



Providing a World Class  
Business and  
Enterprise Infrastructure



**South East England  
Development Agency**

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innovate  
growth  
ideas  
future  
investment  
inspiration

**The South East England Development Agency (SEEDA) is charged by Government with providing strategic leadership to promote sustainable economic development, enterprise and investment in regeneration in the South East of England.**

**Working in partnership with business and other agencies, SEEDA acts as a catalyst across a wide range of activities to deliver this objective. Areas of focus for SEEDA's Business and International Division include:**

#### **Sector and Cluster Development**

SEEDA is working with private sector business leaders to identify and provide solutions to key competitive issues facing the region's businesses. Through networking, infrastructure and sharing knowledge and best practice, the Division promotes clusters of related businesses and their supply chains. Current Sector groups are:

- *Aerospace & Defence - led by Chris West, a recent Director of Marconi.*
- *Media & Creative Industries - led by Mary McAnally, Managing Director of Meridian Television.*
- *Marine Industries - led by Martin Jay CBE, Managing Director of Vosper Thornycroft (UK) Ltd.*
- *Transport - led by John Guttridge, Regional Director of The Freight Transport Association.*
- *Pharmaceuticals, Biotechnology & Healthcare - led by Dr Peter Read CBE, ex Chairman of Hoechst Marion Roussel and past President of ABPI.*
- *Tourism - Led by Michael Ann OBE, Chairman of South East England Tourist Board.*

#### **Enterprise Hubs**

A concept uniquely pioneered by SEEDA, Enterprise Hubs form a region wide network of focal points for innovation and entrepreneurial activity, delivering a full range of critical support services. They provide local entrepreneurs with better access to technology, research, business support, flexible workspace and early stage finance. These incubators already house 170 companies, with a target of 2,000 to be incubated by 2005. Each Hub is led by a Business Champion, and a Hub Director who implements the ambitions of the network and contains an incubator unit affiliated to one or more universities or research institutions. Hubs have already been approved at: North Oxfordshire, Newbury, Southampton, Isle of Wight, Brighton & Hove and East Malling.

#### **Innovation and Technology Transfer**

Twenty five percent of the UK's research and development takes place in the South East's universities, research institutes and corporate campuses. Transfer and application of innovations from the knowledge base is key to sustaining local World Class businesses. Among other initiatives, SEEDA is establishing a Regional Centre of Manufacturing Excellence (RCME) creating a knowledge pool within the South East of universities, research departments and World Class

companies, which can provide customers with direct access to expert advice for technology related problems.

#### **Investment by Overseas Companies**

SEEDA proactively markets the region internationally to attract high tech/high value added companies, supporting the ongoing growth and development of existing companies in the region. With international contacts and region-wide resources, the Division offers a free and confidential consultancy service to overseas and UK companies starting a new business in, or relocating to the South East of England.

#### **Investor Development Programme**

The programme is aimed at building links with existing larger companies in the region to encourage profitable growth, develop regional supply chains and act as a conduit between these businesses and local/central government.

#### **Early Stage Finance**

Improving access to investment finance for growing businesses is a key role. By working with UK Government and European Union sources, the

Division is establishing regional funds that will help 'bridge the equity gap' that is so often a stumbling block for companies in the growth transition. The Regional Venture Capital Fund will make investment of up to £ million to Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (SMEs) based in the South East of England. SEEDA is also setting up a pan-regional Business Angels network.

#### **Skills and Infrastructure**

The Learning & Skills and Regeneration & Infrastructure Divisions of SEEDA have significant impact in addressing obstacles to business success in the region, including:

- *The South East Composites Manufacturing Skills Development addresses the shortage of skilled technical staff in the composite sector. Stretching from the Isle of Wight to North Oxfordshire, the partnership includes universities, colleges, Enterprise Hubs and schools. In the first year this project will develop and deliver training for 250 employees and involve over 50 companies.*
- *'E-business, e-xplained, e-asily' led by E Skills NTO addresses the skills issues created by the rapid take up of ICT. Working through the Business Links these will target 100,000 SMEs to improve significantly their ICT skills.*
- *Regeneration activities include bringing forward sites for business development through acquisition and provision of infrastructure. For example, in Folkestone, SEEDA has acquired a 10 hectare site and provided capital and revenue grants creating 30,000 sq ft of high quality flexible workspace and assisting business support services.*

