



# Good practice: ArcLabs Research & Innovation Centre

## **A Community of Innovation and Entrepreneurship bringing together academic research, enterprise and regional stakeholders - 'Making ideas work'.**

The Southern Region of Ireland has strengths in many of the priority sectors identified in Ireland's S3. However, performance is hindered by lack of academic industrial linkages and limited resources available for business-based R&I. Based on the campus of the third level institute Waterford Institute of Technology (WIT) ArcLabs, was established in 2005 to create an environment of entrepreneurship and innovation where academic research, enterprise supports and regional stakeholders could meet and 'make ideas work'.

ArcLabs believes that entrepreneurs are the key to creating jobs, prosperity and economic growth. The incubators, located in Waterford and Kilkenny, support a community of high-tech start-up companies and growing businesses. Entrepreneurs are enabled to collaborate with each other and with the research teams in a unique work environment. Key to the success of ArcLabs is its strategic location. Since its inception, ArcLabs has been co-located with the Telecommunications, Software and Systems Group (TSSG) and the Centre for Enterprise Development and Regional Economy (CEDRE) of WIT providing a vital link to leading researchers to support the enterprises being cultivated within ArcLabs.

ArcLabs works by providing business supports, space & facilities. They have pre-determined criteria to ensure the most suitable clients and a strong governance in place with an advisory board that is comprised of internal and external stakeholders.

## **Resources needed**

ArcLabs is funded through Capital Funds (80%) and WIT (20%). Clients pay a licence fee dependent on the space they take which is a market-value set rate of €22 per yard.

## **Evidence of success**

- 27 businesses currently housed in ArcLabs
- Supported more than 60 companies to start/scale in South-East Ireland
- 195 jobs created
- Mentoring the next generation of entrepreneurs through the creation of a 'Bizcamp' programme for 12 to 15-year-olds
- Establishment of Techstars Startup Weekend – accelerated entrepreneur bootcamp
- Home and partner to one of the three NDRC locations, who build and invest in very young digital companies, or start-ups.

## Potential for learning or transfer

Southern Ireland is categorised as an innovation leader but there are limitations in the capacity of HEIs to commercialise R&I outputs, a challenge for many regions across Europe. Arclabs address this and responded to the needs identified in both national & regional strategy to counteract the loss of competitiveness & the need to increase start-ups and entrepreneurial activity.

Arclabs provides a working example of how to build on current strengths in this case maximising a strategic location to facilitate the workable relationships between academia and research to support entrepreneurs. Their straightforward approach to building the best community of entrepreneurs and start-ups can be easily replicated. They focus on the individuals needs by working with each entrepreneur to create individual plans for developing viable, profitable and thriving businesses. By doing so they ensure there are interesting sustainable jobs in the region through fostering better exploitation of innovation

---

Tags: Development , Engagement , Innovation , Jobs , Regional policy , Research , Sustainable

**Project**

COHESION

**Main institution**

Waterford Institute of Technology

**Location**

Southern and Eastern, Ireland (Éire)

**Start Date**

January 2005

**End Date**

Ongoing

[Further information](#)**Contact**

Karen Coughlan

Please [login](#) to contact the author.