

# INNOVATION MAKES A D-LINE FOR EXPORT

## Innovation Programme Case Study: D-Line (Europe) Limited

A North East business with a well established international reputation joined the Innovation Programme in February 2012 to develop new innovative merchandise, adding to their already successful product range.

D-Line specialises in cable management after managing director, Paul Ruddick, identified the need to hide unsightly cables effectively and now the company, which was founded six years ago, has merchandise on sale in outlets such as B&Q, Screwfix and other leading wholesalers in the UK, as well as being exported worldwide to countries which include the US, South Africa and even New Zealand.

Paul approached the North East Business and Innovation Centre's (BIC) Innovation Programme which utilises £724,000 of ERDF investment and is part financed by the European Union's ERDF Competitiveness Programme 2007 – 2013, to promote a step change in the region by encouraging North East businesses to explore their innovative potential. Paul explains:

***"I have over 15 years experience running an electrical product consultancy and therefore understood that to hide cables, installers often didn't want to be channelling behind walls and then redecorating. Despite the fact we are living in a wireless age untidy cables behind desks, televisions and even hanging from walls are things that everyone can identify with. We joke that all we think about 9-5 is cable management solutions to blend in with decor."***

***"Our products are used by electricians, TV and aerial installers, floor layers, as well as office based companies all over the world. Here at D-Line we understand that to keep one step ahead of the competition we need to constantly innovate and develop solutions which will give us the edge on competitors and access into new markets."***

***"The business already employs 17 people and we have recently moved into bigger office space to accommodate our increased demand."***

***"The BIC are helping us seize some of these opportunities and we are developing a new product which will broaden our client base. The Innovation Programme has helped us accelerate development at a time when businesses can't afford to stand still."***

**For more information on how the Innovation Programme can help you to develop your business's innovative potential call 0191 516 6021 or visit [www.ne-bic.co.uk](http://www.ne-bic.co.uk)**



# The North East SME INNOVATION PROGRAMME

## What you need to know...

The North East Business and Innovation Centre's (BIC) Innovation Programme is funded through ERDF until September 2014. Projects are currently underway in the fields of Manufacturing, Electronics, Energy Conservation, Renewable Energy and the Healthcare Industry.

The aim of the programme is to support North East SME's who are committed to developing and implementing innovative ideas and processes. Ideas may include (but not limited to) those which;

- broaden product base
- introduce a new service
- introduce to new markets
- change operating methods
- develop new financial tools
- make better use of new technology
- ultimately reduce long term risk and increase sustainability

The programme offers a holistic approach to embedding innovative thinking, culture and attitude through a comprehensive package of support.

## The benefits of the Innovation programme include;

- The potential of 40% funding for innovative projects
- Project values between £5,000 and £40,000
- A comprehensive package of support, including a dedicated 'Innovation Specialist'
- Available to North East based B2B SME's who have traded for 12 months or more

## Get in touch

For further details about the Innovation Programme, visit

[www.ne-bic.co.uk/innovation](http://www.ne-bic.co.uk/innovation) or contact the Innovation team on **0191 516 6021**.

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