

Brussels, 15 March 2010

European Enterprise Awards 2010 shortlist

A shortlist of nominees has been selected for the European Enterprise Awards 2010. More than 330 projects competed in national competitions in 28 European countries for the European Enterprise Awards 2010. The 53 selected entries were reviewed by the Awards jury which has established a shortlist of 12 nominees in 5 categories. The winners will be announced on 31 May 2010 at an award ceremony in Madrid to which all national nominees will be invited.

Category 1: Promoting the Entrepreneurial Spirit

Austria: How to unlock the entrepreneurial potential of young artists

Blooming artists can also be blooming entrepreneurs. The Institute for Business Creation and Development at the Johannes Kepler University, in Linz, understood this well and introduced in 2005 a course entitled “Self-Employment in the creative industry”, as an elective subject for all students of the University of the Arts. So far, more than 300 students have attended the course, which runs on a low budget, since it mainly relies on external specialists.

Self employment in the creative industry, www.iug.jku.at

France: “Entrepreneurs' Residencies”, a creative way to attract business start-ups

In the French region of Auvergne, the Regional Development Agency set up “Entrepreneurs' Residencies” which are short- and long-term support measures for business creators or buyers from outside the area willing to settle in the region. They are designed to support, facilitate and accelerate the setting up of new businesses by guiding potential entrepreneurs and refunding their living expenses. Since 2007, the region has arranged more than 600 residencies of which 211 have resulted in the creation of new businesses.

Entrepreneurs' Residencies www.auvergnelife.tv

Ireland: Nurturing a new generation of entrepreneurs through the Genesis Enterprise Programme

The Genesis Enterprise Programme was established in the south-west of Ireland in 1998, in order to accelerate the development of young knowledge-based businesses with international potential. Every year, its holistic approach of incubation brings together regional and national supporting bodies and has led to an outstanding rate of success: so far, 79% of the participants are still in business. This approach has also been replicated successfully in other regions of Ireland.

Genesis Enterprise Programme, www.gep.ie

Category 2: Investing in Skills

Sweden: Halland, a Swedish region with more entrepreneurially minded young people

The earlier, the better: Region Halland, an association re-grouping the county and local authorities, has created its own pedagogical environment, stimulating entrepreneurship in primary and secondary schools, but also in adult education. The results are striking: whereas in 2004, only 26% of local young people would have preferred to be an entrepreneur, this had risen to 44% in 2008!

Företagsamt Halland, www.foretagsamt.se

United Kingdom: Hull proud of its entrepreneurial and economic regeneration

The Pride of Hull concept was developed in 2007 by the City Council and has since driven communities and a multitude of partners towards a common goal: creating the conditions for enterprise and fostering economic inclusion for the people of Hull, through inspiring programmes and events. Among its more impressive successes, Pride of Hull has already led 684 persons to employment in a year (project GROW), its Acorn Fund has helped create 395 businesses and 2,096 jobs, and it has developed innovative and entrepreneurial approaches in schools.

Pride of Hull, www.hullcc.gov.uk

Category 3: Improving the Business Environment

Greece: Reviving traditional cheese types with modern technology

Cheese-making had been almost abandoned on the small Aegean island of Ios, until the municipality decided to build a cheese factory in 2007 to produce quality traditional cheeses. Since then, the project has helped 40 farming families and local tourism entrepreneurs get extra income from selling quality dairy products. The municipality is now seeking to protect this gastronomic heritage by establishing the cheeses as specifically protected products.

Municipality of Ios Cheese Factory, www.ios.gr

Slovenia: Two-in-one: helping new companies and avoiding their closure

Since 2007, the company DATA Poslovne Soritve, has provided free support to entrepreneurs in the first stages of the life of their company. The aim of this public-private project is to create a better business environment for new companies and to reduce the rate of failure. In two years of operation, the rate of closure of the participating businesses dropped by more than half to 9%. Initially created to cover Ljubljana only, the initiative has now been extended across the whole country.

Programme of providing support to entrepreneurs aimed at reducing the closure rate of businesses, www.data.si

Category 4: Supporting the Internationalisation of Business

Germany: Stretching arms (and businesses) across the border

The Niederrhein University of Applied Sciences in Germany and the Dutch Teamvenlo consortium jointly established the Euregional Start-up Initiative (EGI) in 2006, to promote cross-border activities of newly founded and young enterprises in the northern Rhein region. Their approach, based on workshops with bi-national groups, has allowed participants to understand cultural differences and variations in the legal and fiscal frameworks. This initiative has led to the creation of 64 new businesses with an international focus.

EGI - Euregional Start-up Initiative, www.egi-online.eu

Norway: Norwegian SMEs are matching innovation with the market

Innovation Norway, a government-funded company, set up a support scheme called Industrial Research and Development Contracts (IRD) in 1994. This enables SMEs with high growth potential to penetrate international markets with new and innovative solutions. The scheme provides grants to R&D projects where an SME supplier teams up with an international customer to develop a unique, custom-made product or service. In recent years, more than 200 SMEs have received funding and gained access to new expertise and markets, a global network and strategic partners.

Norwegian Industrial Research and Development Contracts (IRD), www.innovationnorway.no

Category 5: Responsible and Inclusive Entrepreneurship

Finland: Promoting co-operatives as a modern and flexible form of entrepreneurship

The Tampere Region Co-operative Centre offers new co-operative entrepreneurs free counselling and education services. It also makes its expertise available to professional business counsellors and develops new operational cooperative models. Thanks to the Centre the number of cooperatives has risen by 500% in the past ten years. In 2008, there were 180 new co-operatives with an aggregate turnover of €37.7 million, compared to €2.91 million in 1998.

Counselling services for co-operative entrepreneurship, www.osuustoimintakeskus.net

Germany: Priority for Ethics!

The Time for Ethics initiative ("Zeit für Ethik") was initiated by the Office of Economic Affairs of Nuremberg and a group of entrepreneurs who make ethics central to their business success. The project relies on a strong network of volunteer experts who provide local entrepreneurs with coaching and advice on leadership ethics. In times of change or crisis, the risk is high that businesses' ethical standards fall. This initiative ensures that the competitive edge of ethics is made visible and therefore profitable.

Initiative "Time for Ethics", www.zeitfuerethik.de

Poland: A simple but clever way of solving labour and housing issues

In 2006, the District Labour Office of Nysa and the municipality of Paczków in Poland jointly launched a project to enable 176 long-term unemployed people to become qualified construction workers, by allowing them to build a real building (a 2-storey block of 12 flats). In so doing, they also provided social housing at a lower cost to the municipality. The simplicity of this initiative makes it replicable virtually anywhere.

Construction of houses by means of a training system for unemployed persons,
www.pup.nysa.pl

Full information about the awards, the jury and its collaborators can be found at:

http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/sme/best-practices/european-enterprise-awards/index_en.htm

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