



European Commission  
Enterprise Directorate-  
General

**Final Report**

# Benchmarking of Business Incubators

February 2002



*Centre for*  
**Strategy & Evaluation  
Services**

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# INCUBATOR MANAGERS QUESTIONNAIRE

# A

This study has been carried out by the Centre for Strategy & Evaluation Services (CSES) for the European Commission's Enterprise DG. We would like to thank the Commission, in particular Mr Christer Hammarlund, for the support provided throughout the project. We would also like to thank business incubator managers who were nominated by Member States to provide advice and assistance, and our two special advisers, for their input. A list of the experts and advisers is provided in Section 1 of the report.

The data and analysis presented in this report are the responsibility of CSES under a contract with the European Commission. Although the work has been conducted under the guidance of Commission officials and the Member State experts, the European Commission is not necessarily in agreement with the analysis presented and the views expressed do not necessarily represent the official position of the European Commission.

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# INCUBATOR QUESTIONNAIRE

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1.6 What are the main objectives of the incubator? Please rank the following objectives in order of importance (where 1=most important objective and 5=least important objective):

Objectives of Incubator	Ranking
(1) To contribute to competitiveness and local job creation	<input type="text"/>
(2) To help universities and R&D centres commercialise know-how	<input type="text"/>
(3) To help companies generate spin-off activities	<input type="text"/>
(4) To help disadvantaged communities/individuals with projects	<input type="text"/>
(5) Other roles - please specify:.....	<input type="text"/>

1.7 Who were/are the main partners involved in setting up and operating the incubator? Please distinguish between (a) partners that are/were members of the board and (b) other partners:

Partners	Board Members	Other Partners
(1) EU and/or other international agencies	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
(2) National authorities and public agencies	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
(3) Companies, banks and other private sector organisations	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
(4) Universities and other R&D organisations	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
(5) Community and voluntary organisations	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
(6) Other partner organisations	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

1.8 How long did it take to set up the incubator? Please include the business planning phase:

1 to 12 months       1 to 2 years       Over 2 years

1.9 What was the cost of setting up the incubator (thousand euro)?      euro

1.10 What is the annual cost of operating the incubator (thousand euro)?      euro

1.11 How do the incubator's operating costs break down? Please indicate the (approximate) percentage that each type of cost makes up of the total:

Operating Costs	
(1) Total payroll/benefits	<input type="text"/> %
(2) Building costs, e.g. maintenance, mortgage costs	<input type="text"/> %
(3) Other costs - services to tenants	<input type="text"/> %
(4) Other costs, e.g. utilities, equipment, supplies, telecoms	<input type="text"/> %
<b>Total</b>	<input type="text"/> 100%

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1.12 How does the incubator cover its costs? Please distinguish between the sources of funding for (a) setting up the incubator and (b) to help cover running costs:

Source of Funding	Set Up Costs	Running Costs
(1) Subsidies - EU and other international agencies	<input type="text"/> %	<input type="text"/> %
(2) Subsidies - National authorities and public agencies	<input type="text"/> %	<input type="text"/> %
(3) Payments from banks and other private sector organisations	<input type="text"/> %	<input type="text"/> %
(4) Payments from universities and other R&D organisations	<input type="text"/> %	<input type="text"/> %
(5) Rental income and other incubator charges	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> %	<input type="text"/> %
(6) Other revenue, e.g. from service contracts	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> %	<input type="text"/> %
(7) Investment income, e.g. royalties, equity returns	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> %	<input type="text"/> %
(8) Other sources - please specify: .....	<input type="text"/> %	<input type="text"/> %
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b> %	<b>100</b> %

1.13 Is it part of the incubator's business plan to break even, ie to generate sufficient income from non-public sources (Categories 3 to 8 above) to cover operating costs? If yes, how long has it taken/will it take for the incubator to reach this point?

No - not part of business plan  Yes  Years

1.14 If the incubator receives cash operating subsidies (Categories 1 and 2 above) and this funding was stopped, what would the effect be on its operations? Please tick the most appropriate box:

Importance of Cash subsidies

(1) Incubator activities could be maintained at current levels	<input type="checkbox"/>
(2) Incubator activities would have to be reduced significantly	<input type="checkbox"/>
(3) Incubator activities would stop altogether	<input type="checkbox"/>
(4) Not relevant - incubator does not receive subsidies	<input type="checkbox"/>

1.15 How many businesses has the incubator assisted since it started operating?   
 How many of these firms subsequently went out of business?

1.16 How many tenant businesses is the incubator currently assisting? Please distinguish between (a) tenant firms occupying incubator units and (b) other ('outreach') clients not located in the

Tenant companies  Other ('outreach') clients

1.17 Where did the current tenant businesses originate from? Please indicate the number in each category:

Origins	Number
(1) Start up	<input type="text"/>
(2) Branch of existing firm	<input type="text"/>
(3) Spin off from university or R&D centre	<input type="text"/>
(4) Other - please specify .....	<input type="text"/>

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1.18 What sort of business activities are the tenant companies undertaking? Please indicate the number of clients falling into each of the following categories

Business Activities	Number
(1) Sales, marketing and distribution	<input type="text"/>
(2) Business and financial services	<input type="text"/>
(3) Advanced/high tech manufacturing	<input type="text"/>
(4) Information and communications technologies	<input type="text"/>
(5) Research and development	<input type="text"/>
(6) Other manufacturing activities	<input type="text"/>
(7) Other service activities	<input type="text"/>
(8) A combination of some/all of these activities	<input type="text"/>

## 2 Nature and Scope of Support Services

*This section of the questionnaire examines the type of incubator services available to companies and the way in which these services are priced.*

2.1 What is the physical space of the business incubator? Please indicate in square meters:

Total area  Incubator units

2.2 How many units does the incubator have and what type of space is available? Please indicate the number of units and total space available for the following categories:

Categories	Number of Units	Space sq m
(a) Office space	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
(b) Workshop space	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
(c) Laboratory space	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
(d) Mixed/other types of units	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
(e) Common facilities, e.g. meeting rooms	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

2.3 What percentage of the total incubator space is currently occupied?  %

2.4 How large are the incubator units? Please indicate the size of the smallest and largest units and the monthly rental charges in euros:

Incubator Units	Size	Charge
Smallest units	sq m <input type="text"/>	euro <input type="text"/>
Largest units	sq m <input type="text"/>	euro <input type="text"/>

2.5 What is the maximum length of time tenants can occupy incubator units? Years

2.6 Does the rental charge for incubator space vary according to the length of tenancy? If yes, please indicate how the monthly rental (in euro) for the smallest units varied over time:

Initial rental  Final rental  Not applicable

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2.7 Are charges for utilities (e.g. electricity) included in the rentals? Yes  No

2.8 How does the rental charge for incubator units compare with the cost of similar types of premises elsewhere in the area?  
 Lower  About the same  Higher

2.9 What sort of professional services does the business incubator offer? Please tick the appropriate boxes and indicate whether the services are provided by (a) incubator staff (b) an external

Professional Services	In House	External
(1) Pre-incubation services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(2) Business planning and forming a company	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(3) Training to develop business skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(4) Accounting, legal and other related services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(5) Market research, sales and marketing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(6) Help with exporting and/or partner search abroad	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(7) Help with e-business and other aspects of ICT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(8) Advice on development of new products and services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(9) Help with raising bank finance, grants, seed and venture capital	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(10) Incubator seed/venture capital fund, business angel network	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(11) Advice on recruitment of staff and personnel management	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(12) Networking, e.g. with other entrepreneurs, potential customers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(13) Mentors, board members and other senior advisers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(14) Other services - please specify .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Does the incubator take an equity (ownership) position in client firms?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

2.10 What other facilities and support services are available to clients? Please tick the relevant boxes and indicate whether the services are provided by (a) incubator staff (b) an external provider:

Other Support Services	In House	External
(1) Shared secretarial and office services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(2) Cleaning and maintenance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(3) Meeting room(s), restaurant	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(4) Other services - please specify .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2.11 What approach is adopting to the pricing of incubator services?

Pricing Policy	In House	External
(1) Services are mostly free to clients	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(2) Clients charges partly cover the cost of services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(3) Client charges cover the entire cost of services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2.12 How do the charges for incubator services generally compare with the cost of similar types of services provided by other business support organisations in the area?

Lower  About the same  Higher

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### 3 Key Functions of Incubator Managers

*This section of the questionnaire examines issues relating to incubator management - key functions, quality standards, performance indicators.*

3.1 How many personnel does the incubator have? Please indicate the full-time equivalents for each category:

Personnel	Number
(1) Managers	<input type="text"/>
(2) Secretarial	<input type="text"/>
(3) Other personnel	<input type="text"/>

3.2 What are the main functions of the incubator's management team? Please rank the following functions (where 1=most important function and 4=least important function):

Management Functions	Ranking
(1) Routine management of incubator affairs	<input type="text"/>
(2) Providing advice and assistance to tenant companies	<input type="text"/>
(3) Networking with other incubators and business support organisations	<input type="text"/>
(4) Other roles - please specify:.....	<input type="text"/>

3.3 Taking the second of these functions, approximately what percentage of management time is devoted to providing tenants with advice and assistance?

Percentage of working week  %

3.4 What sort of experience and skills do the incubator's staff have? Please indicate the number of managers and staff who:

Staff Experience and Skills	Number
(1) Have set up/managed their own firms or worked in business	<input type="text"/>
(2) Previously worked for public authorities/agencies or universities	<input type="text"/>
(3) Have previous experience of advising start up and small firms	<input type="text"/>
(4) Have participated in training that is relevant to business incubation	<input type="text"/>

3.5 What sort of formal qualifications does the incubator manager have? Please tick the appropriate box and indicate the level/type of the qualification:

Incubator Manager Qualifications	Degree	Professional Qualification	Other
(1) Accounting, banking, finance, etc	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(2) Real estate, property management, etc	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(3) Personnel management, education/training	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(4) Legal qualification	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(5) Sales, trade, marketing, etc	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(6) Other - please specify .....			<input type="checkbox"/>

3.6 In the past 12 months, how many staff have participated in formal training?  Number

3.7 What sort of criteria does management use to monitor the performance of the incubator itself?



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Performance Criteria	Quite Important	Very Important
(1) Incubator occupancy rates	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(2) Number of companies graduating from incubator	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(3) Jobs created by tenant/graduate companies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(4) Turnover of tenant/graduate companies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(5) Financial performance of incubator itself	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(5) Other criteria - please specify:.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**4 Promotion of Incubator Services**

*In this section we consider how incubators define their target market, methods used to promote incubator services, and admission and exit criteria.*

4.1 What criteria, if any, are used to define the incubator's target market?

Target Market	Quite Important	Very Important
(1) Firms must be start ups	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(2) Firms can be already trading but must be below a certain size	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(3) Firms must be involved in certain types of activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(4) No particular criteria exist to define the target market	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(5) Other criteria - please specify:.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4.2 What type of methods are used to promote the incubator's services?

Marketing	Quite Important	Very Important
(1) Advertising and media promotions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(2) Business events, conferences, exhibitions,etc	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(3) Referrals from other business support agencies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(4) Direct approach to potential clients	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(5) Other method(s) - please specify:.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4.3 Approximately how many enquiries does the incubator receive from potential clients each year and how many of these are subsequently taken on by the incubator?

Enquiries  Initial screening  Admissions

4.4 What sort of criteria are used to screen projects for admission to the incubator? Please tick the relevant boxes:

Admission Criteria	Quite Important	Very Important
(1) A business plan must have been prepared	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(2) Financing must be in place	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(3) Business must have an innovative project	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(4) Business must demonstrate high growth potential	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(5) Other criteria - please specify:.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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4.5 What approach is adopted to client management while firms are with the incubator? Please indicate which of the following arrangements apply:

Client Management	Yes
(1) Clients are monitored on a regular basis	<input type="checkbox"/>
(2) No particular client management arrangements	<input type="checkbox"/>
(3) Other arrangements - please specify:.....	<input type="checkbox"/>

4.6 What criteria are used to decide when tenants should leave the incubator?

Exit Criteria	Quite Important	Very Important
(1) Companies can only rent units for a fixed period of time	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(2) Companies leave when they need more space to expand	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(3) Companies leave when they achieve agreed business objectives	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(4) Companies leave when they fail to achieve agreed business objectives	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(5) Companies leave when they require support the incubator cannot offer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(6) No particular exit criteria	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(7) Other criteria - please specify:.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**5 Evaluation of Incubator Services and Impacts**

*In the final section, we examine the way in which incubator services are evaluated and the nature of their impacts on local development.*

5.1 What, in your opinion, makes the incubator an attractive location for businesses? Please rank the following factors in order of importance (where 1=most important factor and 4=least important factor):

Incubator Strengths	Ranking
(1) Favourable location and image	<input type="checkbox"/>
(2) Quality, price and flexible terms for incubator units	<input type="checkbox"/>
(3) Availability of professional business support services	<input type="checkbox"/>
(4) Clustering and opportunity to network with similar businesses	<input type="checkbox"/>
(4) Other factors - please specify:.....	<input type="checkbox"/>

5.2 What methods, if any, are used to obtain feedback from clients and stakeholders on the incubator's services?

Feedback on Incubator Services	Tenants	Stakeholders
(1) Feedback via informal contact	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(2) Periodic meetings with clients and stakeholders	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(3) Periodic surveys of clients and stakeholders	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(4) Other methods - please specify:.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(5) No particular methods used to obtain feedback	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Note: If no survey work to obtain feedback from tenants (and graduates) has been undertaken, would you be willing to help organise a survey of some/all clients as part of this project?

Yes  Don't know  No

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5.3 How many people are currently employed by tenant companies? Please indicate the number of tenants falling into the following size bands (full time equivalent employees):

1-3 persons                       3-10 persons                       10-20 persons   
 20-50 persons                       50- 100 persons                       Over 100 persons

5.4 Where do most of the people currently employed by tenant companies come from? If possible, please provide an (estimated) breakdown for the total workforce:

Not possible

Source of Recruitment

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(1) Recruited from the immediate locality  %  
 (2) Recruited from elsewhere in the region  %  
 (3) Recruited from elsewhere in the country  %  
 (4) Recruited from other countries  %

---

Total  100 %

5.5 What is the turnover of tenant companies? If possible, please indicate the percentage of companies whose turnover for the past 12 months fell into each of the following bands:

Not possible

Turnover

---

(1) Below 1 million euro pa  %  
 (2) Between 1 and 5 million euro  %  
 (3) Between 5 and 10 million euro  %  
 (4) Over 10 million euro  %

---

Total  100 %

5.6 If possible, please indicate the turnover growth rates that tenant companies have typically achieved in recent years.

Not possible

Below 10%                       Between 10 and                       Over 20%

5.7 Where are tenant company suppliers mainly based?

Local area                       Elsewhere in country                       Other countries

5.8 Where are tenant company competitors mainly located?

Local area                       Elsewhere in country                       Other countries

5.9 How many businesses have 'graduated' since the incubator started operations?

5.10 Apart from business failures, why do companies leave the incubator? Please rank the following factors in order of importance (where 1=most important reason and 5=least important reason):

Reasons for Leaving Incubator	Ranking
(1) Companies take on new staff and need more room to expand	<input type="text"/>
(2) Incubator units can only be rented for a fixed period of time	<input type="text"/>
(3) Companies find better and/or cheaper premises elsewhere	<input type="text"/>
(4) Other reasons - please specify:.....	<input type="text"/>

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5.11 Where have graduates, ie companies that have left the incubator, mainly moved to? Please indicate the most common destinations by ranking the following possibilities in order of their relevance (where 1=most common and 3=least common):

Destination of Graduate Firms	Ranking
(1) Premises close by (e.g. science park)	<input type="text"/>
(2) Elsewhere in the local area	<input type="text"/>
(3) Elsewhere in the region	<input type="text"/>
(4) Elsewhere in the country	<input type="text"/>

5.12 How does the incubator contribute to local development? Please rank the following impacts from 1=most important to 6=least important:

Contribution to Local Development	Ranking
(1) Helping to create new, high quality businesses	<input type="text"/>
(2) Helping to improve the competitiveness of existing businesses	<input type="text"/>
(3) Contributing to job and wealth creation	<input type="text"/>
(4) Contributing to the development of new products and services	<input type="text"/>
(5) Contributing to the internationalisation of businesses in the area	<input type="text"/>
(6) Other roles - please specify:.....	<input type="text"/>

Thank you for completing the questionnaire. Please return it to Jack Malan at CSES, preferably by e-mail (jmalan@cses.co.uk) or by fax (+44 1959 525-122) or post (Jack Malan, Centre for Strategy & Evaluation Services, P O Box 159, Sevenoaks, Kent TN14 5WT, UK).

# COMPANY QUESTIONNAIRE

# B

**1 Name of Company** .....

1.1 Address Street.....  
 Town.....  
 Region: .....  
 Country: .....

1.2 Contact name/position: .....

1.3 Contact details: Tel:.....Fax:.....  
 E-mail .....

1.4 Incubator where company is/was located: .....

Note: if your company has recently left the incubator, please complete Sections 2 and 4 of the questionnaire only.

**2 Company Details**

2.1 What is the company's main business activity? Please describe:  
 .....  
 .....

2.2 What is the company's legal status?  
 Public entity  Private company  Other

2.3 Is the company a subsidiary of another organisation?  
 Yes  No

2.4 How long has the company been located at the business incubator? Years

2.5 What was the status of the company when it first started operating at the incubator?  
 Start Up  Existing Firm

If the company was already trading when it moved to the incubator, where did it come from?  
 Same area  Elsewhere in country  Another country

2.6 Is the company's main site at the incubator? Yes  No

2.7 Does the company have operations elsewhere? Yes  No

2.8 How many people does the company employ at the incubator location? Please provide details for the last two years:

	1999	2000
(a) Number of full time staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(b) Number of part time staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2.9 How many people does the company employ at other locations?

# COMPANY QUESTIONNAIRE

# B

2.10 What type of qualifications do your company's staff have?

No qualifications  Vocational qualifications  Degree or higher

2.11 Where do most of the company's staff come from? Please indicate the approximate proportion from:

Same area  Elsewhere in country  Other countries

2.12 What is the company's turnover? Please provide details (euro thousands) for the past 3 years:

1998-1999  1999-2000  2000-2001

2.13 What was the approximate value (euro thousands) of purchases made with local suppliers?

euro

2.14 Where are the company's main customers?

Same area  Elsewhere in country  Other countries

2.15 Where are the company's main competitors?

Same area  Elsewhere in country  Other countries

2.16 Approximately what proportion of the company's turnover is invested in R&D?  %

2.17 Approximately what proportion of the company's turnover is invested in training?  %

### 3 Role of Incubator

3.1 Why did your company decide to obtain premises at the incubator?+B121

Reasons for Locating at Incubator	Ranking
(1) Favourable location and image	<input type="checkbox"/>
(2) Quality, price and flexible terms for incubator units	<input type="checkbox"/>
(3) Availability of professional business support services	<input type="checkbox"/>
(4) Clustering and opportunity to network with similar businesses	<input type="checkbox"/>
(4) Other factors - please specify below:	<input type="checkbox"/>

3.2 What sort of incubator services have been particularly useful? Please rank the following services (where 1=most useful and 8 = least useful):

Professional Services	Ranking
(1) Pre-incubation services	<input type="checkbox"/>
(2) Business planning and forming a company	<input type="checkbox"/>
(3) Training to develop business skills	<input type="checkbox"/>
(4) Advice on development of new products and services	<input type="checkbox"/>
(5) Help with raising bank finance	<input type="checkbox"/>
(6) Access to grants, seed and venture capital funding	<input type="checkbox"/>
(7) Advice on recruitment of staff and personnel management	<input type="checkbox"/>
(8) Other professional services - please specify below:	<input type="checkbox"/>

# COMPANY QUESTIONNAIRE

# B

Has your company been required to pay for professional services?

No

Yes

Don't know

If yes, do you think that the charges are fair?

Yes

No

If no, would your company be prepared to pay?

Yes

No

3.3 Please also rank the incubator's support services (where 1=most important and 4=least important):

Incubator Support Services	Ranking
(1) Secretarial and office services	<input type="text"/>
(2) Cleaning and maintenance	<input type="text"/>
(3) Meeting room(s), restaurant	<input type="text"/>
(4) Other support services - please specify below:	<input type="text"/>

3.4 How would you rate the incubator units in terms of price and quality? Please rank each of these factors on a scale where 1=excellent and 3=poor:

Incubator Space	Ranking
(1) Quality of incubator units	<input type="text"/>
(2) Rental charges for incubator units	<input type="text"/>

3.5 How important has the support provided by the incubator been to the development of your company? Please tick the box that best describes your view:

- (1) Critical - without the support , the company would not have been successful
- (2) Important - the support has been helpful bit not critical to business success
- (3) Not very important - the company would have do as well elsewhere

Please use the space below to explain how the incubator has contributed to your company's success and how the incubator might improve its services in the future:

.....

.....

.....

.....

## 4 Graduate Companies

4.1 When did your company leave the incubator?

Year

# COMPANY QUESTIONNAIRE

# B

4.2 Why did your company leave the incubator? Please rank the following reasons in order of importance (where 1=most important and 8= least important):

Reasons for leaving incubator	Ranking
(1) Tenancy was for a fixed term	<input type="text"/>
(2) Company needed more room to expand	<input type="text"/>
(3) Company found better and/or cheaper premises elsewhere	<input type="text"/>
(4) Other reasons - please explain below:	<input type="text"/>

4.3 Where did the company move to?

Same area  Elsewhere in country  Another country

4.4 At the time when the company left the incubator, how many people did it employ and how many people does it employ now?

Number of employees:                      When left incubator                       Now

4.5 Looking back, how important was the support provided by the incubator to your company's development? Please tick one of the following boxes:

- (1) Critical - without the support , the company would not have been successful
- (2) Important - the support has been helpful bit not critical to business success
- (3) Not very important - the company would have do as well elsewhere



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# INCUBATOR DEFINITIONS

# C

**NBIA** ([www.nbia.org](http://www.nbia.org)): Business incubation is a dynamic process of business enterprise development. Incubators nurture young firms, helping them to survive and grow during the start-up period when they are most vulnerable. Incubators provide hands-on management assistance, access to financing and orchestrated exposure to critical business or technical support services. They also offer entrepreneurial firms shared office services, access to equipment, flexible leases and expandable space — all under one roof.

An incubation program's main goal is to produce successful graduates — businesses that are financially viable and free-standing when they leave the incubator usually in two to three years.

**UKBI Definition** ([www.ukbi.co.uk](http://www.ukbi.co.uk)): Business Incubation is a dynamic business development process. It is a term, which covers a wide variety of processes, which help to reduce the failure rate of early stage companies and speed the growth of companies which have the potential to become substantial generators of employment and wealth.

A business incubator is usually a property with small work units which provides an instructive and supportive environment to entrepreneurs at start-up and during the early stages of businesses. Incubators provide three main ingredients for growing successful businesses - an entrepreneurial and learning environment, ready access to mentors and investors, and visibility in the marketplace.

**ELAN (French National Association)** (<http://www.pepinieres-elan.asso.fr>): "Structure d'accueil, d'hébergement, d'accompagnement et d'appui aux porteurs de projet et aux créateurs d'entreprise. La pépinière est un outil de développement économique local. Elle offre un soutien au porteur de projet et au créateur d'entreprise jusqu'au développement de l'entreprise et son insertion dans le tissu économique." (Norme N.F. X 50-770)

**EBN – European Business Network** (<http://www.ebn.be>): The Business & Innovation Centre is an organic regional structure of support to innovative SMEs and entrepreneurs. Through this support, the BIC plays a vital role in the development of regional economies throughout Europe. The key objectives of BICs are to turn innovative entrepreneurial projects into successful businesses, adding long term value to regional economies.

**UK Science Parks Association** (<http://www.ukspa.org.uk>) (definition of a Science Park) A Science Park is a business support and technology transfer initiative that:

- Has formal and operational links with centres of knowledge creation such as universities, higher education institutes and research organisations.

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- Provides an environment where larger and international businesses can develop specific and close interactions with a particular centre of knowledge creation for their mutual benefit
- Encourages and supports the start up, incubation and development of innovation led, high growth, knowledge based businesses.

**ADT** – (<http://www.adt-online.de>): Der Begriff „Innovationszentrum“ fasst sowohl Technologie- und Gründerzentren als auch Wissenschafts- und Technologieparks zusammen.

Entscheidend sind die Ziele und Aufgaben, die Innovationszentren realisieren. Im Mittelpunkt steht, dass sie günstige Rahmenbedingungen für die Konzept-, Start- und erste Entwicklungsphase junger, insbesondere innovativer, technologieorientierter Unternehmen schaffen und darüber hinaus günstige Bedingungen für ihr weitergehendes Wachstum gestalten. Dies geschieht überwiegend in drei Hauptfeldern:

1. Beratungs- und Unterstützungsleistungen für Unternehmensgründer und junge Unternehmen, Begleitung der Unternehmensentwicklung, Einbindung in das Kontakt- und Kommunikationsnetzwerk des Zentrums etc.
2. Ein differenziertes Angebot an Infrastruktur für die Unternehmen in den verschiedensten Bereichen, z.B. vom temporär mietbaren Konferenzraum bis zur Präsentationstechnik, von Telekommunikation und Internetanbindung bis zu Laborausstattung, von klassischen Dienstleistungen wie Empfang, Postservice bis zu Projektmanagement etc.
3. Ein Angebot an Räumlichkeiten für den Start und die erste Entwicklung der Unternehmen in hoher Flexibilität hinsichtlich Zeit, Größe und Konditionen entsprechend deren Entwicklung.

Innovationszentren realisieren diese Grundaufgaben im Idealfall aus einer Hand mit hoher Effizienz und unter Einbeziehung eines Netzwerkes von Experten und Partnern.

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# CASE STUDY REPORTS

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As part of the Phase 2 research, CSES carried out visits to Managers Group incubators. Reports on the case studies are bound separately.

The purpose of the research was to:

- Examine the way in which different incubators operate;
- Identify key ‘headline’ and ‘operational’ indicators, and best practice;
- Obtain feedback from companies on the benefits of an incubator location;