

*A short study of*

# ***Sustainable Incubation***

*March 2006*

*Based on the perception of  
4WE Limited*

## Acknowledgements

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## **Table of Contents**

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Introduction.....	2
Enterprise Support .....	3
Stuttgart - Germany .....	3
Cardiff - Wales .....	8
Fife - Scotland.....	10
Stoke-on-Trent - England.....	14
Key Findings.....	17
Recommendations .....	21
Annexures .....	23
Case Study 1 - Centre 4 Enterprise & Creative Hearts (England).....	24
Case Study 2 - GIG7 (Germany) .....	25
Case Study 3 - Thomson House (Scotland) .....	26



## Executive Summary

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Women are vital contributors to the UK economy and women owned business start ups are increasing year by year. In order to maintain this momentum and encourage more women to realise their potential in enterprise, it is widely accepted that enterprise support needs to be targeted, flexible, affordable and consistent.

The inspiration for the study originated from the Stoke on Trent based Centre for Enterprise & Creative HeArts - an embryonic incubation facility, and was also influenced by the West Midlands Regional Enterprise strategy.

The authors of this report met on an Advantage West Midlands sponsored study tour to visit enterprise incubators in the Baden-Wurttemberg region of Germany. Inspired by what they had learned during the tour, they subsequently helped to co-found the West Midlands Regional Forum for Women's Enterprise and continue to volunteer their time and energies to the steering group. They have recently established 4WE Ltd, a social enterprise business primarily geared to provide grass roots support to women, young people and minority groups.

The substance of this report reflects feedback from a return visit to GIG7, the women's business incubator in Mannheim, Germany. Visits to Scotland and Wales were also selected because of their devolved status and achievements in supporting women's enterprise.

In compiling this report we have looked at incubation in its broadest sense rather than focus solely on the provision of bricks and mortar facilities. Incubation after all is a lengthy process that requires dedicated time and support, if the seed of an idea is to germinate into a successful and sustainable business.

This report and its recommendations summarise the feedback and best practice gained from the tour, and reflects the perceptions of women business owners with diverse experience of using and delivering business support.

The authors recognise the support given by the individuals, agencies and organisations that have so generously shared their time and knowledge to enable this report to be compiled.

## Introduction

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UK business support is targeted at the pre-start up and start-up phase, which includes up-skilling individuals in their chosen field i.e. literacy, numeracy, business acumen etc. Once this stage has passed, there is limited support for individuals in terms of business incubation during the vital early years of the new business start up.

UK incubations are targeted at high growth; technology based businesses, rather than the micro and lifestyle business women are more likely to start. Limited support exists in some areas but there are few incubation facilities specially geared to provide the bespoke support that women need.

The ability to enterprise is a fundamental building block of human nature, yet most human beings would be surprised to learn that they enterprise every day. Driven by a demanding economic agenda, 'enterprise' has become synonymous with high growth businesses and entrepreneurs with super-human powers.

The study will look at enterprise in it's broadest sense, reflecting local and national incubation policies and facilities and compare perceptions of the support, progress and sustainability of different initiatives in Germany, Scotland, Wales and England.

Incubation is often perceived as bricks and mortar facilities. In the context of this report, incubation reflects the whole *processes* and services that enable women's businesses to start and sustain themselves, including bricks and mortar facilities.

Primarily geared to the sustainable incubation of women's businesses, 4WE's report intends to widen access, increase understanding, share knowledge and good practice and increase capacity

The report will conclude with recommendations for women only business incubation as discovered from good practices witnessed during the study tour.

The appendix contains case studies of three good practices, in business incubation, from England, Germany and Scotland.

## Enterprise Support

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The study tour explored four areas of the country England, Scotland, Wales and Germany. Below are findings of the current state of enterprise in these areas and the state of women's business incubation.

### Stuttgart - Germany

#### ✓ Women's Enterprise Support

Located in the region of Baden-Wurttemberg, "Landesgewerbeamt Baden-Wurttemberg" (Office for the Promotion of Trade and Industry) is a public body supporting small and medium sized businesses in the region. Reporting directly to the regional Ministry's of Economic Affairs. IFEX (Initiative for Start up and Business Transfer) is part of Landesgewerbeamt and was founded in 1994 to carry out the central services of the start up initiative in the Baden-Wurttemberg region.

Prior to it's formation business support information was fragmented and infrequent and systematically edited data was missing. Limited information mainly dealt with entrepreneurship in general, specific aspects relating to women's entrepreneurship were rare. Media rarely covered entrepreneurship,. women were not equally represented amongst business start ups and many chambers and associations initially refused to recognise the specific support that this target group needed.

To overcome apathy, challenge stereotypes, transform perceptions and increase access to enterprise, IFEX started amongst other things, a series of information days with a specific focus on women. Showcasing support provision and diverse role models recruited from different sectors, the information days raised awareness amongst decision makers and experts and highlighted women's enterprise as a viable alternative to employment. The support of high ranking politicians substantially increased media reporting of more than 40 events which involving 4,700 women and 120+ business support agencies.

These information days gave general ideas about start up and the process. They also raised awareness amongst women, highlighting entrepreneurship as a viable alternative to employment.

A wheel of information consisting of data collection brochures, a press campaign, a hotline for entrepreneurs and an interactive portal was set up with a sub portal for women. Because of its vast data collection, knowledge and experience in the field of business start ups, IFEX is an advisor to all Baden-Wurtemeberg Ministries, to MPs and other state governments in Germany. It was also highly instrumental in the formation of the new national agency for women start ups and entrepreneurs – Bundesweite Grunderinnenagentur (BGA).

This is the first and only nationwide body providing gender specific support for women starting and creating a business. It is sponsored by The German Federal Ministry for Education and Research, The German Federal Ministry for Family, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth, The German Federal Ministry of Economy and Labour and the European Social Fund.

BGA offers

- Qualified initial first advice and orientation including guidance service
- Contact with suitable advisory agencies experts and networks
- Consulting and training
- Up to date information data and studies
- Information about events, seminars, workshops, trade fairs etc , specific to women's business start ups
- Support for models and pilot projects
- Support in the development of education and advisory components of business foundation
- Information about good practice examples
- Information about gender specific EU measures in the field of business start ups
- Participation in the market place for contacts ideas and services as well as in a network of officers and in the transfer between research and women start ups and advisory practice.

This is achieved via;

- A nationwide hotline
- An interactive internet portal [www.gruenderinnenagentur.de](http://www.gruenderinnenagentur.de)
- The experts database



- The directory of networks specific to business start ups by women.

#### ✓ Business Incubation

Mannheim (a town based in the region) has a successful incubation project called GIG7.

Between 1994 and 2001, a counselling service was operated in the town without a building. GIG7 was set up in 2001 part financed by European Social Fund and the municipal authority. GIG7 currently receives €80,000 a year from the municipal authority who also own the building and take care of the business insurance and building maintenance.

GIG7 selects its clients by their business plan, avoiding duplication to ensure there is no competition.

The incubator currently hosts 16 businesses. Age range of these clients ranged from 35 to 60 years. Types of business range from photographer to aromatherapist.

There is a standard contract between the incubator and the clients. All rooms are hired out at a fixed rate. Clients have use of the conference room, six times a year.

The services offered are:

- Counselling – The first 3 sessions are free followed by €35 per subsequent session.
- Regular seminars covering range of topics charged at €30 per session

At first most women feel that they don't need seminars. GIG7's own experience has shown that women who are comprehensively informed are more successful which is backed by their statistics that 95% of women who attended seminars are still in business after 5 years.

These statistics enforce the need for seminars and workshops hence women are encouraged to participate in these events. The incubator certificates all training and this evidence is used to support and finance applications.

Compared to other countries, there is a culture of expectation to pay for support services and women are comfortable in paying for these services. Women feel embarrassed about receiving free support. Support that is charged is perceived as professional.

The incubator provides a certificate after training which is used by individuals in seeking funding from banks etc who look to see that the woman has received previous advice.

Developments for the future include a loyalty scheme which is seen as a way of encouraging the incubates to keep in touch with the centre e.g. a set fee of €150 for counselling for 3 years.

The incubator has determined a new target group, in the form of creative arts businesses. Mostly these individuals earn low incomes and need help and support to market themselves and their products.

Mannheim is an ideal place for this target group because it has an academy of rock and pop and lots of cultural events. Women are not very well represented in the music industry so there is a need for a greater level of support.

With funding from the European Union, the centre has developed a short course to help artists to develop viable businesses.

The incubator has gone through a steep learning curve. Some of the key points learned are:

- It is better to have a 3 year tenancy agreement with a review to extension as opposed to 5 years. This was bought about by difficulties experienced with current tenants.
- Association with local authority – The incubator felt the close relationship with the local authority was advantageous in that it was a good source of information in terms of potential premises for businesses that needed to move on.
- The incubator felt that in order to attract financial support it was vital to emphasise the economic case for supporting women rather than the social case.

- Micro businesses are the right way for women to overcome unemployment. It takes too long for factories and large industries to get established to meet the immediate employment needs of an area.
- The incubator felt that public sector financial support was crucial in providing the professional services that were *affordable* to women business start-ups.
- In order for women to become active contributors to the economy, it is imperative that seed funding for such initiatives is readily available.

The summary of feedback from Stuttgart makes familiar reading. No matter how hard they work, nor how SMART their strategies, organisations that provide support to women entrepreneurs are limited by the lack of secure funding to enable them to establish themselves and the services that they have to offer.

## Cardiff - Wales

### ✓ Women's Enterprise Support

Chwarae Teg was established in 1992. A consortium approach was adopted, including the involvement of the Welsh Development Agency, Equal Opportunities Commission, Local Authorities, Training and Enterprise Councils.

In 1997 the 'All Wales Enterprise Action Group for Women' was established. This was a pan Wales network. Members included Business Support Agencies, Academia, Local Authorities (Economic Development, Individuals, Consultants Trainers etc.

The 'All Wales Enterprise Action Group for Women' developed a strategic approach, producing a consultation document – "Supporting Women Entrepreneurs in Wales, a strategy for good practice, 1997".

Subsequently the 'Women's Enterprise Wales Project 2000' was launched, with an aim of providing the tools to underpin the implementation of the Business Birthrate Strategy for women.

Women's Enterprise Wales secured funding from the European Regional Development Fund with matched funding from Welsh Development Agency. The project was launched in 2001.

It provided a dedicated start up support to women interested in self employment. Through a network of local officers a one to one service is provided giving support, information and a variety of free courses to help people build their confidence understand their skills and explore ideas for self employment.

Since its launch the project has assisted 2333 women, 600 new businesses have started and 902 jobs have been created.

This project is coming to an end in 2006. Women's Enterprise Wales aim to mainstream gender equality strategies within new and existing systems.

The Welsh Development Agency has ensured that all its partners and delivery agents utilise a central system to track individuals passing through the support system.

This is a unique concept, allowing all agencies to work together to help provide business support to the client; reducing duplication of support, creating a win-win situation for agencies and individuals. This unified approach puts the client's needs at the very centre of the support service.

Some agencies were reluctant to use the system for fears of losing outputs to other agencies. This was overcome by the Welsh Development Agency in allowing contractors to record soft outcomes as outputs.

The Welsh Development Agency has now made it a contractual obligation for agencies to use the system.

The individual has benefited from this approach in that support provided has been progressive, removing duplication and frustration of having to re-start at the beginning with each agency they access support from.

#### ▼ Business Incubation

Wales host a number of successful incubation units, from Technology to Market Place.

It was not possible to visit an incubator in Wales, but information gathered suggests that at one incubator unit, there is no time limited rent contract, which could be argued that this provides no incentive for individuals to move on.

Another incubator is geared towards high growth technology businesses and is perceived to be too expensive by small micro businesses.

For small, part time, micro businesses, there is a gap in incubation unit provision, inhibiting growth of these businesses.

## Fife - Scotland

### ✓ Women's Enterprise Support

Following research undertaken by the Paisley University Research Centre (PERC) on behalf of the Scottish Executive, The National Unit for Women's Enterprise was established in April 2003, ensuring greater coordination on women's enterprise between Scottish Enterprise and Highlands and Islands Enterprise. The National Unit for Women's Enterprise (NUWE) has an independent advisory board combining expertise from business and academia. The unit has worked collaboratively with the advisory board to undertake a programme of research to inform policy and strategy development for the enterprise networks.

Scottish Enterprise has a purely economic remit and develops their projects to meet this objective.

It has adopted a central approach, setting up 'Business Gateways' ( delivery agencies), partnership agreements with Local Authority and Scottish Executive partners, through which business support is offered to a 90% of geographical coverage of the population of Scotland. One part of this service is "Women into Business" which provides training, access to advice, support, funding and networking events.

The networking events run all over Scotland on a monthly basis and take the form of seminars and workshops, with specialist advisors present to answer queries from start ups to established businesses. These include Inland Revenue, banks, etc. The aim is to create a friendly environment for women to access information.

Each monthly session is initiated with an introduction from Business Gateways and the services they offer, followed by seminars which vary from month to month covering different topics associated with business start-up. There is also a networking opportunity at these events.

Scottish Enterprise also runs a microcredit scheme. This is where a group of women meet fortnightly with an advisor to formulate their business plans, and to

train and develop in a supportive environment. Members of this scheme can then apply for a loan of between £500 and £5,000.

Business Gateways also provide mentoring and online resource facilities for women. All events are free to women.

Women are tracked through a CRM system that work with Business Gateways. This works on the same principle as the system developed by the Welsh Development Agency.

#### ✓ Business Incubation

Business incubation is available via business parks, Women Business Technology Centre in Fife is one example. This was not visited however.

At community level, Thomson House situated outside the town of Kirkcaldy in East Fife, runs a number of programmes liaising with job centres and benefits agencies.

It has developed incubation units through community support. Fighting, all odds, Rose Duncan, has managed and developed the centre to support employment and enterprise.

Thomson House is a purpose built centre assisting people from disadvantaged backgrounds (long term unemployed, lone parents, redundancy, ex offenders, current offenders) to get back into employment including self-employment.

The building was set up to provide services to these groups as well as implementing facilities for hire to external companies. Previously the services had been housed at a less desirable location and had attracted vandalism from not only the surrounding residents but also the users of the building.

The centre has been entrepreneurial in its approach to all aspects of managing the facility.

The land for the building was initially purchased from Scottish Enterprise Fife, by a private organisation. European Union funding was initially used to furnish the essential areas of the building.

Thomson House pays rent to owner of Thomson House through a factoring company. Subsequent furnishing of facilities has been achieved through sponsorship by local companies as well as by past beneficiaries of the services who have become successful in their own right.

This has enabled companies to participate in a community based initiative, creating a sense of connection between the community and local businesses which has had a positive effect for those using the services.

Companies visit Thomson House and participate in in-house schemes to assist clients with skills to get back into employment. Some companies will recruit only from the clients who have been on the schemes operated at the centre.

Since opening the unit has had no trouble with vandalism as there is a great sense of ownership by the clients on the programmes. The building hosts computer suites, rest rooms and more importantly pioneering “Embryonic Pods”.

These are small areas equipped to allow beneficiaries to test trade and can be hired by those wishing to start-up a micro business. These businesses would not otherwise have access to affordable premises nor importantly for the types of clients being supported, the opportunity to develop an idea to explore its viability.

These embryonic pods included equipment for a hairdresser, a nail technician, a reflexologist and masseur.

The building also hosts general office hot-desk facilities, combined with complete business support.

Thomson House has recognised the needs of individuals in their local community and consistently develop bespoke packages to meet those needs. No source of funding and sponsorship is ignored. There was clear evidence that the centre has an in-depth understanding of its clients and their community, now and in the future.



Whilst some clients may receive free services, there is always quid pro-quo to the equation. A recent illustration of their ability to think outside of the box, is demonstrated by their willingness to provide free accommodation to a clairvoyant running her own business, in return for the traffic she could bring to the centre.

This approach is core to their willingness to access hard to reach groups and explains why the centre is successful.

Whilst the centre offers a flexible and responsive approach to the needs of its clients, they also have their feet well rooted in reality. Well aware of the scale of the black economy they recognise that many individuals are reluctant to declare themselves self-employed for fear of losing state benefits. Pointing out the risks, the centre encourages individuals to recognise their business potential, legitimise their activities and utilise the centres resources.

The sustainability of the project may well be maintained by the entrepreneurial approach of those running it i.e. they have reached outside the traditional methods of funding and developed attractive packages to attract commercial sponsorship.

## Stoke-on-Trent - England

### ✓ Women's Enterprise Support

England is divided into nine regions. Under the Regional Development Agencies Act 1998, nine Regional Development Agencies (RDA) were established.

Each agency has the statutory responsibility of promoting business efficiency, investment and competitiveness. This makes the RDA's the focal point for the strategic development of regional activity to promote women's enterprise.

A recent report by prowess, "*The Regional State of Women's Enterprise in England*", June 2005, explored each region and looked at the regional contribution to the women's agenda.

Amongst other things the report found that:

- Generally, those regions with the more dynamic economies and labour market characteristics – London, South East, the South West and the East of England – tend to show better rates of female entrepreneurship than those in the Midlands, and those in the north.
- The "failure to recognize and value the contribution and potential contribution of women owned businesses to the UK economy" is gradually changing across the regions. However, the contribution of women in a variety of circumstances remains under utilized at present.

England is saturated with enterprise support. It hosts excellent flagship organisations (see [www.prowess.org.uk](http://www.prowess.org.uk)) and innovative programmes tackling enterprise at the heart of the community; but this can be at the cost of small voluntary organisations constantly fighting for an ever decreasing pot of funding.

Good practices are taking place in isolation across the regions, in small pockets at community level, rarely getting the recognition. Support appears de-centralised and on ad-hoc basis, leaving many disheartened and discouraged.

## ✓ Business Incubation

England hosts a number of incubators ranging from universities, private and technology based.

Unlike other regions visited as part of the study, England has very few community based incubation units.

Centre 4 Enterprise & Creative HeArts is one such community based incubator under current development.

It operates on the principle of “Why spend valuable energies turning one wheel when the same energies invested, co-generates the capacity to turn them all”.

Devastated by the decline of its’ traditional manufacturing base and the jobs and careers that it provided, Stoke on Trent’s fortunes have declined in recent years and the Potteries that once made it famous now predominantly produce their products in the third world. At the bottom of the UK league table for academic achievement and business start-up the City faces enormous social and economic challenges if it is to break the tradition of low skilled, low paid employment, evolve the established warm, round, follower culture and mobilise its’ citizens to realise their potential to shape an alternative future in enterprise.

Centre 4 Enterprise & Creative HeArts is an alternative incubator located in the Civic Quarter of Stoke on Trent in an area of high human traffic. Designed to normalise enterprise and provide grass roots incubation for wanabee entrepreneurs and small businesses, Centre 4 Enterprise and Creative HeArts, combines a flexible mixture of commercial, manufacturing and studio space. Front of house a retail co-operative enables small businesses to position their products and services on the high street at a fraction of the usual cost and the huge picture window provides an ideal frame to showcase to exhibit entrepreneurs and creatives in action.

Incubates arrive at Centre 4 Enterprise and Creative HeArts, equipped with a degree in Fine Arts and a desire for studio space to express their creativity. As is often appearing to be the case with creative arts graduates , there is a lack of experience of business and no idea of how to turn their talents to their own advantage. The work of the Centre 4 Enterprise and Creative Hearts aims to

change their perceptions and is successfully attracting clients from similar backgrounds.

Privately financed by its' founders, Centre 4 Enterprise and Creative Hearts, must co-generate the capacity to ensure its' own sustainability through the development of commercial income streams to supplement its' social enterprise core.

## Key Findings

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Much has been said and done in the field of women's enterprise, yet the issue of business incubation appears to have been left very much for individuals and private sector to address.

Fragmented initiatives may produce good local results but the impact on the broader enterprise strategy may be minimal.

Grants and funding are increasingly short in supply and competition is fierce. The net result of this is that organisations that should be working in partnership are working in isolation, recreating wheels that already exist.

Short term funding may provide a core that enables an organisation to function, but often for small amount of funding, the net worth may diminish pro rata to the amount of effort is required to obtain it.

Whilst grant funding has a place in the development of women's enterprise strategy the processes involved can be so bureaucratic that it requires a full time resource to administer and evaluate. Project funding tends to be very prescriptive and inflexible, sometimes forcing fund users to concentrate their efforts on fulfilling the requirements of the grant rather than developing long term strategies for continuation of services.

A culture of grant dependency can leave organisations and their clients high and dry when funding sources cease, irrespective of how efficient and effective their results.

Feedback from our visits to Scotland and Wales suggests a different picture to that of England. Devolved from Central Government, Wales and Scotland appear to have taken the bull by the horns and centralised the services that they have to offer to women entrepreneurs. Recognising the need to develop infrastructure and resources, the Welsh Development Agency has invested time, energy and resources in supporting women entrepreneurs. Providing consistent funding to support providers delivering core and bespoke services at the sharp end of enterprise they now have a massive 55% of women's businesses.

Scottish Enterprise's strategy has resulted in a vast network of support for women entrepreneurs and their flagship building sends a clear message that Scotland values

women and the contribution that they can make to the national economy. A network of support providers and co-ordinators deliver a plethora of workshops and support and Networking events are well attended. Numbers of “wannabee” entrepreneurs grow pro-rata to the effort that is put in to recruit them but support is free and flexible to the needs of individuals.

Scottish Enterprise has made great progress because of its clear focus on the economic agenda and only the Highlands and Islands Enterprise operate a social agenda through more remote community networks. Whilst there is no doubt that progress has been made, this may have been at the cost of smaller organisations whose funding and support has been re-directed to a central pot.

Wales and Scotland have striking similarities in that both have made progress because of the concentration of effort and resources; however it is possible that both are in danger of losing their edge because they are withdrawing resources from organisations that have done outstanding work in women’s enterprise.

Chwarae Teg is a vivid example of this truth. Celebrated at the Prowess Conference and recognised with several awards, this organisation now faces the harsh reality of disbanding it’s teams and reducing momentum because funding for the project has finished.

From this study it is evident that in order to sustain and support the growth of new women owned businesses, we must offer a wider range of support packages including accessible business incubation. This is an area that appears to have been overlooked in current enterprise support strategy.

The few women business incubators that do exist have been setup with lots of good will and initial enthusiasm from relevant agencies, but due to changes in funding priorities they have often changed funding focus, leaving the sheer dedication of the few individuals who share the passion and commitment in this area to continue as best they can.

There is substantial evidence that women owned businesses contribute significantly to the UK’s economy. Women in small business ownership make an estimated £50-70 Billion annual contribution to the gross value added by business to the economy - SBS estimate 2004. (*Promoting Female Entrepreneurship, SBS March 2005*). **Women are**

an economic force in waiting and funding and support strategies need to recognise that the case for women's enterprise is a high priority on the economic agenda not a touch feely social agenda.

Primary carers, women take on the bulk of household and domestic chores and garage, spare room and kitchen table enterprises are the starting point for many small enterprises. Geared to fit in with lifestyle and family commitments these businesses are often perceived as 'pocket-money' enterprises and derided in the mainstream.

Direct sales organizations that sell their products and services through networks provide an ideal starting point for many small businesses but remarkably few support agencies channel women towards this fast-start approach to enterprise. Providing a high standard of emotional and business support through a virtual incubation network, organizations like Forever Living Products, Weekenders and Avon provide women with the opportunity to explore their capacity to enterprise under the umbrella of large organizations with the willing capacity to provide one to one support.

Recognising the credibility of all enterprise, irrespective of its' size and nature is a fundamental building block in bridging the gap between kitchen table enterprises and mainstream support.

A lack of a bridge exists between the "kitchen table enterprise" and accessible serviced facilities. To bridge this gap, support facilities that help in the growth of women owned businesses are needed.

If we are to encourage women to realise their potential to shape a future in enterprise, we must provide core funding, build capacity and tailor versatile, flexible, accessible support services outside the conventional nine to five.

Enterprise services must be tailored to the needs of women and provide versatile, flexible support outside the conventional nine to five.

Short term funding produces short term results and support providers spend valuable energies and resources that should be used to support women, searching for additional funding. Grants and funding sources are hard to access and support providers are driven to compete with each other, rather than collaborate. Working in

isolation support organisations protect rather than share what they know and invest time and energy in recreating wheels that already exist.



## Recommendations

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Accessible business units providing flexible tailor made support packages geared to needs and pockets will provide a nurturing environment in which women owned business can grow and move to the next level.

A number of recommendations are suggested for a successful women business incubator. These include:

- On-site business advice and support
- Finance training and easy access to financial support
- Mentoring and coaching support outside conventional business hours
- Enterprise experience and provision for test trading
- Administrative support
- Networking events
- Affordable and flexible office units/ facilities
- Meeting & conference rooms
- Social and emotional support network
- Hot desk facilities
- Access to office equipment
- Reference library
- Online services
- Accessible childcare provision
- Business seminars
- Access to group buying
- Access to advice on benefit system
- Can Do! Culture and Sense of Community amongst the incubates
- Holistic approach to the development of people and potential

The incubator provider needs to foster a 'Can Do' attitude not just for incubates but amongst its own staff who should ideally have relevant experience of being at the sharp end of self-employment.

The provider should operate outside the normal office hours. Women especially those wishing to start up, may not be able to access the support during the day.

Ideally the incubator must be a single, central resource of information and should be at the heart of the community.

Partnership working between external agencies to monitor progress of individuals, needs to be encouraged and made possible for agencies, to ensure a quality service is delivered.

## **Annexures**

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## Case Study 1 - Centre 4 Enterprise & Creative Hearts (England)

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Centre 4 Enterprise & Creative HeArts

44 Kingsway

Stoke-On-Trent

Staffordshire

ST4 1JH

**Founded:** 2005

**Objective:** Enterprise and incubation space

**Finance:** Privately financed.

**Ownership:** Leased building.

### **Services Offered**

- Business counselling
- Mentoring
- Rooms at fixed rates
- Usage of conference room
- Regular events

## Case Study 2 - GIG7 (Germany)

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Mannheimer Grunderinnenzentrum in G7

Established in 1994, Gig7 metamorphosed from a counselling service to an enterprise incubator courtesy of a local and European funding package. Host to upto sixteen non-competitive businesses, GiG7 charges commercial rents and makes subsidiary income from workshops and room hire but the two key factors in the sustainability equation is that Manheim Municipal Council own and maintain the building in which the incubator is located and Gig7 is a community that benefits from the passion and commitment of founders and supporters who volunteer time and energies

**Founded:** 1994

**Objective:** Enterprise support on ad hoc basis.

**Finance:** In 2001, GIG7 part financed (45%) by European Social Fund and the municipal authority. GIG7 receives €80,000 a year from the municipal authority.

**Ownership:** Municipal authority, who also take care of the business insurance and building maintenance.

### Services Offered

- Seminars
- Business counselling
- Mentoring
- Business planning
- Rooms at fixed rates
- Usage of conference room, 6 times a year
- Regular events

### General Information

- Business selected by business plan
- No onsite crèche facility

## Case Study 3 - Thomson House (Scotland)

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Thomson House  
Harbour View  
Methil Docks Business Park  
Methil  
Leven  
KY8 3RE

**Founded:** 1996

**Objective:** Provide Employment and Enterprise support

**Finance:** European Regional Development Fund

**Ownership:** Private Investments – Leased to the community

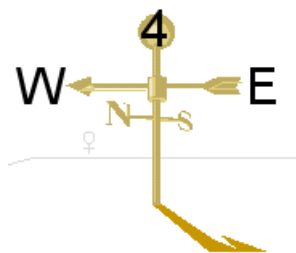
### **Services Offered**

- Reception
- Secretarial support
- Meeting & conference room
- Kitchen and catering
- Exhibition space
- Presentation or conferencing equipment
- Business advice and support
- Aftercare
- Mentoring
- Embryonic Pods for test trading

### **General Information**

- Onsite crèche facility





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