



IBIS
Incubator Growth in Europe

Newsletter Edition 1: September, 2016

Focus on UNITED KINGDOM



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I-BIS project: a brief overview

Innovative Business Growth Incubator for Start-ups



The I-BIS project aims to support European start-ups during the challenging years of growth through a new business learning programme based on the European Business Growth Catalyst.

I-BIS also aims to provide incubators with new and innovative training materials to support start-up companies.

The Objectives of I-BIS are:

- > To contribute to the growth of **enterprise and entrepreneurship** in partner countries by supporting start-up activity during the first years of growth;
- > To develop **entrepreneurial learning in Europe** by providing a training programme for start-ups that is based on cutting-edge practice for small business and intercultural aspects based on a needs analysis;
- > To support **female entrepreneurship** in Europe;
- > To enhance the **support given by incubators** by providing a Guide for Incubator Managers and providing I-BIS training for incubator' staff working in the project.
- > To provide an Insider's Guide to Doing Business Online;
- > To develop an online incubator (e-learning hub);
- > To promote online networking and communities in Europe.

IBIS is an initiative of the European Commission to develop a pan-European approach to growing businesses.

Project coordinator:
The University of Sheffield
United Kingdom
www.sheffield.ac.uk



The
University
Of
Sheffield.

Kick-off meeting: Sheffield

1-2 March, 2016

Colleagues representing the IBIS partner organisations met together for the first time and had a successful 2 days work meeting together to plan our work over the course of the project.



Representatives of the I-BIS project:
Feeling enthusiastic to start the new project!

The partners were hosted by The University of Sheffield Management School: The University is in the top one percent of leading business and management schools in the world and teaches around 2000 students through its undergraduate programmes, MSc programmes (including the MBA) and a Post-Graduate Research programme. One of the core areas of work in the school is Research and Impact, which closely links with local businesses

and support growth in the region. As the lead partner in IBIS, the Management School is therefore very much looking forward to engaging with local start-ups through the programme.

The meeting itself focussed on the work to be completed in the first output: an analysis of the training needs of incubators and start-ups. The partners presented the initial results of their desk research which considered the situation of start-ups and the services currently offered by incubators in each country.

Of course, an equally important aspect of these meetings is the opportunity to get to know each other and partners were able to spend some social time in Sheffield as well! Sheffield itself is the fourth largest city in the UK and also one of the greenest in Europe with a great mix of city living and access to the beautiful countryside of the Peak District National Park just 20 minutes from the city centre.

We look forward to welcoming partners in Sheffield again in January 2017 for the Training the Trainers Workshop.

Exploring United Kingdom

Start-ups in the UK: A blooming business?

In the United Kingdom, the government has made a big effort to support start-up businesses through funding programmes and cheaper loan rates. Private investors are encouraged to invest in start-ups via The Start-Up Loan scheme, The Business Finance Partnership and the Business Angel Co-Investment Fund. Therefore, the UK is named as one of the best countries for start-up activity.

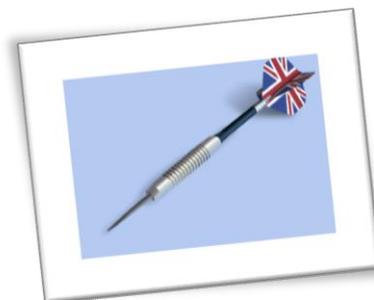
The attractive business climate has also led to an increase in accelerator and incubator activity in the UK. Between 2011 and 2014, the amount of incubators has increased by 110%. Most of the incubators are located in London, which makes the city a real start-up-hub!

Many of these big incubators offer a wide range of services including mentoring, legal and accountancy support, in-house trainings and networking events. However, many only offer workspace though they refer to themselves as incubators, so support is varied. And, in the rest of the UK, the number of incubators is much lower.

Our research has shown that, where wider support services are provided

by incubators, start-ups find them very useful. 1 out of 5 start-ups consider their lack of knowledge about finance the biggest obstacle for their business growth. Lack of marketing knowledge and legal knowledge follows closely. Furthermore, there are many soft skills that start-ups consider necessary in order to be successful. Problem solving, confidence and communication are only a few examples from a long list. The incubator staff we questioned also felt that many of their start-ups lacked soft skills, especially in confidence and creativity.

The UK has a fantastic climate for start-ups and incubators and offers many opportunities for funding. It is now up to the I-BIS team to provide the start-ups with the necessary hard and soft skills they need in order to fully benefit from this!



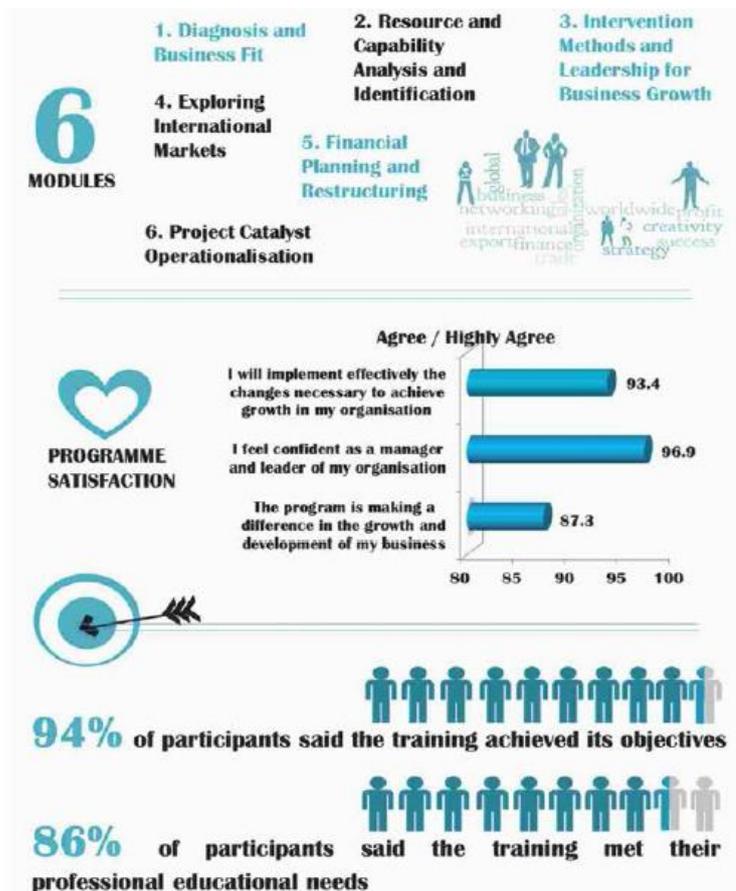
Success story: European Business Growth Catalyst programme

I-BIS is based on an existing business growth programme developed by The University of Sheffield Management School alongside other partners from two more of the top Management Schools in Europe, ALBA (Greece) and ESADE (Spain), as well as other business partners.

The European Business Growth Catalyst is a highly successful programme aimed at promoting growth in Small/Medium Sized Businesses (SMEs) across Europe. It is a 6 month programme within which leaders of SMEs develop key skills to grow their business and in particular to explore international markets. The programme was first piloted with 66 participants from the UK, Spain and Greece between October 2014 and March 2016.

The programme covers six main areas as illustrated below and follows a group consultation process, rather than traditional methods of learning. Participants work together to support each other and explore how business growth theory could be practically implemented in their own businesses.

The programme has received excellent feedback which is illustrated:



Upcoming events: Spread the Word Group events

28.09.2016 Sheffield, UK

September events will promote:

- > The I-BIS project;
- > Key results of the Needs analysis.

12.10.2016 Vaasa, Finland

03.10.2016 Granada, Spain

25.10.2016 Kaunas, Lithuania

For more information about the event, please contact representatives of the project I-BIS in your country. Find contact details below:

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