

Government of the Future Centre

A green hub for Dublin ?

College of Europe – Accenture – The Lisbon Council

A report for Dublin City Council, 21st of April 2010

College of Europe - Dublin Team

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Executive Summary

The present report is composed as an answer to Dublin City Council's objective to stimulate the greening of Irish economy on a local level and within its competences. Green economy was identified as a way for Ireland to recover growth following a major economic recession. This strategy has also been followed world-wide and on the EU level.

Because of the recent nature of green business phenomenon, old patterns of thinking and working have been challenged. As a response to that, Dublin City Council put forward an idea to facilitate sustainable ways of working. This has been done around the world via the establishment of new kinds of working hubs, physical spaces with a strong community and networking aspect. The report takes as a reference a particular model of this idea, a franchise called the HUB network.

In answer to this, the present report assesses the desirability of a similar structure for Dublin.

Chapter 1 defines basic concepts necessary to set foundations for further analysis.

Chapter 2 outlines assumptions the report is based on and the working method undertaken.

Chapter 3 analyzes the local, national and European context for green business development.

Chapter 4 benchmarks European best practices related to working hubs.

Chapter 5 looks at similar Dublin-based initiatives to verify the added value of a potential hub in Dublin.

Chapter 6, 7 and 8 recommend a hub (chapter 6) with a particular focus on green, community and business aspect (chapter 7) and propose different scenarios for its establishment (chapter 8).



Introduction

The Client

Dublin City Council (DCC) is the largest local authority in Ireland. It has 52 elected representatives - the City Councillors, accompanied by an administration. The administration is led by the City Manager. The figurehead is the Lord Mayor, who has to provide civic leadership, facilitate dialogue with organisations and with citizens. Dublin is Ireland's economic engine. It is responsible for 50% of GDP in Ireland, and 25% of Ireland's population lives in the Dublin Region.¹ It is therefore from Dublin that growth can be generated, and it is also within Dublin that growth can then flourish. Any action from DCC must be in line with their 2011 - 2017 Development Plan.² It should also fit into the upcoming 'Framework for a Sustainable Dublin'.³ There is a palpable enthusiasm from the city government for "Design Thinking".⁴ The Dublin City Council has become involved in a myriad of networks and initiatives in recent years, which all could be incorporated quite easily into the project under examination.⁵

The Context

Ireland's "Economic Miracle" is well-documented; unfortunately, it is also well and truly over. Unemployment had reduced to 4.3% by 2000, a level at which it remained till 2007. In the last 18 months it has skyrocketed back up to over 12.5%.⁶ Today, Ireland has negative growth of - 8.13 % a decrease from + 9% since 2001. Many positive attributes which contributed to the "Celtic Tiger" are still present in the Ireland of 2010, despite the global economic context.⁷ The challenge is how to capitalize on them in order to grow.

¹ Internal document made available by Dublin City Council

² Dublin City Council, Dublin City Development Plan 2011-2017, 2009, retrievable at: <http://www.dublincitydevelopmentplan.ie/index.php>.

³ In the process of internal elaboration

⁴ Conclusions from the 1st field visit

⁵ See the annex 1

⁶ Central Statistics Office

⁷ See chapter 3 for more details

However, this new growth should be of a different nature, it should be sustainable and green, as outlined by the current government in national policy documents.⁸ The seeds of green growth are being sown by public policy, nevertheless the question of what action to take still remains.

The Challenge

Dublin City Council wants to support the economic regeneration of Dublin. “Green Business” is seen as the key to this growth. The broad nature of Green Business and of new “smart” technology which can be used for green ends makes it difficult to pin down. This sector can be defined in a multitude of different ways, from horticultural consultancies to retrained electricians, all these can be classified as “green jobs”. The types of businesses and the environment they require also ranges from low-skill manual labour involved in re-greening products and services and hi-tech research or product development.⁹

Furthermore, the green sector is a wide ranging sector which is constantly changing and developing. There are very few published statistics available about the size of the Irish green sector. The most comprehensive study of the environmental goods and services industry in Ireland was carried out by FORFAS and Intertrade Ireland. Forfás and InterTradeIreland estimate the value of the market in Ireland to be in the region of €2.8 billion in 2008.^{10,11}

Political, legal and regulatory sphere is not within the ambit of local powers, but Dublin City Council can act as an enabler and build up on the expertise and energy which has been generated at EU and national level in order to find a formula to stimulate green business.

Scope of this report

The aim of the project is to determine the desirability and value of establishing a hub, a structure for green entrepreneurs in Dublin. The hub is a concept initially presented by DCC as a potential solution to the challenge outlined. Detailed information about the proposed structure and content

⁸ See the annex 2 for a full list of policy documents

⁹ A working definition is elaborated in chapter 1

¹⁰ Forfás and InterTradeIreland, “Environmental Goods and Services Sector on the Island of Ireland: Enterprise Opportunities and Policy Implications”, October 2008, p.8, <http://www.nanoireland.ie/publication/search.jsp?ft=/publications/2008/Title,1930,en.php>.

¹¹ Taking into account changed circumstances it is difficult to judge the size of the market today in 2010.

was not available during the creation of this report.¹² A general, high level assessment is made of how it could best sow the seeds for a thriving green enterprise cluster and what role DCC could play in this process.

However, the present report assesses the adaptability of the concept to Dublin's reality and outlines various scenarios for its establishment. The potential value of such a project will be evaluated against its potential to contribute to the over-arching goal of the Irish government to stimulate Irish economy through green business. Could a green hub work for the promotion of green economic growth and would a green hub add value in Dublin? This is the question that the present report intends to answer.

¹² Ideas about it range from Integral Learning school to flexible work space and small, community style organization. World Café style conference, Dublin, 8 March 2010, see annex 3



Chapter 1: Basic Concepts

Hubs and HUB

The idea behind a hub is to provide a place where entrepreneurs can be gathered to share experience, resources and connections in an innovation-stimulating atmosphere. A hub is, in basic terms, a physical working space based on flexible officing principles and offering support structures such as networking opportunities, training and workshops, and access to capital providers.

The HUB (referred to in capital letters) is an international network of centres¹³ will be used as a model/reference in the present paper because of its successful implementation in 22 countries across the world and because it encompasses the notion of sustainability.

The HUB network began in London in 2005. Initially started by social entrepreneurs, this new model of working was found to be conducive to new ideas and economic success. The idea of business incubators or attempts by public administration to stimulate the creation of clusters is not a new one, the HUB model tries to emulate valuable aspects of these in a micro and more holistic sense.

Each of the hubs in the HUB network is adapted to particular local context, depending on the city environment and entrepreneurs involved. However, the network shares a common vision of a sustainable society. The HUB also represents a community of people committed to avoiding siloization and fostering creativity. Learning, cooperation with the local community and a multi-use flexible space are integral aspects of all successful hubs. For a multitude of reasons this solution suits the changed shape of the working world and has demonstrated success in both helping existing entrepreneurs and stimulating further entrepreneurship.

¹³ HUB network website, <http://the-hub.net/>

While there is not necessity for the hub in Dublin to join the HUB network, successful elements of the HUB network can be incorporated without necessarily joining the franchise. The report looks into best practices within this network and similar structures which are not part of the network.

If such a structure were put in place in Dublin to stimulate green economy, there is a need to further define green business.

Green Aspect

There is no uniform definition of green concepts, such as green jobs, concepts are defined in terms of specific subjects studied.¹⁴ The United Nations defines green jobs as “positions in agriculture, manufacturing, construction, installation, and maintenance, as well as scientific and technical, administrative, and service-related activities, that contribute substantially to preserving or restoring environmental quality”.¹⁵ Potential for growth in the green sector, thus defined, is tremendous, both in new industries and in traditional sectors of the economy, without counting those jobs related to green sectors in a more indirect manner. The estimations for growth in the green sector vary substantially, from 2.4 to 36.4 million new jobs created, depending on the definitions and scope taken into account. Definitions can consider either eco-industries, core activities, or environment-related economic activities which depend on environmental resources such as agriculture. Direct, indirect or induced employment can be counted.¹⁶

Comhar suggests that a green new deal could be achieved in Ireland through creating new green jobs in “an innovative, low-carbon and resource efficient society”.¹⁷ At the same time, their report warns

¹⁴ European Commission, Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, *Employment in Europe report 2009*, Luxembourg, Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, 2009, retrievable at: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=113&newsId=642&furtherNews=yes>, p. 109.

¹⁵ United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), International Labour Organization (ILO), International Organisation of Employers (IOE), International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), »*Green Jobs: Towards decent work in a sustainable, low-carbon world*», http://www.unep.org/labour_environment/features/greenjobs-report.asp, 2008, pp. 35- 36.

¹⁶ European Commission, *Employment in Europe report 2009*, *op. cit.*, pp. 109-111.

¹⁷ Comhar Sustainable Development Council, »Towards a New Green Deal», <http://www.comharsdc.ie/publications/index.aspx?PAuto=274>, 2009, p. 17.

that meeting the targets set by the EU Climate Change and Energy Package are going to be difficult in Ireland without a higher level of investment in green sector¹⁸.

A particular emphasis is placed on green technology aspects of Ireland's green growth¹⁹. This is defined broadly as "anything that seeks the efficient use of natural resources to limit or negate environmental impact while reducing costs and raising revenues, profits and value".²⁰

¹⁸ 20 % reduction in greenhouse emissions, 20 % of renewable energy sources and 20 % improvement on energy efficiency

¹⁹ Conclusions from World café Style conference, see annex 3

²⁰ Greentech Media, *The 2008 Greentech Market Taxonomy*, 30 November 2007, Greentech Media Inc., retrievable at: <http://www.greentechmedia.com/articles/read/the-2008-greentech-market-taxonomy-342/>, p. 3.

Chapter 2: Assumptions and working method

Assumptions

- There is an important potential for incentives focusing on green growth to benefit from EU funds, as old EU programmes have acquired new focus on green, reinforced by the new EU2020 strategy, released in March 2010.²¹
- The crisis context in Ireland makes new initiatives to boost up the economy easier to implement, especially the ones in the green sector, as it offers most potential for growth.²² While the crisis context brings some disadvantages, such as lack of access to credit, there are clear advantages for entrepreneurs.²³ New opportunities available include emptier commercial and Local Authority owned spaces, weak competition in some areas and a much larger pool of free workforce available due to unemployment.
- Support in Dublin business incubation/facilitation centres focuses on start-ups in an advanced stage of business development therefore new entrepreneurs find it difficult to access financing or other support in Dublin.²⁴ Due to the recent interest in green business, companies in this sector usually appear under the emergent start-up category.
- Dublin city, as a seat of many multinational companies' headquarters, offers possibilities to leverage Corporate Social Responsibility.²⁵

²¹ European Commission, "Europe 2020: a new economic strategy", 3 March 2010, retrieved 17 March 2010, http://ec.europa.eu/eu2020/index_en.htm.

²² COMHAR, "Towards A New Green Deal for Ireland", retrieved 25 March 2010 <http://www.comharsdc.ie/themes/index.aspx?TAuto=8>

²³ The case can be found in previous recession periods, e.g. Kauffman Foundation Study found out than more than half of all Fortune 500 companies were started in a recession or bear market. Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation, *The Economic Future Just Happened*, 9 June 2009, retrievable at: <http://www.kauffman.org/newsroom/the-economic-future-just-happened.aspx>.

²⁴ Conclusion from the 1st field visit

²⁵ The European Commission's definition: "A concept whereby companies integrate social and environmental concerns in their business operations and in their interaction with their stakeholders on a voluntary basis." European Commission, "Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)", 16 March 2010, retrieved 20 April 2010, http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/sustainable-business/corporate-social-responsibility/index_en.htm.

- There is a lack of understanding of green business among CEOs and banks which makes green business development difficult.²⁶
- Site visits to Dublin and meetings with key stakeholders have proven that there is a demand for a hub as well as potential sources of support.²⁷

Working methods

The following approaches, working methods and tools were undertaken for the preparation of the present report:

- a) In-depth research with an analysis of primary sources

Policy papers produced by DCC and Irish government, high-level policy objectives at the EU level and reports produced by Accenture and others.²⁸

- b) Site visits

There were two types of sites visits undertaken – the ones effectuated in the framework of our two site visits to Dublin (on 29 January and 8-9 March 2010) and the visits to other hubs in different European cities (Brussels, London, Paris). In Dublin, we attended meetings at Dublin City Council offices, Lord Mayor’s residence, Cultivate centre at Greenhouse, Forfas and TrinityHaus.

- c) Stakeholder consultation

A World Café style (WCS) conference was organized by DCC on 8th of March 2010 where we moderated discussions and gathered valuable information from different experts in the area, as well

²⁶ The identified need to promote, raise awareness and gain support for green business (as green policy is mostly seen as an enemy by the CEOs) is addressed by the Dublin based The Ecology Foundation which is engaged in persuasion and promotion activity with CEOs. Interview with The Ecology Foundation, Dublin, 9 March 2010.

²⁷ The network of “Innovation Studios” people comprises more than 100 members and response to public events is huge – around 200 interested people come to events they organise. Following our discussions with Forfas, there also might be an opportunity for support. Interview with Forfas, Dublin, 29 January 2010.

²⁸ For the complete list of primary sources, see annex 2

as held some informal talks with stakeholders. The conference addressed four questions of what must be done to ensure Dublin realises the potential of the Green Economy by 2010.²⁹

d) Interviews

Interviews were conducted both during live meetings and by using conference call facilities to connect with hubs and incubators in Dublin and Europe.

e) SWOT analysis

The analysis of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) has been applied to assess whether the idea of establishing a hub could attain desired goals in the current Irish economic context and the possible added value it could bring to existing structures in place with having green and/or community aspect enhanced.

f) Benchmarking and comparative tables

The process of benchmarking has been applied in order to analyse and learn from Irish and European best practices. Comparative tables are the tool used to present the main outcomes.

²⁹ Main outcomes are revealed throughout our report and the minutes outlined in the annex 3

Chapter 3: Local, Irish and EU context

Ireland and Dublin

There seems to be a general consensus on embracing green technology and supporting green jobs creation as a solution to recover growth in Ireland.³⁰ DCC embraced this philosophy and is trying to find a way of implementing the needed shift towards green.³¹

DCC has shown its intention to assist the greening of the economy by establishing a post of a “Green Business Officer” in 2008 and a Business Support Unit, whose aim is to assist businesses by providing information on a range of services relevant to business. In June 2009, DCC in co-operation with Dublin City Enterprise Board, launched a “Guide to Enterprise in Dublin City” and a “Funding Support Website”³² was set up as an easy to use web portal that offers users the option to browse funding information of Irish government and EU funding opportunities and links to other relevant organizations’ websites.³³ The Lord Mayor also established a Commission focused on employment and other related issues. Furthermore, Dublin City Centre has a number of research institutes linked to its universities either covering entrepreneurial or innovation matters.

European Union

The EU offers a number of funding opportunities for European networks centred broadly on the notion of sustainable development. Especially due to crisis context, many new initiatives have been put in place, such as Recovery Plan for growth and jobs of November 2008. In addition, traditional

³⁰ See World cafe Style Conference conclusions, annex 3

³¹ Conclusions from the 1st field visit

³² www.funding4dublincity.ie

³³ Dublin City Enterprise Board, Dublin Business Innovation Centre, Dublin Chamber of Commerce, the Guinness Enterprise Centre, Sustainable Energy Ireland, Enterprise Ireland, etc.

policies are being greened – more than €105 billion was invested in the "green economy" through the EU Cohesion Policy.³⁴

However, these programmes entail a complicated and lengthy application process for which partnerships with different regions/cities in Europe need to be established. The whole application process takes at least 6 months, and additional three to four months are to be taken into account for having a feedback if the proposal was selected.³⁵ Nevertheless, this is an important potential source of funding once the hub is put in place and there is a potential for cooperation with similar structures across Europe.

According to the European Innovation Scoreboard, providing an annual assessment of innovation performance across the EU,³⁶ Ireland is in the group of *Innovation followers*, with an innovation performance above the EU27 average. The Scoreboard also suggests that public support appears to have helped firms maintain innovation expenditures, underlining its increased importance in times of economic crisis.

Annex 4 provides an overview of the possible funding opportunities offered by the EU as well as their objectives and selection criteria.

³⁴ Europa Press Release, "Cohesion Policy backs "green economy" for growth and long-term jobs in Europe", 9 March 2009, retrieved 20 April 2010, <http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/09/369&format=HTML>.

³⁵ Conclusions from the 1st field visit

³⁶ European Innovation Scoreboard 2009, "Comparative analysis of innovation performance", retrievable at: <http://www.proinno-europe.eu/sites/default/files/page/10/03/EIS%202009%20Final%20report.pdf>.

Chapter 4: International best practices

The idea of a hub has been successfully implemented in a number of European cities.³⁷ This section compares London, Brussels, Amsterdam and Paris hubs under categories of special interest for Dublin stakeholders. The analysis focuses on North-western European hubs for a more accurate comparison with the specific case of Dublin. Particular attention was given to the green aspect of each of the hubs' work and to the particular financial context in which the hubs operate. The Paris hub, not being part of the HUB network, was selected for a more comprehensive overview.

Hubs across Europe contribute to job creation and entrepreneurship. In fact a community context in which hub members operate is a framework stimulating synergies among entrepreneurs. Thanks to a highly personal and entrepreneur-centred dimension, hubs can offer a working environment which encourages entrepreneurship and faith in individual endeavour³⁸ which is often mentioned as the greatest challenge for business development of innovative ideas.³⁹

³⁷ Amsterdam, Berlin, Bristol, Brussels, London, Madrid, Milan, London, Porto, Riga, Rotterdam, Stockholm, Tampere, Vienna and Paris

³⁸ Interviews with Amsterdam, Brussels and London Hubs

³⁹ Conclusions from the World café Style Conference, annex 3

Figure 1: Best Practices Table⁴⁰

| | | London | Brussels | Amsterdam | Paris |
|-------------------------------|----------------|---|---|--|--|
| Justification | | 1 st hub in the HUB network – model for subsequent hubs | The most recent hub established in the perspective of job creation | A hub with a business focus | A hub following the HUB model but not part of the network |
| HUB network membership | | yes | yes | yes | no |
| Benefits from the HUB network | | Access to international network of entrepreneurs Expertise and example to follow during the establishment process | Access to international network of entrepreneurs Expertise and example to follow during the establishment process | Source of encouragement for entrepreneurship | Not relevant |
| Green dimension | | Only few companies / entrepreneurs work in the green sector but all need to have a 'change making ethos' | Only few companies / entrepreneurs work in the green sector but all need to have a 'change making ethos' | About 40 % of members are sustainability oriented. | Only few companies/ entrepreneurs work in the green sector. Focus is more on social innovation |
| Hub focus | | Charities | Change making | Change making & business potential | Local Development and Social Innovation |
| Financial aspects | Public support | None | Regional grant of 60,000 euros | None | City Council grant of 100,000 initially, then 350,000 after establishment |

⁴⁰ Compiled as a result of visits to the London, Brussels, Paris and Amsterdam Hub in February and March 2010

| | | | | |
|----------------------------------|--|--|--|---|
| Starting capital | 30,000 pounds | 24,000 euros | n/a | n/a |
| Monthly cost | 11,000 pounds | 12,000 euros | 20,000 euros | n/a |
| Revenues | 100% membership | 80% membership 20% events | renting out hub spaces membership, consulting services | n/a |
| Services provided | Networking events, mentoring, training opportunities | Services in development | Networking events, mentoring events, business clinic once a month | Networking events, mentoring events. |
| General context of establishment | Need for a physical space where to co-work | Grant obtained in the perspective of job creation | Idea imported from London | Idea of a private investor with a public grant. Perceived need to develop the focus on local development. |
| Physical component | Central location Relatively small space. Basic office equipment, alternative style | Central location. Wide physical space in loft style. Equipment under development | Central location. Full office equipment including conference and meeting rooms. | Central location, very spacious office space. |

Observations

HUB network

There are strong benefits from joining the HUB network, however, the example of Paris Hub shows that alternative developments are possible and can be successful.

Green focus

Although only a small fraction of entrepreneurs present in the European hubs could be strictly defined as green business in eco-industries, their activity could fall into the broader definition of green business quoted in chapter 1 in terms of their indirect contribution to greening the economy.

Public grant

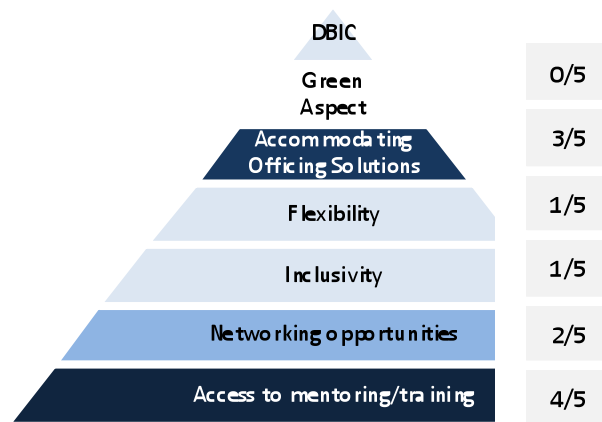
Although access to grant considerably sped up the establishment of Brussels and Paris hubs (grants under the ‘job creation objective’), there are significant benefits from personal financial participation of hub members. In fact personal contribution could reinforce the entrepreneurial dimension of a hub and make it a truly entrepreneurs-driven endeavour.



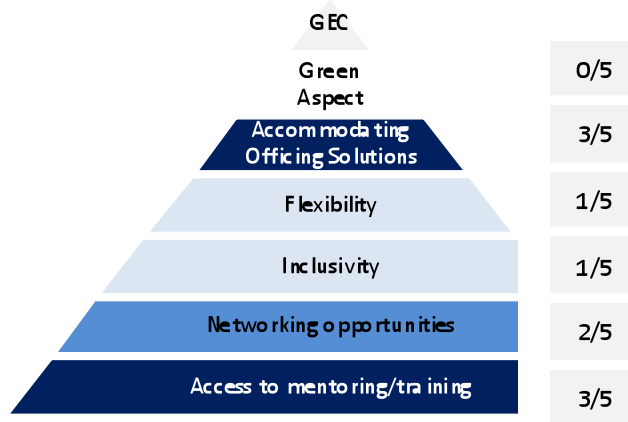
Chapter 5: Dublin-based initiatives

Dublin-based initiatives were compared to the hub project based on 6 criteria which are further detailed in annex 5. The aim of this analysis is to show that a hub could add value as current Dublin structures do not meet the needs identified (as estimated on a scale between 0 and 5). In ideal circumstances, a hub for Dublin could satisfy all of the categories.

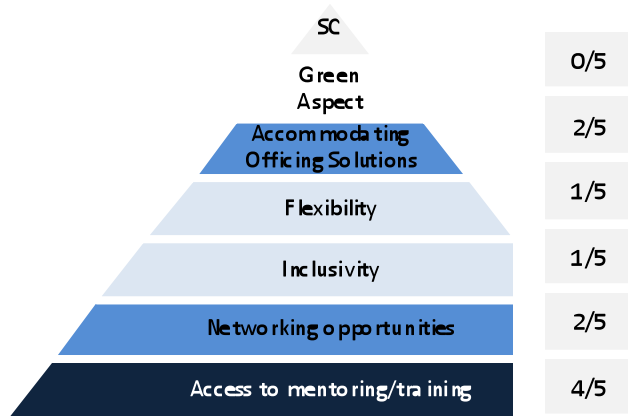
Dublin Business Innovation Centre



Guinness Enterprise Centre



Synergy Centre



Chapter 6: Recommendations - the hub as a response to Dublin's needs

This section examines the potential of a hub solution in the context of Dublin through a SWOT analysis, taking into consideration the current economic crisis and the potential advantages which could be leveraged by green businesses in Dublin and the rest of the country.

As a result of this analysis, the general recommendation is the creation of a hub in the Dublin area. Certain aspects are crucial in order to fully adapt the hub to Dublin's specific needs. These will be further observed in the next chapter.





Chapter 7: Recommendations – fundamental aspects of a hub

Recommendation 1: A green aspect as inclusive as possible

As the benchmark shows, a successful hub has a specific distinctive nature (social innovation, local development). Since Dublin’s economic priority is “green growth”, a potential hub should focus on green business, as defined in chapter 1. Taking into account this broad definition, the hub should be as inclusive as possible in order to achieve the objectives of stimulation of economic growth.

While it is not necessary that the green hub focuses on a particular aspect of green business, it is important that it encourages sectors as green technology and smart ICT-based solution in which Ireland has natural advantages. Green focus of a hub should also encompass providing the essential support for the transition to green economy in terms of skills anticipation, partnership and information sharing.

Recommendation 2: Focus on community aspect and cooperation

The possibility for the hub members to exchange their experiences and share their skills has been identified as one of the most important added value for the hub.⁴¹ The hub should therefore provide the necessary framework, physical and virtual, for the community to thrive.

As a consequence, DCC, using its central position in the area, has to create and maintain, especially in the beginning, a network of stakeholders. This should create the necessary synergies between third level structures and other Dublin based initiatives related to green business.

⁴¹ Conclusions from world café style conference, annex 3 and international best practices chapter

Recommendation 3: Concentrate on the business aspect

As pointed out in the benchmark, the business focus varies considerably across the hubs examined. Some of them are focused on the artistic dimension, others on charity activities. In order to leverage the economic growth which is the basis for the creation of the hub, it is necessary for Dublin to insist on the business aspect (training, mentoring and network activities).



Chapter 8: Recommendations – identification of possible establishment scenarios

First of all a hub could be either established as a new initiative or via remodelling of an already existing business incubator/zone space. Once the most suitable formula for a hub is selected, a number of scenarios can be identified from financial and managerial point of view.

Figure 2: Hub formulae

| Scenario | Practical Consequences | Advantages | Disadvantages |
|--------------------|---|---|---|
| New hub | Need to find and the right localization and undertake major renovation works. | Possibility to select the most convenient localization. Possibility to tailor the layout of the space towards specific needs of hub users. | Higher capital investment. Longer establishment period. Higher investment risk. |
| Remodelling | Need to find an incubator in a transitional phase/looking for a new model. | Lower starting capital required, possibility to benefit from already existing expertise and networks. | Loss of the 'fresh initiative' aspect of the project. |

Some hubs studied obtained no public support and instead were established by a single investor or by a community of investors. It is also possible to envisage that one public agency, such as Dublin City Council, could give financial support to the project. Another possibility would be for a group of government and/or local agencies based in Dublin to create a common platform for the establishment of a hub (multi-agency).

| Scenario | Practical Consequences | Advantages | Disadvantages |
|------------------------------|--|--|--|
| No public support | Need for the entrepreneurs to provide the starting capital for the hub. | Development of a spirit of cooperative among founding members who provide the starting capital. | Potential difficulty to find funding, especially in the crisis context. Little influence of public agencies (like Dublin City Council) on priorities retained. |
| Single Agency Support | Need to identify the scope of support and the role played in the management of the hub. | Coherence in actions and choices. Possibility to make sure that key priorities of the agency are taken on board. | Possible captivation of the project management by the agency supporting the hub, instead of entrepreneur-driven management. |
| Private Investor | Need to emphasise the business aspect of the initiative and to increase revenue streams. | Fast establishment and opportunity for quick development of the hub, driven by the need to recover costs. | Potential loss of community character of the hub. Potential difficulty to find an investor in a recession context. |
| Multi-Agency | Need to create a strong platform and clearly identify common objectives. | Shared risk and wider sources of expertise/network. Increased cooperation in the green sector among already existing Dublin-based agencies through the hub initiative. | Coordination challenges, time-consuming process. |

Annex 1: Stakeholders

CATEGORY1: Service providers

Relation to Hub: Provide services such as incubation spaces, access to capital and training and workshop opportunities.

The Dublin City Council

The Dublin City Council in its capacity as primary governmental authority in Dublin City, has an important role to play in order to foster a sound business climate for entrepreneurs in the City. It has a greatly important role in laying the foundation for economic development through its economic development unit.

Dublin Business Innovation Centre

Dublin business innovation Centre assists and provides advice to new business projects as well as access to capital to selected enterprises. The Dublin BIC also offers advice to entrepreneurs when they are confronted to various challenges related to developing their business, starting a business or expanding an existing business.

Guinness enterprise Centre

The Guinness Enterprise Centre provides incubator space to new and established small businesses, primarily in software services oriented businesses, and also to provide financial support to startups in the Dublin area.

Dublin City Enterprise board

Dublin City Enterprise Board offers services such as a mentoring program offering advice to entrepreneurs on how to start a business, financial assistance and access to capital, as well as networking opportunities.

Enterprise Ireland

Enterprise Ireland is a government agency responsible for the development and promotion of the Irish business sector. Their services include providing advisory and financial support to startups, giving advice on how to grow your business, and how to adapt your business to changing needs by examining innovative business practices.

CATEGORY 2: Advisors

Relation to Hub: Providing advice to green start-ups on how to conduct themselves in a sustainable way, and identify and help dealing with the challenges they face to accomplish their "green" objectives.

Business in the Community

Business in the Community advises business on how to use their resources in a way that is sustainable and good for the environment.

Forfás

Forfás is Ireland's national policy advisory body for enterprise and science. Forfás contributes to the emergence of a good economic climate for businesses by together with other government agencies, making sure that the right fiscal policies, supports and structures are in place. Additionally, Forfás identifies infrastructural challenges facing enterprise in Ireland, benchmarks Ireland's performance against other leading economies and identifies the opportunities for enterprise in the environmental / energy goods and services sector.

Codema

Codema is the leading energy agency for Dublin and provides advice to the government, and businesses on improving their sustainability.

Sustainable Energy Ireland

SEI is Ireland's national energy authority which has as its main objective to promote and assist in the development of sustainable energy.

Social Entrepreneurs Ireland

Social Entrepreneurs Ireland identifies, invests in, and supports social entrepreneurs and the organisations they launch. They also work with their social entrepreneurs' network, partners and supporters to promote social entrepreneurship at local, regional and national level throughout the country.

Comhar

Comhar is the forum for national consultation and dialogue on issues related to sustainable development.

GreenAir Ltd

One of the world's fastest growing carbon credit companies, GreenAir Ltd is involved in every aspect of the carbon credit value chain and provides funding and expertise to commercialise carbon credit projects worldwide, and sells the resulting carbon credits on established international markets.

DesignTwentyFirstCentury

Design Twentyfirst Century is a not for profit, charitable organization dedicated to the belief that Ireland can be a prosperous, innovative and happier country if we reawaken and tap the spirit of creativity and imagination that runs deep in Ireland's people and history.

CATEGORY 3: Universities and possible users

Relation to Hub: Providing the necessary skills to green entrepreneurs who also may be potential users.

Dublin Institute of Technology

Offers through its hothouse program, incubation spaces, workshops and access to opportunities for entrepreneurs and as well as funding opportunities for investors.

DCU Ryan Academy

DCU Ryan Academy is a partnership between Dublin City University and the family of the late Tony Ryan (Ryanair). The Academy exists to promote entrepreneurship and innovation and to use the iconic building in Citywest as a hub for entrepreneurs and researchers to develop ideas, learn new skills and network.

Synergy Centre

The Synergy Centre provides, incubation spaces, business support through a mentoring and training programs and networking opportunities

Tipperary Institute

The Tipperary Institute through its Centre for Innovation and Enterprise Development, engages academic, industry and start up business to advance enterprise development in the Tipperary region. The centre focuses on education, mentoring start up companies, nurturing innovation and entrepreneurship, collaboration with relevant stakeholders and networking.

The Digital Hub

The Digital Hub is an Irish Government initiative to create an international centre of excellence for knowledge, innovation and creativity focused on digital content and technology. Its services include workshops and training programs.

The Dublin Hub- Innovation Studios

The Dublin Hub is working space for start-ups, social entrepreneurs and creative businesses to come together to share ideas, experiences and resources in order to spur innovation.

Trinity Haus

Trinity Haus is a new venture at Trinity College that focuses on fostering and providing the skills needed to innovate in the energy sector by providing courses in related disciplines such as science and engineering.

ECO- UNESCO

ECO-UNESCO is Ireland's Environmental Education and Youth Organisation affiliated to the World Federation of UNESCO Clubs, Centres and Associations (WFUCA).

ECO-UNESCO's aims are to raise environmental awareness, understanding and knowledge of the environment among young people, to promote the protection and conservation of the environment and to promote the personal development of young people through practical environmental projects and activities.



Annex 2: Policy documents

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Annex 3: World cafe Style Conference

Question of *what must be done to ensure Dublin realises the potential of the Green Economy by 2010* indicated solutions could include avoiding a general green labelling and establishing a strong definition with quality marks defined, integrating business and arts into reflection on green ideas, growing community and putting infrastructure in place to help develop ideas. There is lot of energy in Dublin, networking opportunities in place (“Tweetivism”), vacant spaces available, however it is necessary to combine expertise (retraining and upskilling) and energy. While small companies lack resources, big business could be use as a leverage – a need to find a way how to leverage the presence of multinationals (e.g. social responsibility funds, cohort of people inside Google, who are given time to explore other opportunities). Main obstacles are constant changes in grants schemes, red tape, small green market while competition is global, no price for environmental goods (e.g. water is not paid for in Ireland, law currently under revision). Access to funds is the biggest problem for SMEs, banks lack trust in green business, Ireland is slow on adapting new technology, research, education for green and use of new technologies is needed, besides solving the myth of the entrepreneur, there is a need to celebrate “ordinary” entrepreneurs. A need has been identified to move away from services towards technology while prioritising education – Universities need to educate green skills and capture the energy. DCC could be a leader in standards setting - like a rating agency (niche), capitalising on the unutilised skillbase, offering practical supports, safety nets for new startups and use partnership approach. DCC could educate and communicate - academic aspect is important as well as PR e.g. home packs.

On the 2nd question *if a Green Hub could add value and how could it work in Dublin*, the answers were generally positive. By leveraging ICT, brand, renewable energy potential, energy environmental councils and universities initiatives, the green hub could add value. It would work provided it is holistic and supported by many partners, if it doesn’t get bogged down (more action), have workforce and skills. The appetite is there - a need to connect colleges, link teachers and doers. It could have increase societal and business awareness; serve as an example, testbed for a shift in individual values, creating understanding and different lifestyle. Better if it is not about the space but about the people. However there is a need for communication, exhibition space and meeting place

as number of entrepreneurs in Ireland is huge (Microsoft survey) - need to influence them to capitalize on 'Green' and create clusters (e.g. Green isle Galway Bay project, spirit of Ireland etc.) Synergies and giving back to rest of network would create the missing community, safe space of support and challenge model. Ideas shop to pitch, questions, support and put ideas in conjunction while network would encourage creativity, match ideas with potential and ability and provide legal safeguards (sign up-register idea). Dublin is the capital; therefore it could prove the model and propagate it across the island. Get the network together first, then meetings, then space (gap in the market is in Grassroots Foundations). The focus should be business – as diverse as possible as each participant adds value in a particular area. International contact – Hub to Hub could help identifying common problems and solutions. Important to establish credibility (e.g. through Charter of Principles), green identity, business plan, make financial incentives and peer support available. Connections, synergies are missing in Dublin, especially with big multinationals and corporate world.

On the third question *on how could the nation's/region's strengths be best capitalized*, the following outcomes were given. The devastating effects of the financial crisis have compelled Ireland to utilize its limited resources in the best possible way, and to analyse how to best foster innovation at a particularly challenging time for the country. In light of the apparent willingness and enthusiasm in Dublin for stakeholders from a wide range of different sectors to come together in order to find solutions to Ireland's economic challenges, the creation of a “green” hub was viewed as a critical step in order to help jump- start a “green economy” in Ireland. A hub would provide the necessary framework to accomplish this, and to promote Dublin's innovative spirit, while at the same time giving entrepreneurs the tools to realize their ideas. Indeed, nowadays entrepreneurs often lack the skills to succeed even though several existing organizations offer potentially interesting services, as there currently is a lack of coordination between them; this problem could possibly be addressed with the establishment of a “green” hub. The creation of a hub could provide all the essential services to an entrepreneur in a working environment that would enable like-minded people to meet and collaborate with each other, while also creating links with venture capitalists, thus bridging the divide between the public and private sector.

The fourth theme addressed the question of *how to best kickstart green Business through existing structure of Innovation Studios*, the following ideas were elaborated. Dublin Innovation Studios could provide entrepreneurs with the necessary business skills that are essential in order to

be successful. Innovation Studios could be significant in bringing entrepreneurs who are in the process of or have just launched their business, together with more experienced entrepreneurs, who would then be able to guide them throughout the initial start-up phase, and provide professional advice on numerous levels. Through their educational programs, Dublin Innovation Studios could stimulate existing entrepreneurial potential in individuals, and in so doing, unleash the kind of creative thinking that would ultimately lead to original business solutions. Often the initial stages of starting a business are the most difficult and challenging, and Dublin Innovation Studios could be a valuable asset in enabling new business initiators to address these specific challenges. By receiving the appropriate intellectual training through the available educational programs offered, as well as network opportunities with like-minded individuals and businesses, entrepreneurs would then be stimulated and aided in realizing their full potential.



Annex 4: European financing opportunities

| Programme | Purpose | Funding opportunities for IE | Specific requests |
|--|---|--|--|
| European Social Fund (ESF) | promoting economic and social cohesion; ⁴² employment and social inclusion | Two opportunities under Human Capital Investment operational programme; “upskilling the workforce” and “activation and participation of groups outside the work force” ⁴³ | implemented through individual projects run by participating organisations; public administrations, NGOs and social partners |
| European Regional Development Fund (INTERREG funds) | investment to create and safeguard sustainable jobs, investment in infrastructure which contributes to development, | INTERREG IVB North West Europe (NWE) Programme; four priorities: Innovation, Environmental Challenges, Connectivity and Strong & Prosperous Communities ⁴⁴ INTERREG IVC Programme ⁴⁵ Two main priorities for the period 2007/13: ‘Innovation and Knowledge economy’ (with a particular focus on entrepreneurship and SMEs) and ‘Environment and Risk prevention’ | call for proposals is held twice a year, until 2013 partnership requested |
| Intelligent Energy – Europe (IEE) programme | supports programmes to achieve the EU climate change objectives | innovative projects for a more energy-intelligent Europe, such as measures to promote energy efficiency, renewable energy sources, integrated initiatives ⁴⁶ | Call for proposals until June 2010, at least 3 partners from different countries |

⁴² http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/esf/index_en.htm

⁴³ http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/emplweb/esf_projects_117/result.cfm

⁴⁴ <http://nweurope.eu/index.php>

⁴⁵ <http://www.interreg4c.eu/>

⁴⁶ http://ec.europa.eu/energy/intelligent/index_en.html



Annex 5: Criteria for comparison of Dublin-based initiatives

| Category | Question | Hub answer |
|--|--|---|
| Green Aspect | Is there a green focus in the membership criteria? | Clear green focus |
| Flexible Officing solutions | Is there a possibility of hot-desking/hourly subscription for office space? | Full flexibility - various degrees of flexible memberships available |
| Flexibility towards members' business project evolution | Is it allowed for members to change their business focus/strategy during the incubation/membership period? | Full flexibility – business projects of Hub members only have to maintain a green focus |
| Inclusivity | Are the membership criteria highly selective/exclusive? | Highly inclusive – no special requirements other than green focus |
| Networking opportunities | To what exchange does membership guarantee access to networking? | Extensive networking opportunities within the physical space and the virtual network |
| Access to mentoring and training | Is there a mentoring/training program? | Good access |