marine business, including “Incubator Capacity – Develop new, and enhance existing, national and regional facilities, targeting global growth areas and market opportunities for emerging products and services.”

2. Call for Proposals
Enterprise Ireland as the state agency with responsibility for the development of start-up companies in Ireland has been charged by the Government to implement this action.

Enterprise Ireland is now opening a competitive Call to Third-Level Institutions for Expressions of Interest for the establishment of a Marine (including maritime) Campus Incubation Centre. Applicant institutions should have a strong track record in research, industry collaborations and infrastructure in marine sectors. This is a competitive call, funded under the Enterprise Ireland Campus Incubation Programme.

Funding of typically €3m will be provided for the establishment of the incubator. Additional, part-funding may be provided for a limited period to contribute to management costs. Funding will be allocated on the basis of the competitive call for Expressions of Interest (EoI) proposals followed by an invited call for detailed proposals to shortlisted EoI applicants. The timeline for the 2-stage call process is as follows:

Stage 1 – Call for Expressions of Interest proposals
Call Opens: 29th April 2016
Call Closes: 30th June 2016

Stage 2 - Call for Full proposals
(limited to the shortlisted applicants selected from stage 1 EoI evaluation)
Call Opens: 22nd July 2016
Call Closes: 23rd September 2016

3. Campus Incubation
Enterprise Ireland has pursued a Campus Incubation Programme at Third-Level Institutions for the following policy objectives:
- foster entrepreneurship and campus company activity
- help realise the commercial potential of Ireland’s research community and
- support balanced regional development

From 1998 to date, Enterprise Ireland invested nearly €54 million in the establishment of campus incubation centres in the Universities and Institutes of Technology (IoT) around Ireland, including the funding of speciality bio-incubation suites to drive the emerging
biotechnology industry. An independent impact review of the Programme undertaken in Q3/4 2014 reported strong economic impact results with evidence of significant job creation and value add to the local economy.

By investing in a dedicated campus incubation centre for marine and maritime business, Enterprise Ireland is signalling its intent for this important sector – to support sustainable economic growth, regional development and job creation. This vision is informed by the Government’s plan ‘Harnessing Our Ocean Wealth - An Integrated Marine Plan for Ireland’ published by the Government’s Inter-Departmental Marine Coordination Group (see www.ouroceanwealth.ie publications).

The incubator will develop and support new high potential start-up companies in the diverse and growing marine sectors, such as marine ICT, marine biotechnology, offshore renewable energy, and nascent opportunities in emerging markets, hence contributing to the ambitious targets set for Ireland’s ocean economy.

In recent years significant public investment has been made both in marine research and in non-marine research which will find applicability in diverse marine sectors. This investment is now yielding a pipeline of opportunities for potential spin-outs addressing marine market needs. By establishing a dedicated incubation facility for marine, the public investment in R&D will be leveraged, capturing market opportunities supported by existing Third-Level research centres, infrastructure and knowledge base. So too, the ‘marinising / strengthening / developing’ of existing products and services as described by the Marine Development Task Force can create spin-in companies to be nurtured by the incubator.

4. Call Objectives

The objective of the call is to establish a dedicated Marine Campus Incubation Centre to nurture spin-in and spin-out companies in marine sectors, supported by the host’s existing infrastructure and knowledge base and fully utilising the existing national facilities and infrastructure around Ireland which serve the marine industry.

The incubator will be a world-class, market-focussed centre, which will deliver critical mass through co-location with existing facilities, typically including, research centre, laboratory, demonstrator facility, general incubator, industrial or business park. The incubator will nurture high-potential start-ups in a broad range of marine sectors. The provision / co-ordination of marine and marinising services for Irish SME companies and for MNC companies as appropriate, will ideally be a feature of the co-located site.

5. Eligibility

Enterprise Ireland is seeking Expressions of Interest proposals from publicly funded Third-Level Institutions, (Universities and Institutes of Technology) under the Campus Incubation Programme based on the guidelines and selection criteria herein. Following the evaluation of the Expression of Interest proposals, Enterprise Ireland will invite the shortlisted applicant Institution(s) to submit a Full proposal, including detailed building specifications, costings and additional information per the Stage 2 Application Form and panel queries arising from the EoI evaluation.

6. Funding

The Campus Incubation Programme operates under Section 16(g) of the Industrial Development Act of 1986 and Section 8 (1) (d) of the Science and Technology Act of 1987.
Under this competitive call, the programme will support the construction and/or refurbishment of a marine-specific campus incubation centre to typically €3m, depending on the size specifications and projected deliverables of the centre. During Stage 2 evaluation, a detailed costings and building specifications review and site visit will be carried out by Enterprise Ireland’s Grants and Buildings Administration Manager to confirm value for money. The funding will be awarded to one host entity which may be a University or an Institute of Technology, under the following grant rules:

Universities may receive grant aid to a maximum of 40% of eligible expenditure for new constructions and/or 100% of eligible expenditure for refurbishment of existing buildings. Institutes of Technology may receive grant aid to a maximum of 90% or 95% of eligible expenditure, depending on the region, for new constructions (90% rate in South & East regions and 95% rate in Border, Midlands & Western regions) and/or 100% of eligible expenditure for refurbishment of existing buildings.

Where a University and IoT wish to submit a joint application, one of the entities shall be the lead applicant for the purpose of the proposal.

Eligible costs include, building, refurbishment and site development costs, speciality units and fitting out where justified, professional fees and the provision of electrical and other site services. Ineligible costs include site purchase cost, ongoing maintenance/ administrative costs, laboratory or research equipment, office and canteen furniture and equipment and temporary buildings.

Part-funding for management costs for a limited duration may be considered in the follow-on detailed application.

The programme may be co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) under Ireland’s European Structural and Investment Funds Programmes 2014-2020.

7. Application Process

This is a competitive call under the Campus Incubation Programme. Third-Level Institutions wishing to be considered for evaluation are requested to complete the Expression of Interest form and return it by e-mail by closing date, 5.30pm on Thursday 30th June 2016 to una.moran@enterprise-ireland.com followed by the original signed, stamped hardcopy to:

Una Moran,
Campus Incubation Manager,
Enterprise Ireland,
Eastpoint,
Dublin 3 (to arrive during the following week).

Receipt of applications will be acknowledged within three working days. For any queries, please contact: Una Moran, by email or phone, Tel: + 01-7272962.

8. Evaluation Process and Selection Criteria

The Expression of Interest (EoI) proposals will be evaluated by a panel of experts comprising agency, external and international members with expertise in start-up incubation, marine business, and international trends. EoI proposals will be evaluated and ranked based on the following selection criteria which are equally weighted:
Individual written evaluations will be provided by evaluators prior to the panel meeting of the evaluating team to reach a consensus panel decision. The following ranking system will be used in the evaluation of the main criteria, which are weighted equally;

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Very Poor. The response fails to address the criterion under examination or cannot be judged due to missing or incomplete information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Poor. There are serious inherent weaknesses in relation to the criterion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Good. The response addresses some of the criterion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Very good. The response addresses the criterion well, although certain minor improvements are possible.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Excellent. The response successfully addresses all relevant aspects of the criterion in question.</td>
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The successful EoI applicant(s) will have demonstrated the vision and capability to deliver new businesses in the growing marine economy, a strong potential pipeline of start-up companies, a knowledge of emerging marine market opportunities, coupled with proven capability and commitment of the Institution.

Stage 2: Following the ranking of the EoI proposals, the shortlisted applicant(s) will be invited to submit a Full proposal including detailed costings, designs and building specifications for the incubator, as well as additional information per the Stage 2 Application Form and panel queries arising from the EoI evaluation. Stage 2 will include a meeting with Key Managers / Directors from the applicant Institution(s) and a site visit review.

After the stage 2 evaluation process, the funding recommendation of the evaluating panel will be presented for funding decision to Enterprise Ireland's Industrial Research & Commercialisation Committee (IRCC). If approval is given by the IRCC, the funding recommendations will be brought forward to the Enterprise Ireland Board for final approval decision. Written feedback will be provided to all applicant institutions following the evaluation and approval process.

9. Timeline

The turnaround time for decision on EoI applications is expected to be before the end of July 2016, with the evaluation of Stage 2 Full proposals expected to be completed by the end of October and the final result announced by the end of November. The contract will be issued to the successful applicant Institution during December 2016, based on a standard grant agreement between Enterprise Ireland and the Third-Level Institution.