

Business Innovation

Wales Innovators Network



Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru
Welsh Assembly Government

www.cymru.gov.uk



Ewrop & Chymru: Buddsoddi yn eich Dyfodol
Cronfa Datblygu Rhanbarthol Ewrop
Europe & Wales: Investing in your Future
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WHO ARE WE?

Part of Business Innovation Support, WIN is a network operating across the length and breadth of Wales, providing support to innovators working as individuals.

WHAT CAN WE DO FOR YOU?

The Network offers a free and impartial service devised specifically for individual innovators living in Wales.

WIN provides confidential one-to-one support with Welsh Assembly Government Innovation Managers, all highly experienced in business and product innovation. They can show you how to access the full range of assistance available to individuals who seek to develop and commercially exploit new ideas. WIN's advice is always tailored specifically for your needs as an individual innovator.

Working on your own can be a challenge, especially in a modern business environment that thrives on wide-reaching contacts and alliances. WIN creates a range of networking opportunities for you – and other like-minded people with similar ambitions – to innovate new products.

WHY COME TO US?

Having the idea is just the 'easy bit'. Developing your idea into a commercial product will require your courage, determination and hard work. But it can be done. It happens every day. With guidance and help from WIN, you can substantially improve the chances of turning your concept into a fully developed product ready for the market place.



"WIN guided me through the minefield of Intellectual Property Rights and helped me to identify those relevant to my invention and how to secure them."

Scott Dutton,
Bra Angel Ltd

THE FIRST STEPS

The first step is to arrange a meeting with an Innovation Manager. Each month they hold pre-arranged meetings at local business centres around Wales. Contact us so that we can set up a meeting time for you.

Prior to the meeting you will be sent a copy of the UK Intellectual Property Office Confidential Disclosure Agreement (CDA) Booklet, which contains an example of a Confidentiality Agreement that you will need to draw up and use when disclosing information about your invention or idea to any third party. The booklet also explains the importance of Confidentiality Agreements and how they work. Your Innovation Manager will be able to discuss this with you at the meeting.

HOW TO GET THE BEST FROM YOUR WIN MEETING

WIN can guide you in your thinking and point you in the right direction. The rest is up to you. Our resources aren't infinite and – as you might expect – our highly experienced advisors are very much in demand. When making an appointment to meet with an advisor, we would ask you to carry out the following tasks ahead of time, and to the best of your ability:

- Make sure that you thoroughly search the shops and the internet for products similar to yours. There's no point trying to reinvent the wheel.
- After satisfying yourself that your idea is unique, identify competitor products that are broadly related in some way. What's already out there that your product can add to, or even replace? How does your pricing compare?
- Ensure that you can legally own your idea. Undertake a Patent Search. You can do this free of charge by going to www.espacenet.com. You can contact us for a help sheet if you need one.
- Who would use your product? Identify your target market and consider how that market might expand in the future.
- Have you thought about how to fund your invention?



"Getting an impartial evaluation of your idea is essential. Friends and family will always think it is a good idea. WIN gives you the tools and techniques you need to develop your idea into a commercially viable business opportunity."

Barbara Blackburn,
B-Tidy Ltd



“If I had known what was involved in the invention process I probably wouldn’t have done it. WIN gave us a structured approach to develop the idea and we now have a thriving internet business stocking 480 ski gadgets and accessories.”

Sian Brooks,
Skiweb Ltd



At your confidential one-to-one meetings with your Innovation Manager, you will be encouraged to keep a bound notebook (just a simple one from any stationary store) to record all your ideas, drawings, meeting minutes and observations.

THE STRUCTURED DEVELOPMENT PLAN (SDP)

This is a ‘route map’ of the stages that WIN recommends you should follow. The SDP will improve the chances of successfully commercialising your idea – and it will form the basis of your future meetings with us. Your Innovation Manager will guide you through the work you need to do at each stage to prove the commercial viability of your idea. Once completed, your Structured Development Plan is used in the Review Panel process.

WHAT’S THE REVIEW PANEL?

The WIN Review Panel evaluates the progress of your idea and focuses on its likely commercial potential, making recommendations for its development and exploitation. The evaluation, which is completely fair and impartial, will be based on the supporting information that you will have submitted.

The ultimate aim of working through the SDP and obtaining impartial feedback from the review panel is that it all helps you to develop your idea to a level where it can be successfully exploited.

HELPING TOWARDS YOUR INITIAL COSTS

As a WIN Member you will be eligible to apply for funding from the Welsh Assembly Government’s Single Investment Fund. Your Innovation Manager can advise you on the eligibility criteria, the application process, the likely timescales and all the information that you will need to provide.

(You must obtain formal approval before undertaking any work, and must be able to pay for the work in full and then claim back the grant funding from Welsh Assembly Government. No retrospective applications can be made.)

FURTHER OPPORTUNITIES FOR CONTACT

WIN operates a lively calendar of meetings throughout the year. They complement the individual advice and assistance delivered at your one-to-one meetings with Innovation Managers.

Regular Network Meetings, held across Wales, provide an opportunity for you to make contact with like-minded individuals, and share experiences, knowledge and skills. The meetings include relevant talks from lone innovators and from professional advisers.

All meeting dates are published as a Year Planner on the Flexible Support for Business website fs4b.wales.gov.uk. Here you’ll find plenty of useful links, along with further guidance on developing new ideas.

You will also receive invitations to events organised by the Welsh Assembly Government and its partners.

SUMMARY OF WIN’S SERVICES

- Confidential one-to-one counselling with Innovation Managers (IM’s)
- Provision of a Structured Development Plan (SDP) pack
- Advice and help while making your SDP ready for the Review Panel
- Innovation Manager support at the Review Panel
- Assistance in preparing applications for funding
- Help identifying third parties for further development of your project
- Networking opportunities
- Point of contact for technical, innovation and Intellectual Property queries



“WIN has helped us identify potential buyers and distributors and facilitated meetings with them to help secure interest for the product.”

Mike Farr and Stephen Thomas, Topster™



**“If it wasn’t for WIN,
I would never have
been taken seriously.
They helped me
to prepare a
professional package
of information for
presentation to
potential investors.”**

Bridget Docking,
Sent & Meant Ltd

ALWAYS KEEP IN MIND

You exploit your idea, not us. WIN has no commercial involvement in your idea. It is up to you to drive your own project and ensure that it progresses at a pace that suits you.

WHAT TO DO NEXT

If you would like to take advantage of the support provided by the Wales Innovators Network (WIN) please contact us to arrange your first appointment with an advisor.

**Call Flexible Support For Business now,
on 03000 6 03000**

Or visit us at fs4b.wales.gov.uk/innovation



**Cymorth Hyblyg i Fusnes
Flexible Support for Business**



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