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MediaBook

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Deal: Entrepreneurs Rhona Togher, left, and Daniel Plewman, far right, with John Perry and Michael Johnson

Start-ups twinned with EU experts

BUDDING entrepreneurs can be matched with experienced business people abroad as part of a scheme launched yesterday.

The Erasmus For Young Entrepreneurs Programme is already established in 23 other European countries.

To date, more than 530 new entrepreneurs have travelled to other countries for up to six months to learn management skills from experienced small-business owners.

The Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Enterprise Board is behind the programme's introduction to Ireland, with more county and city enterprise boards expected to join as intermediary organisations in the coming year.

The Minister for Small Business, John Perry, launched

Mail Business Staff

the recruitment drive for the Enterprise Exchange Programme yesterday at the European Parliament Information Office on Molesworth Street.

He said: 'It is a logical step to point our growth-oriented entrepreneurs towards the Internal Market of the European Union.'

Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Enterprise Board chief Michael Johnson said: 'By participating in this European-wide programme, new business start-ups increase their chances of survival in the early years.'

Rhona Togher of start-up Restored Hearing and Daniel Plewman of happythreads.ie were just two of the entrepreneurs who attended the launch.





Vote of confidence in County Enterprise Boards

THE Minister for Small Business John Perry yesterday defended the role of County Enterprise Boards (CEBs) and praised them for stimulating employment.

The CEBs have been criticised by a number of business leaders, including former Norkom chief

executive Paul Kerley, while the 'Ireland First' group of businessmen, including Goldman Sachs International chairman Peter Sutherland and One51 chief executive Phillip Lynch, have called for the cutting of the number of CEBs from over 30 to nine.

Mr Perry, however, said the Government intends to refocus the boards and hailed them as an engine for growth in the community.

"Our intention is to focus on the successful CEBs, which turn out jobs at low cost. There is an emphasis on small

companies through the CEBs and that will be restated through a plan of action that will be announced in the jobs initiative next month."

Mr Perry was speaking at the launch of the European Enterprise Exchange Programme.

PETER FLANAGAN



At the announcement of Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland becoming the first organisation to be certified to the National Standards Authority of Ireland's Swift 3000 were NSAI chairman Ann Riordan, with Maurice Buckley, CEO of NSAI, and Minister for Small Business John Perry. JASON CLARKE



Enterprise Exchange Programme

A new exchange programme for entrepreneurs will be launched in Dublin this week, with the aim of enabling the founders of start-ups in Ireland to work with experienced entrepreneurs from other EU countries.

Part of the €4.3 million EU-wide Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs programme (EYE), the scheme will be managed in Ireland by Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Enterprise Board.

It is inviting interested entrepreneurs to attend Wednesday's launch, which will take place in the European Parliament information office on Molesworth Street in Dublin city centre.

"This is an enterprise exchange programme with a difference," said Michael Johnson, chief executive of Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown County Enterprise Board.

"On the one hand, people who are seriously thinking of setting up their own business in Ireland can be matched with an experienced entrepreneur from another EU country, working abroad with them to build up their own management skills, business experience and market knowledge.

"On the other hand, established SMEs in Ireland can act as 'host entrepreneurs' for new start-up companies abroad, developing new commercial relations and potentially accessing new markets."

For more information, log on to www.dlrceb.ie/eye