

**DIFASS GOOD PRACTICE FACT SHEET NO 28, Hampshire 19 September 2013**  
**WORKSHOP THEME: INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY AND HUMAN CAPITAL**

**PROGRAMME:** Protect Your Knowledge

**Originator:** Beata Hulinka, Rzeszow Regional Development Agency, Poland

**Weblinks:** <http://www.wlasnoscintelektualna.com.pl/>

**E mail:** [bhulinka@rarr.rzeszow.pl](mailto:bhulinka@rarr.rzeszow.pl) Tel: 0048 17 852 06 12

## 1. SUMMARY OF GOOD PRACTICE

### ▪ Overview & Aims

Launched in 2010 to encourage the growth of innovation in businesses, the overall aim of the **Protect Your Knowledge** programme was to provide innovative entrepreneurs in Eastern Poland with the general and legal i.e. Intellectual Property information needed to protect their ideas and maximise their sales potential.

Targeting innovative businesses with untapped potential i.e. those not yet engaged in IP activity in less active regions, the programme was set up to:

- ✓ raise awareness of the opportunities associated with IP
- ✓ raise awareness of the support available
- ✓ provide entrepreneurs/innovative businesses in the region with the relevant knowledge i.e. legal information, skills and support needed to implement relevant IP protection
- ✓ turn the outcomes of the programme into tangible activity; sales, regional growth for business and the economy

Entrepreneurs were familiarised with the basic principles associated with intellectual property; inventions, protection through patenting, industrial designs, utility models and trademarks In addition to the benefits arising from managing intellectual property.

### ▪ Key Resources

#### – Programme Partners

Rzeszow Regional Development Agency – lead partner. No other partners involved.

#### – Funding: Funding Body & SME Contribution

€342K - EU & State Funding can you confirm this figure is correct

Access to the programme and support provided free of charge. Businesses were also able to access grants to co-finance costs and expenses involved in acquiring IP protection within other complimentary programmes.

### ▪ Eligibility Criteria

Micro businesses and SMEs located in any one of the five regions of Eastern Poland covered by the programme. No terms and conditions applied.

## 2. IMPLEMENTATION

Running for 33 months from July 2010 to March 2013 across five regions in the east of Poland the scheme was managed by three project staff and five regional coordinators.

### ▪ Key Steps - How it Worked

Aiming to raise awareness and use of IP in regions with low historical take up of IP opportunities project activity included:

- 10 one-day 'awareness raising' conferences providing basic information on issues, benefits and relevant legal options e.g. invention protection, patenting, industrial designs, utility models, trademarks etc associated with IP.
- 10 Seminars and 35 Workshops (one day events); knowledge transfer sessions covering detailed, up to date Polish/EU legislation relating to a variety of IP options.
- Interactive Web Portal; an extensive 'live' information hub [www.wlasnoscintelektualna.com.pl](http://www.wlasnoscintelektualna.com.pl) with discussion forums, case studies, publications, quarterly magazines, newsletters and opportunities for 'live chats' with experts.
- Publications/Communications; a practical guide to Intellectual Property, CD case studies, quarterly magazines and a wide range of information and promotion activities and materials, using every opportunity available to raise awareness of IP and potential benefits.

Entrepreneurs involved in the scheme were also able to **access a separate Grant scheme** 'support to obtain protection of industrial property'. Particularly targeted at those entrepreneurs with potential for internationalisation, grants could be used to co-finance the costs and expenses involved in protecting intangible goods and/or the protection of industrial property. Grants range from €460 to €92,165 for one enterprise per project and backed by a simple 'on line' application process, with decisions made within 3-4 days.

### ▪ Key Stats

The Protect Your Knowledge scheme has resulted in a real increase in the number of the companies actively using Intellectual Property principles and practice, taking the legal steps required to protect their products/services.

New research and development projects in the area of new technologies created by entrepreneurs supported by the programme include solutions for water turbines, welding facilities and systems supporting seaports and mineral wool production.

KEY MEASURE	NUMBER
Programme applications submitted	Over 1490
Programme applications accepted	1490
Entrepreneurs accessing business related institutions	1087
Conferences, seminars and workshops participants	1490
Applications made to date for patents, protected utility models and industrial design	12

DIFASS Workshops Good Practice Fact Sheet 28 Intellectual Property and Human Capital

Patents, protected utility models and industrial designs abroad accepted to date	5
Number of new R & D projects run by supported entrepreneurship	12
Number of on-line users	1070
Entrepreneurial businesses supported in the project (67% Micro-Enterprises, 18% Small Enterprises, 15% Medium Enterprises)	1087

### 3. KEY LEARNING POINTS & OPPORTUNITIES

The lengthy Patent process in Poland has made it difficult to assess the legacy and impact of the project at this stage.

– **What worked well – key strengths**

Availability of free information and wide variety of support previously unavailable for entrepreneurs in Eastern Poland. Access to complementary financial/grant support. Increase in the number of Patents, applications submitted for IP protection in addition to research and development projects from participating companies.

Extensive range of marketing communications tools resulting in increased awareness and ‘how to’ go about using IP.

– **Challenges/Weaknesses**

Concerns from entrepreneurs regarding confidentiality resulted in little interest in online ‘chats with experts’ through the website.

Lack of resources needed to enable one to one consultancy support

▪ **Transferability**

– **Opportunities**

Use of a similar approach to raise awareness and application of IP

The possibility of accessing European funds for this/similar programmes.

– **Threats**

The need to find alternative sources of finance for this kind of programme

**FURTHER INFORMATION:**

DIFASS You Tube Channel <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p1fRh5D4Fo>

Rzeszow Regional Development Agency <http://www.rarr.rzeszow.pl/en>