

The East London Centre Laying a Solid Foundation for Business Incubation



Training and Conference Rooms at East London Centre

What has been achieved?

In April 2002 all of the Incubator units at the East London Centre were occupied with a total of 56 people working in them. The Centre is currently expanding their facilities and is developing a further eight units, due for completion October 2002. ERDF grants were instrumental in igniting the initial development of the Centre, and are fundamental in the current expansion.

What's the Project all about?

The East London Centre as an ERDF project involved the refurbishment and return to use of two vacant buildings. The ERDF grant was used to convert the basement level into a high quality, business incubation centre. Eight units, fully-furnished and fully-equipped with telecom and Internet connections, as well as PC hardware and essential software packages, were built to provide start-up rental space for eight separate businesses. Three conference rooms, a Business Resource Centre, and IT training room were also built to provide facilities for the eight businesses in the units and room for ELC training courses.

The aim of the Centre is to provide a high profile, customer-focused centre of excellence for businesses and individuals. Designed to enhance business competitiveness and local economic prosperity, the Centre will act as a broker for agencies and a focal point for business support. It will provide a virtual Centre with the provision of technological links to range of partner agencies and services and co-locate a number of key service providers, including: LETEC, Business Link London East and other strategic partners.

Success Stories

Officially opened April 2001, all the incubator units were fully occupied within six weeks. One of the aims was to cluster fledgling businesses within the I.T., Creative, Media and Social Enterprise sectors. This has been successfully achieved and as a result, some of companies have begun *to* integrate their work. By April 2002 the Centre had assisted over 5,000 businesses and helped over 250 people start up companies. (East London Centre figures)



One of the Incubation units offered let to start up businesses at East London Centre.

One of the first tenants at the Centre was FutureFirst Technologies a web development company set up by Director Stuart Brant. When Stuart moved into the unit in May 2001, they were able to start their business using the two PC's installed, which Stuart describes as "invaluable". After six months the company had grown large enough to purchase its own PCs and subsequent expansion required the upgrade of the internet link to the Unit. East London Centre was able to install a new a high speed internet link to the Unit at little extra cost to the rent, something at the time not readily available to start up companies. This enabled the company to effectively compete in the web design market.

Further Information: Getting Involved

For further information on the above project contact James Smith

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