

TCS Partnerships Mean Business



East of
Scotland
TCS
Centre

Local businesses can now benefit from a DTI grant-funded scheme which allows them access to a wealth of technological, scientific and managerial expertise, allowing them to develop and sustain their competitive advantage.

The scheme, run through the East of Scotland TCS Centre, is a collaborative venture established by The University of Edinburgh, Heriot-Watt University, Queen Margaret University College and Napier University. Companies with specific product, process and systems or market development projects, which may have a two to three year development phase, are eligible for support. Once an opportunity or a challenge has been identified, academics from the science, engineering or business faculties with the most appropriate expertise are sourced and a practical programme of work is devised to meet the challenge. On approval, a high calibre graduate is recruited to undertake the work within the company, supervised by the academics.

TCS partnerships are awarded grant funding of up to 60% of agreed eligible costs for Small to Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs), and 40% for larger companies. Eligible project costs are

currently in the region of £70,000 per TCS Associate. For most businesses with less than 250 employees and participating in TCS for the first time, the annual costs of a partnership involving one graduate for two years is approximately £14,000.

One company which has already benefited from a TCS partnership is Edinburgh-based Quadstone Ltd. Quadstone's innovative software products help clients primarily in retail, finance and telecommunications, to improve their capability to derive more accurate customer information for marketing purposes.

Working with The University of Edinburgh Management School, they researched specific sectors' use of large scale data analysis and developed tailored demonstration products for those sectors. They then established communications within media channels to enhance the company's position in key markets.

This programme underpinned the development of a strategic marketing team within Quadstone. Previously a one person marketing function focusing on selling and brochure production, the company today has a strategic team working in market research, product development, world wide web and media relations. This successful partnership resulted in the TCS Associate, Fiona Neil, being appointed Marketing Manager at Quadstone.

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