

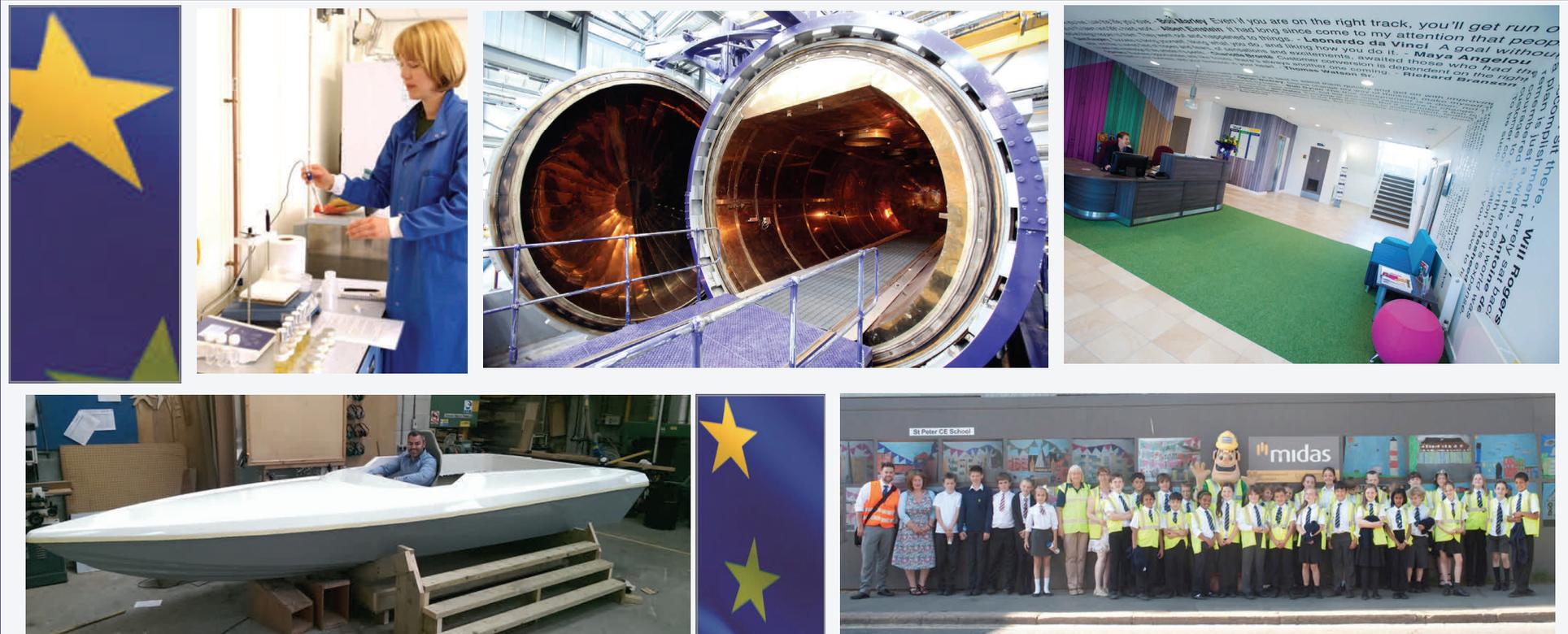


Department for  
Communities and  
Local Government



# Investing in your future: Case study booklet

December 2014



South West Competitiveness European Regional Development Fund Programme 2007 - 2013



EUROPEAN UNION  
Investing in Your Future  
European Regional  
Development Fund 2007-13

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# Overview

## South West Competitiveness ERDF Programme 2007 to 2013

In 2007, the South West of England was awarded €124.7 million (just over £104m) from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) to invest in activities which would strengthen the economy by supporting the productivity of the region's ambitious businesses and encouraging enterprise. With match funding, the total committed by the Programme is £222m.

A group of public and private sector partners from across the South West came together to form the Local Management Committee which has steered the Programme and made recommendations on investments, ensuring that these address local needs and support local growth. To maximise the impact, partners agreed to target three priority areas:

- Promoting innovation and research and development
- Supporting high value businesses to grow
- Encouraging enterprise in the South West's more deprived urban neighbourhoods

Altogether, the Programme has invested in 100 projects across the South West. Regardless of their physical location, most have worked with small and medium businesses right across the region. Very positively, many projects have collaborated and cross-referred clients so that some individuals and businesses have been able to benefit from a package of support.

**The impact of the ERDF funding is already impressive but will continue to grow as projects continue to deliver and report on their achievements into 2015. As a result of the funding awarded so far:**

- Over 11,000 businesses have been supported (receiving a minimum of 12 hours' or £1000 assistance)
- Over 5,200 jobs have been created or safeguarded.
- Nearly 5,000 individuals have been supported to explore starting up their own business

This booklet describes a cross-section of investments and explores how they have helped individuals and businesses.

# Priority one: Knowledge and Innovation

Nearly £38m of ERDF funding has been invested in initiatives aimed at helping businesses to innovate and introduce new products and processes. The investments include £6m of ERDF in six “Business Technology Centres” set up to help businesses explore new technologies and tap into expertise and equipment in the South West’s universities and research institutions.

## Centre for Alternative Testing and In-Vitro Monitoring

The Centre for Alternative Testing and In-Vitro Monitoring (CATIM) is a highly specialised facility based at the University of the West of England, with partners including Bristol University and the European Centre for Cell Cultures. It specialises in the application and development of alternative technologies for testing and monitoring products using cell-based systems.



Since 2013, CATIM has initiated collaborative projects with 44 South West companies from sectors including the cosmetics, pharmaceutical, veterinary and agricultural industries, resulting in the verification of new product specifications and the development and testing of new products.

CATIM assisted Bath Spa Skincare by designing tests to ensure that its hand-made natural skincare products were safe and compliant with legislation. Cell biology based systems were used to test the efficacy of anti-ageing products.

Supported by £900,000 ERDF, CATIM is also a hub providing life-sciences training and showcasing new technologies and products.

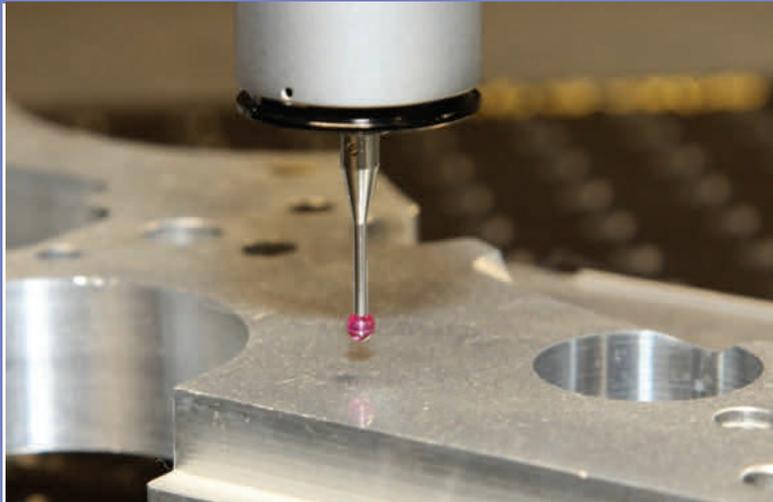
## Marine Innovation Centre



Supported by £900,000 ERDF, the University of Plymouth’s Marine Innovation Centre connects marine sector businesses to the cutting-edge resources and expertise of the University and its partners, including its new marine building and wave tanks. The investment has enabled MARIC to work with over 120 small and medium enterprises to advance their technology readiness levels, supporting the creation of new products and services.

MARIC helped Plymouth-based Phantom Sports Boats to assess the intellectual property rights relating to two boat moulds and supported the production of a demonstrator boat. Partner college Falmouth Marine School developed the prototype hull through a student project and the ERDF-funded Composite Gateway project helped with the introduction of new composite materials and techniques.

## Priority one: Knowledge and Innovation



LIMA helps manufacturing businesses use precision measurement to improve quality control and boost productivity

### Laboratory for Integrated Metrology Applications (LIMA)

Based at the University of Bath, LIMA is a centre of excellence specialising in metrology, the science of measurement. Supported by £1.2m ERDF, LIMA has so far supported 227 businesses across the South West to improve their manufacturing processes through the better use of precision measurement, generating an estimated £4.42m net additional GVA.

LIMA introduces businesses to the benefits of metrology through awareness raising and free or subsidised services at the company's premises. It tailors diagnostic services to each operation, assessing existing processes, identifying potential areas for improvement and working with the company to ensure a positive impact.

Drawing on its experience from the project, LIMA has developed a new diagnostic process in partnership with the National Physical Laboratory. This has received interest from some prime companies seeking improvements in their supply chains.

### Centre for Additive Layer Manufacturing (CALM)

Thanks to £1.5m of ERDF, over 200 small and medium enterprises across the South West have been assisted in their research and development, manufacture and launch of new products using Additive Layer Manufacturing. Businesses supported have predicted £20m of increased turnover and 63 new jobs as a result of the support.

Additive Layer Manufacturing is a versatile manufacturing process which can create complex products whilst reducing waste.

The Centre for Additive Layer Manufacturing has put the South West on the map as a leading centre for the introduction of this new, low carbon manufacturing technology.

The University of Exeter partnered with EADS Innovation Works, part of the global aerospace manufacturer EADS, to create a regional and national centre of excellence which is now continuing to flourish beyond the ERDF funding period.

*“The partnership between Exeter University and EADS UK Ltd has been a superb example of collaboration between industry and academia, with integrated teams working across the two facilities in a mutually supportive manner. In this way we have been able to highlight the potential of a disruptive new technology in manufacturing across the region, reaching far beyond the main players to companies across the industrial landscape. This places the South West in an advanced state of readiness for the changes that are to come.”* **Ian Risk, Head of Airbus Group**

## Priority one: Knowledge and Innovation

### Centre for Alternative Materials and Re-Manufacturing Technologies (CALMARE)



CALMARE, based at the University of Exeter, helps businesses to optimise their use of composites and plastics, with a focus on the recycling and remanufacturing of waste materials. From advising on materials options for new product developments to investigating waste separation techniques, CALMARE's experts share their knowledge to assist small and medium sized companies. The Centre also brings businesses together to deliver collaborative commercial ventures.

CALMARE helped Torbay-based Hymid Multi-Shot Ltd, a manufacturer of injection moulded products, by investigating techniques for recycling a 'two shot' injection moulded medical device. CALMARE was able to demonstrate how, with some further development, the materials in the device could be successfully separated and recovered for eventual reuse.

The Centre was awarded over £900,000 ERDF funding.

### Centre for Business & Climate Solutions

The Centre for Business & Climate Solutions, based at the University of Exeter, collaborates with businesses to help them adapt and mitigate to the impacts of a changing climate and extreme weather events. It offers access to internationally-renowned research and technology within the University and partners, the Met Office, Regen South West, Plymouth Marine Laboratory and IBM.

Nearest Star is a young and exciting engineering consultancy based in Bristol. They offer a design service to enable self-builders, developers and architects to transform projects into up to 100% solar-powered, true zero carbon buildings. The Centre helped Managing Director Marley Bursell to develop his technology by verifying the system using real weather data, thermal simulation of a building and verified generation capabilities against typical domestic consumption. This helped Marley to launch the product and the company in 2012.



Marley commented, "I was pleased not only to have an independent external assessment but something which really helped push the project on, in particular the work on tank u-values and environmental data. I received an excellent service and great value for money (thanks ERDF!)"

# Priority one: Knowledge and Innovation

## Product Development Centre—Manufacturing Advisory Service

Supported by £1.5m of ERDF, the Product Development Centre provides tailored support to businesses looking to develop and introduce new products covering issues as diverse as Intellectual Property, legislation, identifying and accessing markets, product and tooling design, prototyping and testing. A 'Knowledge Hub' helps link businesses with expertise in universities, colleges and research centres.

Since late 2012, the Centre has engaged with over 250 businesses, providing around 400 free innovation reviews and 112 in-depth projects with grants totalling £430,000. Feedback has been very positive, 87% of companies categorising the advisers as "Excellent" and over 90% satisfied or very satisfied with what the grant could fund.

Bath-based Western Air Ducts engaged with the Centre during the development of 'Intellair', an energy efficient air control system designed to react to demand. SWMAS gave advice and a grant towards developing the operational maintenance manual and to facilitate software development. Chris Lintern, Managing Director, commented: *"SWMAS provided us with the capability to access funding we wouldn't have considered applying for before. We have been impressed with the ease of the process and how responsive they have been. They have also given us access to expertise in our local supply chain and we are in discussions about gaining CE marking."*



## Engineering Innovation Network South West

Led by Wiltshire College and supported by £375,000 of ERDF, EIN-SW offers practical support to help engineering businesses develop new products—from designing and prototyping to market intelligence and funding advice. Members benefit from a strong network with industry specific cluster groups and regular events. Established in late 2011, the project is currently actively supporting 89 businesses with 10 involved in collaborative research, 49 launching new products in this period and 12 new patents secured.

Oliver Browne Wilkinson of Medical Models turned to EIN-SW when he hit on an idea for a new beer dispensing nozzle which reduces waste to all but zero. EIN-SW used its 3D drawing and printing facilities to help Oliver develop a prototype for initial testing. Oliver was then referred to the ERDF-funded Centre for Additive Layer Manufacture to further advance the product. Industry take-up has been promising, resulting in an uplift in Oliver's turnover.

## Priority one: Knowledge and Innovation



The Gateway has been helping Tuskguard Ltd to develop composite camera casings with an improved quality finish

### South West Composites Gateway

Supported by £400,000 ERDF funding, the Gateway helps South West engineering companies to capitalise on the huge opportunities afforded by using composite materials. A dedicated team assists businesses to acquire practical knowledge and the technical skills they need to deploy composites in their business.

Tuskguard Ltd, designers and manufacturers of border control security cameras, sought help to replace aluminium with composites in their camera casings. *Tuskguard's Design Engineer commented, "Working with the Gateway team, we have been able to make process improvements and develop new skills in handling composites. The improvements will not only increase our efficiency but will reduce the cost of production and waste. Most importantly, by enhancing the marketability of our products they will open up the potential for new business".*

### Creative England GamesLab South West

Supported by £500,000 ERDF, Creative England GamesLab aims to stimulate the growth of the games industry in the South West by coupling expert advice with grant funding. Two rounds of funding have facilitated projects at different points in the development cycle. Round 1 offered grants of up to £50,000 to develop a new game IP for commercial release and Round 2 offered grants up to £10,000 to develop a game for early access or full commercial release.

A showcase of the games developed is planned as part of Digital Bristol Week in February 2015.



To date, GamesLab South West has supported 14 projects, giving over £300,000 in grants to independent game developers and safeguarding or creating 24 jobs.

Swindon based studio Evil Twin Artworks have been hugely successful with their debut game, Victory At Sea, which was funded by a GamesLab South West grant. Victory at Sea has been fast tracked for PC release by the internet-based gaming giant Steam. Traditionally, developers hoping to get their game featured on this hugely popular platform endure a wait of anywhere up to 2 years for their game to reach players, but after receiving seed funding from GamesLab, an encounter at an event hosted by Steam's parent company Valve provided a foot-in-the-door to get Victory At Sea noticed.

# Priority one: Knowledge and Innovation

iNets were set up to support innovation across 5 sectors with particular growth potential in the South West—the environmental, creative industries, microelectronics, aerospace and advanced engineering and biomedical sectors. Awarded a combined total of £7.5m ERDF, iNets help businesses forge new relationships with other businesses, universities and others to share information and explore new opportunities. Each iNet is designed to meet the challenges faced by the sector it supports and provides targeted, practical support, from workshops and events to one-to-one mentoring and grant schemes. Here are a few examples.

## Microelectronics i-Net

Sharp and Tappin is a Devon-based precision engineering company which tapped into the i-Net's support to help it bring to market products such as a 10 work-station, solar powered IT suite which needs no mains power. The iNet introduced the company to a business coach who helped them develop their business plan and strengthen their management structure; the company subsequently secured £5,000 from the iNet for product testing and producing technical files. The Microelectronics iNet is led by The University of the West of England with an impressive consortium of partners.

## Environmental i-Net

*Forgen Renewables produces vertical-axis micro turbines able to operate in extreme conditions. The North Somerset-based company attended a 'technology roadmapping' event which brought together businesses and academics to explore technological solutions and opportunities for knowledge exchange. They then benefited from a free, independent review with an intellectual property expert resulting in an action plan. The iNet was also able to part-fund a product redesign, matched by Forgen's own funds.*

The Environmental Technologies iNet is led by the University of the West of England with the University of Exeter, Bristol City Council and the Royal Agricultural University.

## Creative Industries iNet



Delivered by Creative England, this iNet has supported over 330 businesses, focusing on those with the greatest potential to secure future economic growth. Evaluation estimates that the project has created £10.5m net additional GVA.

*Original Concept Productions is a Torbay-based creative film production company specialising in commercials, online films and promos for TV channels. The company attended a "Shortcut to Marketing" programme run by the I-Net, which helped identify a skills gap, resulting in the creation of a new part-time sales role. Managing Director Caroline Yearsley also found that the course gave her ideas for raising the company's profile. Following the programme, the company re-branded, creating a new website and extending its business networks using social media.*

## Priority one: Knowledge and Innovation

### National Composite Centre (NCC)

One of the Programme's flagship investments, the NCC is a national centre of excellence at the hub of composites development across the country. Composites are high performance, low weight materials with application in a range of industries and products. Through innovation, skills development and knowledge dissemination, the NCC supports advanced engineering and other high value sectors to improve the efficiency of manufactured products, reducing costs, saving energy and reducing carbon emissions.

£9 million ERDF was invested in specialist equipment and skilled staff to help establish the NCC. The initial investment later helped to leverage an additional £28 million of funding in an extension, evidence of the role that the NCC is playing in putting the South West at the heart of the development and commercialisation of this technology in the UK. The NCC is on track to exceed its targets for generating additional GVA.



Ceremonial bolt-tightening held on 31 October 2014 for the South West Low Carbon Energy Innovation & Collaboration Centre in Bridgwater

### Nuclear and Low Carbon Energy Cluster

A £6m development aims to maximise opportunities from the Hinkley C nuclear power station by establishing a nuclear cluster in Somerset. The project, led by Somerset County Council, is supported with £3.1m ERDF.

Phase one involves the building of 2,400 square metres of flexible office space and a networking café. The centre will support the start-up and growth of businesses in Somerset and the South West and encourage collaborative working between suppliers to enable local businesses to access opportunities in the Hinkley C supply chain and wider national and international nuclear and low carbon energy sectors. Businesses will be able to access a package of business support to meet their development needs.

The investment aims to help drive forward the ambition of local partners to be at the forefront of creating an expert and knowledge-intensive nuclear supply chain in the UK, providing businesses with new opportunities for growth.

# Priority one: Knowledge and Innovation

In Gloucestershire and Wiltshire, ERDF has contributed to new incubation facilities—these are designed to nurture start up businesses, providing a supportive environment in which they can grow and succeed. The enterprise centres combine affordable desk or office space with access to mentoring, skills development, business support and the opportunity to network and collaborate with other businesses.

## Innovation Gloucestershire—Enterprise Hubs

An investment of nearly £400,000 ERDF has helped the University of Gloucestershire in partnership with Gloucester City Council, Cheltenham Borough Council and the GFirst Local Enterprise Partnership, to develop a network of Enterprise Hubs, designed to support start up companies.

ERDF has part funded new facilities launched in 2013 at Blackfriars House in Gloucester and Isbourne House, Cheltenham. Additional facilities have also been developed on the University campus and in the Forest of Dean. Businesses may lease desk space or join the network as associate members, benefiting from the support of a mentor and access to a range of business support plus opportunities to network and collaborate. The current membership is 35 and growing steadily.



Blackfriars House in Gloucester

## Wiltshire Incubation

In Wiltshire, nearly £750,000 ERDF funding has contributed to the development of four new Enterprise Centres at Castledown, Trowbridge, Royal Wootton Bassett and Salisbury. Offering affordable office space, meeting rooms, virtual office space and free business support from Wiltshire Business Support Services, they are part of The Enterprise Network (TEN), a £5.2m initiative to boost small and start-up businesses across Wiltshire and Swindon, which is led by Wiltshire Council with partners.



Dean Randle, director of Corporate LinX, which uses specialist software to help corporate clients reduce costs, worked from home before moving into Castledown Enterprise Centre. *“One of the things I really missed when working from home were those water-cooler moments; the chance to have discussions and network,”* Dean says. He finds the overheads at Castledown reasonable and likes the fact that there are no hidden extra costs. *“It’s also great that there’s free business support available as part of the package.”* The company has taken on three staff since the move.

## Priority one: Knowledge and Innovation

### South West Energy Centre, Torbay



The South West Energy Centre, run by South Devon College, is a sustainable building used to deliver training and qualifications in green energy skills. Its courses are designed to develop a skilled workforce in areas such as Green Deal advisor training, Solar PV installation, biomass and electrical courses. It also offers free information, advice and guidance to businesses seeking to reduce energy consumption or diversify into environmental areas.

The centre is a showcase for green technologies, with features which include a solar thermal wall, photovoltaic arrays and the Passivhaus, an exemplar of sustainable building techniques. A programme of workshops and events on renewable technologies is open to businesses and the local community alike.

In 2014, the centre won the 'Eco Project of the Year' title at the Michelmores/Western Morning News Annual Property Awards.

£2.5m of ERDF has been invested in the centre as a catalyst for developing the green economy.

### Designing Demand

SRA Developments Ltd, based in Ashburton, is a leading innovator in ultrasonic technology for medical, domestic and industrial applications. With a staff of 55 and a £4m turnover, the company has over 30 years experience of designing and manufacturing ultrasonic products. The technologically advanced LOTUS Ultrasonic Scalpel, which uses high frequency sound rather than a steel cutting blade, is widely used in UK hospitals and abroad. When a new line of products was planned, the company decided to update the branding, packaging and marketing messages of the Lotus Scalpel. They were referred to The Design Programme, which works with businesses to help them make the best use of design to meet their goals. This service is supported by just over £1m of ERDF.

Design Adviser, Lynne Elvins, worked closely with SRA to define key messages and put together a project brief for potential design agencies. The appointed design agency, Mytton Williams, engaged with the directors, key staff and sales agents to get a feel for the company and how a new approach to design could contribute to the business. The resulting rebrand involved a new logo, revamped website, revised packaging, new sales and marketing literature and new marketing messages throughout.

Even before the launch, the new approach had created increased interest in LOTUS. The company's European distributors were "very excited" by the new designs. David Wright, SRA's Marketing Director, has nothing but praise for the Design Programme: "The Design Programme was fundamental to the success of the new branding. We had recognised that we would have to bring in external specialist skills and advice on which design companies to shortlist – using the The Design Programme was the key as they made this whole process seamless."

## Priority two: Enterprise and Growth

£38m of ERDF funding has been invested in enhancing the range and depth of funded advice and support available to help ambitious businesses across the South West grow and improve their productivity.

### Superfast Broadband Business Support

“Superfast Business” offers free support to help businesses benefit from digital technologies and faster broadband. The service has a team of expert advisers, a programme of events on hot topics offering insights and practical solutions, technology specialists and online information. This is supported by a £5.8m ERDF investment.

Whether it's developing a digital marketing strategy, selecting a customer relationship management system, moving IT to the cloud, setting up a new operating system or protecting data, the support aims to help businesses cut costs, boost productivity and increase efficiency. Launched in May 2013, the service has so far supported over 450 Small and Medium Enterprises.

The service helped Rob Shaddick of Devon-based Soundguard Acoustics to make more effective use of cloud technology and measure the effectiveness of his web strategy. Rob said, “*Those few hours of expert advice made a huge difference in terms of how we do business. We've noticed an increase in web traffic, and the way in which people are finding us. Just making some adjustments to our blog pushed us up the search rankings. High-speed broadband connections have made the business more efficient, by slashing upload and download times for large technical files and documentation.*”



### Internationalisation

Nearly £10m ERDF is helping South West businesses reap the benefits of trading successfully in international markets. Delivered in two phases by Business West Limited, the Internationalisation project intensifies the service offered to South West businesses by government-funded UK Trade & Investment.



Gloucestershire based Prima Dental, a fast growing precision dental instrument manufacturer exports to over 85 countries. Prima Dental further extended their exporting strategy after participating in ERDF-funded training and research programmes. International trade now accounts for 85% of turnover. Sales Manager, Dan Hodgson, commented, “*ERDF funding has been invaluable to our trading success, which is down to pioneering global marketing programmes. Our consistent emphasis on exporting is the key driver of our success and future growth.*”

## Priority two: Enterprise and Growth

### South West Manufacturing Advisory Service

The Manufacturing Advisory Service (MAS) is a government funded service which helps businesses become more competitive by streamlining processes, adopting new manufacturing strategies and introducing new products. Between 2008-12, nearly £2m of ERDF was invested to intensify the length and intensity of support that MAS could offer. MAS supported over 530 enterprises across the South

Groveley Precision Engineering Ltd, Dorset, increased its manufacturing capacity and generated new business after achieving the bronze award in the SC21 national aerospace and defence sector improvement programme. MAS-SW provided hands-on support, identifying improvement programmes that helped secure the award.



In Melksham, MAS-SW helped Kristek Precision Engineering Ltd to refine its sales and marketing campaign, implement improved quality systems and develop its plans for updating CNC equipment. Peter Hellyer, Director, commented *“MAS-SW was a valuable sounding board, listening to our challenges and helping shape solutions. They provided effective information and great ideas.”*

### Deeper, Broader Information, Diagnostic and Brokerage Service

From 2009 to 2011, nearly £4m ERDF investment was used to intensify the support available in the South West via the government-funded Business Link service. The ERDF funding supported a dedicated team of Business Growth Advisers to provide more intensive, one-to-one support for businesses meeting qualifying criteria. The service streamlined access to a wide range of support. 1,455 businesses were supported through the project, recording a total GVA increase of £37m.



HEL Performance Products said *“The knowledge, straight-talking and foresight of someone outside the business were what we needed to open our eyes to other possibilities – especially in component supply and financial disciplines.”*

HEL Performance Products, based in Exeter, strengthened their supply chain following consultations with a Business Link adviser who also connected them with the ERDF-funded UK Trade and Investment and South West Manufacturing Advisory Service.

## Priority two: Enterprise and Growth

A suite of investments has targeted businesses with high growth or the potential to achieve it. Business West Ltd delivered three projects providing start up support, coaching for established businesses and help to become investor ready. Together, these projects have delivered over 1300 business assists. Alongside them, a project run by Business Link helped to develop skills for high growth.



### High Growth Start Up

This service supporting start up businesses and those in their first year of trading has worked with over 300 businesses.

Innovative Bath-based communications agency, The Big Story, sought support prior to their launch in 2011. Founder Jon Dunbar commented, *“Business West helped us to develop a series of objectives and met with us regularly to ensure we met all the goals that would enable us to achieve our launch date. We attended two half-day workshops, which reassured us that our ideas were right and we were moving in the right direction. The practical support was especially useful; we were able to go over in detail exactly how to set up a company, explore different management techniques and learn how to keep control of the financial set up, including tracking income and outgoings.”*

### High Growth Coaching

Supported by £2m ERDF, this service provided free or subsidised business coaching to help businesses explore and exploit new ideas. The project assisted over 680 businesses across the South West, generating £46m additional GVA as well as positive testimonials from many businesses.

Devon based Moor Instruments, designers and manufacturers of laser systems to measure blood flow, found an external perspective invaluable in helping them to develop a more focused strategic plan.

Jaymart Rubber and Plastics of Swindon commented, *“The support provided has armed us with skills to maintain a focus on the business needs in pursuit of further growth. I cannot recommend this programme enough to other SMEs”.*

Moulton Bicycles Ltd of Bradford-on-Avon reported, *“apart from the positive growth in our trading figures, the process was helpful in a range of aspects. The coach was an excellent listener, tailoring his suggestions to meet our needs and coming up with solutions that wouldn’t have occurred to us and therefore creating new opportunities and growth where we might have hit a wall or not made the most of a situation.”*

## Priority two: Enterprise and Growth

### South West Loans Fund

Securing finance is one of the biggest challenges facing businesses ambitious to grow. The South West Loans Fund was set up with £3m ERDF & £3m public match to provide loans of up to £250,000 at commercial rates to businesses with a viable business plan which were unable to secure funding from conventional sources. The project, managed overall by the South West Investment Group Capital Ltd and through South West Investment Services (SWIG) and FC Fund Managers, has provided loans to 131 businesses, creating 361 jobs, safeguarding 217 jobs and creating £7 million in additional GVA.

Dr Simon Jackson created Dr Jackson's, a natural range of products based on pharmacognosy principles which mimic as closely as possible the way that natural ingredients are harvested and extracted at source. After many years researching traditional medicines from the Amazon to Indonesia and Sub-Saharan Africa, Dr Jackson decided to turn what he

#### DR JACKSON'S



had learnt into a business. A loan from the South West Loans Fund enabled him to rent office space and start to market and produce the products. These are now stocked in Harvey Nichols, Beauty Mart, Droog, Libery and Celestine Eleven and have appeared in Vogue, Elle Decoration and many beauty blogs.

*"SWIG helped me out when no-one else would. If it wasn't for SWIG we wouldn't be where we are today", commented Dr Jackson.*

### High Growth Skills

The Business Link High Growth Skills service ran from 2010 to 2011, helping growing businesses to make the most of their potential by developing the skills of their workforce. It received £600,000 of ERDF funding.

The service offered support from a team of specialist skills and HR advisers, as well as free workshops on leadership and management skills and developing high performing teams.

278 high growth and growth potential businesses were assisted.

Taunton-based Organic Herb Trading Company benefited from a free skills audit to establish where training could help sharpen performance.

The Business Link adviser secured grants to commission a consultancy to deliver a leadership and management event, followed by a programme of skills-based workshops for senior management.



Taunton-based Organic Herb Trading Company found the investment in skills support *"extremely helpful in helping us to ride the global downturn as painlessly as possible"*.

## Priority two: Enterprise and Growth

Kawasaki Precision Machinery UK Ltd was awarded a grant of £550,000 ERDF towards a £5m extension of its factory in Plymouth, increasing the floor space by some 35% to support its export-led production of hydraulic pumps and motors. The ERDF investment is helping to safeguard or create 74 jobs.



### Grant for Business Investment

The Grant for Business Investment is one of the few ERDF-funded schemes offering grant funding direct to individual businesses. It provides capital grants to qualifying businesses to bring forward projects which will increase productivity, skills and employment. The area qualifying for the highest level of intervention is the western part of the South West.

£95,000 ERDF funding helped Fairfords Electronics expand into refurbished premises at Lee Mill Industrial Estate, Plymouth. This has safeguarded 6 jobs and is helping to create a further 9 new jobs by 2015.



In 2010 Pipex px®, manufacturers of thermoplastics and composites, secured £90,000 ERDF towards a new skills and innovation centre. A second grant of £150,000 in 2012 funded equipment and a sophisticated software system. So far, the investments have safeguarded 22



and created 18 jobs whilst supporting the company's ambitions to grow annual turnover from £15m to £25m over 5 years.

Specialist telecommunications company Sub10 Systems, from Newton Abbot, design and develop leading ethernet bridges used in computer networks. A grant of £236,000 helped the company to equip a research & development laboratory for production of 'E' band wireless systems for multi-gigabit, high-speed data transmission. The investment is forecast to safeguard and create a total of 28 jobs.



£215,000 ERDF funding contributed to new plant and equipment at Geocel Limited, a leading manufacturer of sealants and adhesives based in Plymouth. The investment has safeguarded and created 20 jobs as the company continues to expand.

Manuplas Limited designs and manufactures products for the marine and renewable energy markets, including specialist polyurethane elastomer mouldings.

A grant of £234,000 helped the company to acquire new plant and machinery to increase capacity and efficiency at its Plymouth factory.

## Priority two: Enterprise and Growth

### “Ready for Retrofit”

“Ready for Retrofit” provides grants to social landlords to improve the energy efficiency performance of their housing stock, at the same time growing the local supply chain by stimulating demand. The project also helps develop the long-term market by supporting local authority and local community initiatives. The statistics are impressive. So far, £2.3m capital funding has levered £10m total investment in 1,430 energy efficiency and micro-generation measures, resulting in just under 40,000 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> savings! A business support programme is supporting 520 retrofit businesses which have so far created or safeguarded 56 jobs.

*Exeter City Council used a capital grant to refurbish 3 hard-to-treat properties, improving their energy efficiency from D to B. This will reduce predicted annual energy costs by over £500 and save over 3 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> per year per property. The scheme is being used as a template to refurbish similar properties. Learning has been shared through on-site “toolbox talks” open to businesses.*



The contract gave DR Jones, the main contractor, valuable experience of refurbishing concrete non-traditional builds which helped them to win further work and saw turnover increase from £22m to £30m in a year.

### Improving Your Resource Efficiency



Langport-based Sutton Upholsters reduced their waste disposal costs and received a grant towards new energy saving lighting.

Between 2010 and 2014, 1,008 South West businesses were helped to reduce their environmental impact whilst making savings. “Improving Your Resource Efficiency” offered a free audit and action plan to businesses. 458 businesses went on to receive vouchers to help deliver identified improvements.

An evaluation showed that the project was well received, with 89% of respondents stating that their expectations were fully met and 79% very satisfied. The project showed that support of this type can deliver meaningful improvements to resource efficiency, often resulting in improved economic performance.

£7m invested has generated over £11m net GVA growth, created or safeguarded 162 jobs and resulted in a reduction of nearly 38,000 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.

## Priority three: Urban Enterprise

Over £23m of ERDF funding has been invested in initiatives aiming to encourage enterprise, particularly in those urban neighbourhoods experiencing the highest levels of worklessness or deprivation. In three of the region's largest urban centres—Bristol, Plymouth and Torbay—local partners were invited to develop “strategic investment frameworks” to target support to deprived neighbourhoods. Under each framework, a suite of projects has been brought forward to help people to explore self-employment and existing businesses to grow.

### Plymouth Urban Enterprise Programme

Plymouth Urban Enterprise Programme, co-ordinated by Plymouth City Council, has brought together a suite of ERDF-funded projects to help people wishing to set up their own business, supporting them from the germ of an idea to sustainable growth. The programme has engaged local community groups to create a real enterprise ‘buzz’ around the city, resulting in numerous success stories of people moving away from benefits and into self-employment.

The statistics are impressive. The programme has seen over 350 jobs created, 242 businesses started and loans of over £1 million raised to help start-up businesses grow. Over 3,000 people have been engaged and more than 70 social enterprises supported.



*Community 'Blue Bus' event held in August*

An Urban Enterprise Co-ordinator - based in Plymouth City Council - has ensured that effective links are made between the projects and their impact is maximised. The Co-ordinator was responsible for overseeing delivery of the “strategic investment framework” which set out how funding would be targeted to help deprived communities in Plymouth realise their entrepreneurial potential. He helped secure high level support and match funding for each project, linking the programme with the wider economic activities of the local authority and promoting its successes through joint marketing.

The Co-ordinator has also played an important role in managing Plymouth European Competitiveness Funding Forum, chaired by the Chief Executive of the Plymouth Chamber of Commerce. This has ensured that local partners are fully engaged in delivery of the programme.

This approach has helped to ensure a seamless enterprise journey for participants—and that the ERDF-funded projects in the framework are much more than the sum of their parts.

Similar locally co-ordinated Urban Enterprise Programmes have been delivered in Bristol and Torbay.

## Priority three: Urban Enterprise

### Plymouth Enterprise Coaching

Enterprise Coaching Plymouth, delivered by Working Links and supported by £768,000 ERDF, is part of the network of providers delivering the “Urban Enterprise” programme in Plymouth.

Mick, a former care worker whose confidence was low, explored self-employment after relocating to Plymouth. He attended a two day “Building Bridges” course, enhancing his skills in a group. He then worked with the Enterprise Coaching team until he felt ready to attend a formal business course run by partners Outset Plymouth which looked at marketing, feasibility, selling skills, finance and risk. This all helped Mick to formulate his business plan – buying and selling comics.



An opportunity arose to trial a market stall in the Pannier Market. Mick enjoyed this and with continued support has secured himself a permanent stall where he now trades. He loves being his own boss, has met a fantastic network allowing his confidence to grow and hasn't looked back.

### Outset Finance

Another partner in the Plymouth Urban Enterprise Programme, Outset Finance works with businesses that are seeking financial support, helping them understand financial processes and nurturing business owners towards investment-readiness. It runs workshops covering different areas of business finance, then helps business owners put together robust business plans to secure funding. To date, Outset Finance has helped its clients to access £1.2m, creating 133 jobs.

Outset Finance first supported Jenny and Emiko Adjene when they set up boutique stationery design studio ‘In the Treehouse’ and again when their next idea began to take shape. HipHipHooray.com sets out to offer great design standards, presented via a clever website that allows clients to edit the stationery themselves.



Outset helped the couple put together a business plan in preparation for loan applications to fund the venture, resulting in a £14,000 loan from South West Investment Group's Start-Up Loan Scheme and Microcredit Fund. Jenny says the support was invaluable. *“Without their help, I don't know how we would have sourced the funding we needed.”*

## Priority three: Urban Enterprise

Mark Burgess seized the opportunity to do something different after being made redundant in 2013. Motivated by his experience of bullying as a teenager, he decided to develop a programme of workshops to empower youth through performing arts.

Through workshops run by Outset Bournemouth Mark gained skills and confidence to develop his business plan. Just four months after starting the course, Mark successfully launched "Up for a Change", a service designed to support kids and teenagers from in dealing with issues in their lives. potential as active citizens in their communities .



### The Outset Programme

The Outset programme, run by YTKO, offers flexible, practical help to people wanting to start their own business. After helping clients to explore their aptitude for running a business, it provides practical workshops, enabling them to carry out market research and put together a feasibility plan, then develop sales, marketing and financial strategies which combine to form a viable business plan. Coaching and networking opportunities are provided along the way.

The programme specialises in supporting people facing particular barriers, such as those with physical or mental disabilities, single parents, the long term unemployed, the recently redundant and carers.

In total, £4.8m ERDF funding is supporting Outset programmes across Bristol, Torbay, Plymouth, Swindon and Bournemouth. Together, these projects have assisted over 4,300 people to explore self-employment, launching over 1000 new businesses and creating over 1370 jobs.

Outset Bristol has helped launch over 300 businesses since it was set up in 2010. Prothero Eyewear was the 300th to launch after Outset's advice led to it securing a £10,000 government-backed start-up loan. "Outset Bristol's business start-up training was invaluable in helping me start my business," said founder Martin Prothero. "Outset Finance gave me the financial backing I needed to help me turn my business ideas into a reality. I needed a loan to fund essential manufacturing equipment and the development time for the product. I received guidance on how to put my business plan together and practical support in planning how to take the ideas forward."

Jo Higson set up Blue Parakeet Coaching while working full time. Finding it a struggle to combine the two, she turned to Outset Plymouth. "Writing a business plan gave me a proper structure to work to," says Jo, "while learning how other people manage their businesses was invaluable and helped validate my ideas. I qualified for a £500 Micro Credit Grant and spent it on marketing materials which proved vital in helping me raise awareness of my business."



People may have the expertise to offer professional services but still need help to create the foundations of a viable business. Outset can help bridge that gap.

## Priority three: Urban Enterprise

### Driving Urban Enterprise, Dorset



Driving Urban Enterprise, delivered by WSX Enterprise, offers an exciting menu of activities to entrepreneurs in urban areas of Weymouth and Portland, Bournemouth and Poole. The programme supports people considering self-employment, those in early stages of developing their business and established businesses. Experienced advisers build confidence and skills through a coordinated series of practical workshops and events at convenient venues. Free events are geared to helping businesses get off the ground and prosper, including a monthly Friday Club get-together.

Supported by £413,590 ERDF, the project aims to create 100 new enterprises, with 50 created by the end of 2015. Launched late in 2013, it is on track having assisted nearly 150 individuals to date with 25 new businesses started.

### Social Enterprise Focus, Torbay and Plymouth

Social Enterprise Focus, part of the Plymouth Urban Enterprise Programme, provides advice, information and support to people interested in starting a social enterprise or community interest group or wishing to grow an existing one. To date, the project has worked with 97 individuals, assisted 58 businesses to improve performance and helped create 30 new businesses. The project is delivered by Serco in partnership with RIO and Plymouth University, supported by £479,000 ERDF funding.

Bike Space has been saving old bikes from the scrap heap and educating young people for over three years. It aims to engage and motivate young people struggling with mainstream education by training them as bicycle mechanics and giving them the opportunity to get out on mountain bike adventures. The pupils develop transferrable skills which will enable them to succeed in the workplace. Gareth, founder and director, commented: *"It has been fantastic having Paul, our advisor, on hand to assist us with business development. In particular his knowledge of fundraising processes in our sector has proved invaluable"*.



## Priority three: Urban Enterprise—Investments in Workspace

### The Hive, Somerset

Located just off the M5 near Weston-super-Mare, The Hive has quickly established itself as a thriving enterprise hub supporting the needs of start-up and growing businesses. Run by North Somerset Enterprise Agency, it offers flexible, managed office space with onsite business support, training and networking opportunities. Since its launch in July 2014, The Hive has been enthusiastically received and has already let over a third of available office space to nine businesses—well ahead of its planned targets. In addition, the facilities are regularly used by hot desk clients and “virtual” office tenants and meeting room hire has exceeded expectations. The Hive is supported by just over £1m of ERDF.



Chief Executive Angela Hicks, whose role in driving forward the project was recognised by the award of the property personality prize at the South West Property Awards 2014, commented, “*Local businesses have praised our facilities, especially the ease of location, use of technology and comfort for meeting space; one tenant said they wished they could have moved here years ago!*” Mark Burland of telecommunications provider First Class Comms agrees. “*The key benefits are location, ease of access 24/7, 365 days a year and a budgeted monthly cost which includes all services. Clients have commented that they can see this being an interesting and creative place for businesses taking that next step in growing.*”

### Torbay Workhubs

A different style of workspace has been made available to new enterprises, home workers and businesses in Torbay, thanks to an investment of £120,000 ERDF funding in two new “Workhubs”. Designed largely with home based businesses in mind, The Harbour Works at Torquay and Brixham Sea Works offer desk space, shared facilities and meeting rooms that can be booked as and when needed—whether by the day or on a regular basis. Operated like a gym membership, they provide a flexible, low-cost solution in a great environment. Benefits include access to high speed broadband and videoconferencing, plus opportunities to network.

Run by Torbay Development Agency, the Workhubs host a programme of business support drop in sessions and training events. These include “Torbay Jelly” events—informal co-working sessions where freelancers, home workers or micro business owners bring in their laptop to work alongside others, sharing experience and advice and perhaps finding new ideas on which to collaborate.

*“I am extremely excited to be a part of the Brixham workhub. It's a great space for local people who normally work from home to have a space to work, connect and collaborate. I know that it's going to do great things for the town and I am excited to see it grow.”*

**James Brooks - Brooks Creative**

## Priority three: Urban Enterprise—Investments in Workspace

### Cockington Court, Torbay

The £2.85m Cockington Court regeneration project, completed in 2011, restored Grade II\* listed Cockington Court Manor to establish a creative centre of excellence. ERDF of over £1.1m supported new build workspace within the scheme, which includes an art gallery, visitor centre, outdoor entertainment area, and a skills training venue.

The project uses the tourist attraction as a catalyst for economic regeneration and operates it as a creative business incubator as part of Torbay Development Agency's range of innovation centres.

Kate Toms, whose business—the Angel Bill Trading Company - expanded into Cockington Court Craft Centre's Sea Change Studios, said: *"Cockington provides a great work address and environment. It's fantastic, such a special place. It's great to have a studio in a place that's open to the public as well so there is the opportunity of selling, it's a huge bonus."*



### Emmaus Bristol



Emmaus Bristol provides a home, work and support for people who have experienced homelessness. Those who join Emmaus are called Companions and together they run a social enterprise which recycles and sells furniture and goods. Companions receive board and an allowance plus support,

training and mentoring. Through the experience of community and meaningful work, Emmaus helps them to regain dignity, develop new skills and contribute to society.

£403,354 ERDF supported the purchase and refurbishment of a building in the heart of the deprived St Paul's area to create a new centre for Emmaus Bristol. Opened in 2014, the building incorporates a shop and warehouse area, enabling Emmaus to grow the core recycling business, plus workspace to nurture new micro-enterprises started by Companions or others from the local community. The ERDF was targeted at the workspace which will assist at least 10 people start enterprises by 2015 and, by enabling Emmaus to grow the recycling business, will support the financial sustainability of the social enterprise. St Paul's is in the 10% most deprived areas in England and the new centre allows Emmaus Bristol to reach out to other disadvantaged people in the area, offering start up support, work experience and volunteering opportunities as pathways to employment.

## Priority three: Urban Enterprise—Investments in Workspace

### Filwood Green Business Park, Bristol



Filwood Green Business Park

Filwood Green Business Park is an exciting project in South Bristol that will boast the highest BREEAM environmental rating of any industrial building in the South of England. It was shortlisted for two awards in the 2014 BREEAM Awards, coming highly commended in the Industrial category. Construction company Midas have achieved an excellent score under the Considerate Contractors Scheme, putting the scheme amongst the top sites in the UK.

The project, supported by £5.4m ERDF, aims to attract new and maturing businesses in the low carbon sector to create a hub, providing jobs and opportunities. Combining affordable office space, practical workshops and a modern WorkHub, the business park will be a landmark development in Bristol's year as European Green Capital in 2015. Space is already being marketed to SMEs and local start-ups.



### Gainsborough Square, Bristol

A derelict site in Lockleaze, South Bristol, has been transformed by a £3.5m regeneration scheme in which ERDF investment has supported the development of business and community space.

Five years ago, United Communities and Lockleaze Neighbourhood Trust brought together local councillors, residents and agencies to come up with ideas to bring the derelict site back into use. With a massive fundraising effort, work started in 2012. The resulting scheme includes 28 affordable homes, a new community hub and a soft play centre, as well as spaces for local businesses. At the heart is 'The Hub', a well-equipped and adaptable centre which includes ERDF-funded workspace being let to social enterprises and local businesses on short and flexible terms to promote business start-ups. The project was launched in September 2014, with the local community coming together to celebrate its new centre, new business units and 6 new jobs.



## Priority three: Urban Enterprise—Investments in Workspace

### “Genesis” — Millfields Trust, Plymouth



The Millfields Community Economic Development Trust enables local people to contribute to the regeneration of the Stonehouse neighbourhood in Plymouth. Its core business is the rental of commercial premises. Its new Business Enterprise Centre ‘Genesis’ will provide 1995m<sup>2</sup> of commercial workspace, housing up to 50 flexible/hot desk spaces. Built to the BREEAM “excellent” environmental standard, the project is contributing to the regeneration of one of the most deprived neighbourhoods of Plymouth. It will open its doors early in 2015, providing a home for those in the early stages of setting up a business.

Supported by £2.4m ERDF funding, the project has engaged the local community at every stage, employing local sub-contractors and apprentices from the area. The construction site even became a gallery for artwork created by pupils from local schools to celebrate 100 years of Stonehouse. The children were met by project manager Neil Baker and “Ivor Goodsite”, a character created by the Considerate Constructors Scheme as a means through which the industry can engage with young people, assisting at community engagement events and making children aware of the dangers of construction sites.

### Ocean Studios, Plymouth

Also in Stonehouse, a Grade 1 listed former Royal Navy building in the Royal William Yard is being transformed into 1906m<sup>2</sup> of affordable workspace and equipment for artists, creating over 70 new jobs. These will be sustained with business support from Working Links and Outset Plymouth, and a programme of workshops generating teaching and learning opportunities for artists.

Ocean Studios, supported by over £2m ERDF funding, will boost creative enterprise in the city and engage local people with the arts. Research established a need for artists’ workspace in Plymouth and the over-subscribed waiting list continues to grow.

Ocean Studios will also deliver outreach to school children, young offenders, the workless and local residents, and a scheme is being developed with Swarthmore Charitable Trust to fund a studio for three years to be used by someone who could not



Ocean Studios offers flexible solutions to cater for a range of demands. It will comprise 31 artist studios (which can be shared), incubation space, a communal associates’ studio, fully equipped communal workshops such as a printroom, ceramic studio, small scale metal working room, a photography and digital provision and a glass workshop.

## Priority three: Urban Enterprise

### Inspiring Young Entrepreneurs

The Prince's Trust secured £891,000 ERDF to support the delivery of the Enterprise Programme across the South West from 2013 to 2015. The funding aims to support 1308 disadvantaged young people to explore self employment as a way to improve their situation. The programme offers courses across the South West covering everything from marketing and sales to tax and pricing, together with expert mentoring plus the potential to apply for a loan of up to £4,000 to kick-start young businesses.

One such business is the Organic Cake Company in Bath, which specialises in hand-made, wholesale cakes with ingredients from locally sourced food producers. Owner Jess said, *"I have just found a commercial kitchen which has enabled me to approach other cafés in the area. I am in talks with a number who are just starting to order from me! It feels like it is all taking off at once and I couldn't be happier. It is worth saying that without The Princes Trust's support I am not sure any of this would have happened."*



### School for Social Entrepreneurs, Bristol

The School for Social Entrepreneurs (SSE) Bristol aims to develop the talent of people from all backgrounds seeking to become social entrepreneurs and help them set up new community businesses and social enterprises to tackle the city and wider area's social and environmental problems. An ERDF investment of £209,842, matched by funding from Lloyds Banking Group and BIG Lottery Fund, aims to train 38 new social entrepreneurs and grant assist them to set up at least 28 new social enterprises by 2015. The programme offers action-learning based programmes of personal and organisational development over a year to help individuals establish, sustain and scale up social enterprises.

SSE graduate Rob Wall opened "Roll for the Soul", Bristol's community bike café and workshop in 2013, inspired by his experience as a volunteer with Bristol Cycle Festival. Rob commented, *"Looking back to the start of the SSE course, it's amazing to think how far the project has come. We've gone from the very early stages of fundraising to opening and trading in a year. It's been the hardest thing that I've ever done, but there's nothing so motivating as having a vision"*.

Rob's enterprise has created 9 full time jobs, employing 16 people on at least the living wage. Unlike a conventional bike shop, there is a strong emphasis on helping and promoting cycling around Bristol, in partnership with other social enterprises.

## More information

For any enquires regarding the South West Competitiveness European Regional Development Fund Programme please contact the Growth Delivery Team: South West at:

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