

IADT

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1. Introduction

IADT's Strategic Plan 2014-2018 includes supporting the development of innovative spin-in and spin-out ventures within the creative, cultural and digital technologies sectors in Ireland. The Institute's Media Cube Incubation Centre is a key aspect of IADT's overall package of supports for early stage business ventures, along with our delivery of other Enterprise Ireland supports such as the New Frontiers Programme and the Innovation Voucher Scheme.

This Policy sets out the procedures and processes to be applied to the selection of early stage ventures as clients of the Media Cube. The Policy takes into account a number of considerations:

- The need to ensure a strong degree of fit between IADT's incubation activities and IADT's wider strategic positioning as a specialist institute focused on the creative, cultural and digital technologies sectors;
- The objectives of State enterprise support agencies such as Enterprise Ireland and the newly established Local Enterprise Office's, and of initiatives such as the New Frontiers Programme, which aim to support the development of sustainable, knowledge-based enterprises that have the potential to create employment;
- The need to ensure that the Media Cube offers excellent facilities and supports on competitive and flexible terms for start-ups, particularly in the context of the proliferation of incubation/start-up facilities in the Greater Dublin area,
- The need to ensure that the rental income from the Media Cube can support a suitable proportion of the operating costs of the facility;
- The need to ensure that application and selection processes are relatively straightforward and do not discourage potential applicants.

2. Eligibility Criteria

In order to be eligible for incubation space within IADT Media Cube, ventures must meet two key eligibility criteria.

Area of Activity

The main activity of the business should fall within the creative, cultural and digital technologies industry sectors.

Stage of Development

At the time of Expression of Interest, applicant businesses should typically be within their first three years of operation, though consideration will be given to businesses which:

- Have been in existence for more than 3 years but are embarking on a significant business development/diversification project which is knowledge-based and specifically within the creative, cultural and digital technologies sector; OR
- Have been in existence for more than 3 years but are engaging in a programme of research and development collaboration with IADT.

The following types of businesses are not eligible:

- Consultancy and professional services - unless they would offer a very clear and distinctive benefit to other incubation tenants (e.g. a venture capital provider, or creative industries research);
- Businesses proposing to hold significant levels of stock;
- Businesses proposing to manufacture on the premises;
- Businesses with a retail dimension involving customers visiting offices in the Media Cube to conduct a physical purchase

3. Selection Process

Where a venture expresses interest in renting office space within the Media Cube, the following process will apply:

- The Innovation, Commercialisation & Development Manager will meet with the business for an initial discussion in order to:
 - learn more about the venture;
 - provide feedback on eligibility for the Media Cube (see Section 2);
 - advise on the selection process.
- The venture will be asked to provide a short application document (e.g. business plan, slide deck, a funding application prepared for another agency) addressing the following:
 - Principal area of activity, products, services etc;
 - Summary of market research/validation activity undertaken to date;
 - Stage of development as regards:
 - Company formation;
 - Product/service development;
 - Market engagement;
 - Intellectual property rights;
 - Team – background/skills of current team and scope for job creation;
 - Funding status and outlook;
 - Engagement with other start-up support providers (e.g. Enterprise Ireland, Local Enterprise Office, NDRC, etc);
 - Potential areas for collaboration/engagement with:
 - other Media Cube tenants;
 - the wider IADT academic community.
- The application document will be reviewed/discussed by a Review Panel comprising:
 - The Head of the Creative Engagement;
 - The Secretary and Financial Controller;
 - The Innovation, Commercialisation and Development Manager (ICDM).
- The Review Panel will have regard for the Eligibility Criteria set out in Section 2 and for the information presented in the application document in determining if the venture should be accepted as a Media Cube incubation tenant, while also agreeing the terms to be applied;

- The ICDM will communicate the panel's decision to the venture, providing constructive feedback, as appropriate.

Where a very early stage entrepreneur wishes to rent a hotdesk within the Media Cube, the same process will apply but the Review Panel will take into account that the venture may not yet be in a position to provide a fully developed business proposal.

4. Licence Preparation & Approval

The process for the preparation and approval of licence agreements is as follows:

- The ICDM will prepare a draft licence based on the IADT Media Cube Licence Template;
- The licence should be reviewed and signed in duplicate by the tenant, while remaining subject to the approval of the Governing Body;
- The licence will be presented to the Governing Body for approval;
- Once the licence has been approved by the Governing Body, the licence will be countersigned by the Secretary and Financial Controller.

Licences should typically allow a client company to vacate the premises by giving one month's notice.

5. Fee Levels & Variation

The Review Panel will, from time to time, agree a framework of rental fees to be applied to licences. Taking into account the specific circumstances of any application and current occupancy levels, the Review Panel may agree to vary such fees by 25% (+ / -).

6. Licence Renewal

Licences will typically be granted for an initial period of one year, but may be renewed, provided that:

- The venture continues to operate within an eligible area of activity;
- The venture can reasonably be considered to be 'early stage' – typically within no more than 3 to 5 years of its establishment;
- The venture continues to make satisfactory progress;
- The venture has contributed positively to the incubation environment.

7. Invoicing, Payments & Arrears

A new licensee will make an initial payment to IADT comprising:

- A deposit equivalent to one month's licence fee;
- The licence fee for the first month of the licence period.

Thereafter, licence fees will be collected by way of monthly direct debit. The process for the authorisation of direct debits is as follows:

- Media Cube Administrator prepares a list of licence fees due in respect of the coming month;
- The ICDM reviews, amends and approves the list;
- The Media Cube Administrator prepares invoices as per the approved list;
- Finance Office compares the approved list and the invoices; approves the invoices; and authorises the Media Cube Administrator to issue the invoices to the licensees;
- Finance Office authorises direct debit as appropriate.

IADT will strive to facilitate any client company experiencing cashflow difficulties by agreeing a schedule of payments towards any arrears that might arise, provided that the company engages constructively in this process.