

MediaLab

Background

Distance can sometimes hamper innovation across Scotland but no one feels this more acutely than those businesses in the Highlands and Islands. Many SMEs and micro-businesses operating in the Highlands and Islands are highly entrepreneurial and innovative, but do not have the same level of access to a university driven research base as other parts of Scotland enjoy. This may well hamper both their individual economic success and prosperity and that of the region.

The Project

Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE), working in partnership with The Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) MediaLab, developed this project to encourage commercialisation of research and innovation in the region, by providing SMEs with access to leading edge technology opportunities and helping the area to develop its own research infrastructure.

Impact

This project allowed both SMEs in the area and HIE stakeholders access to the MIT MediaLab in Boston. HIE's role was to act as a broker on behalf of its SMEs and stakeholders to channel opportunities coming out of MediaLab into new products, processes and spin-out companies.

The project involved the establishment of various industry work groups including tourism, culture, learning and healthcare. It supported learning journeys to MediaLab in Boston, bringing over visiting researchers and assisting partner organisations, including the UHI Millennium Institute (University of the Highlands and Islands), to channel opportunities for SME and academic development.

From the success of the MediaLab project, HIE has secured a five year funding package to set up a new research lab in the Highlands. Distance Lab will develop new technologies to overcome the effects and barriers to "distance".

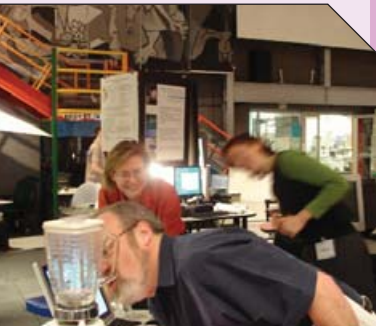
New spin-out companies were formed as a direct result of the project. These include a company developing interactive display products using mobile phone technology and another which is re-developing iCom, a multipoint awareness and communication portal, for the Highlands and Islands.

Contact

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ERDF Funding
£315,000

Total Project Costs
£630,000



actions that have inspired
business change