

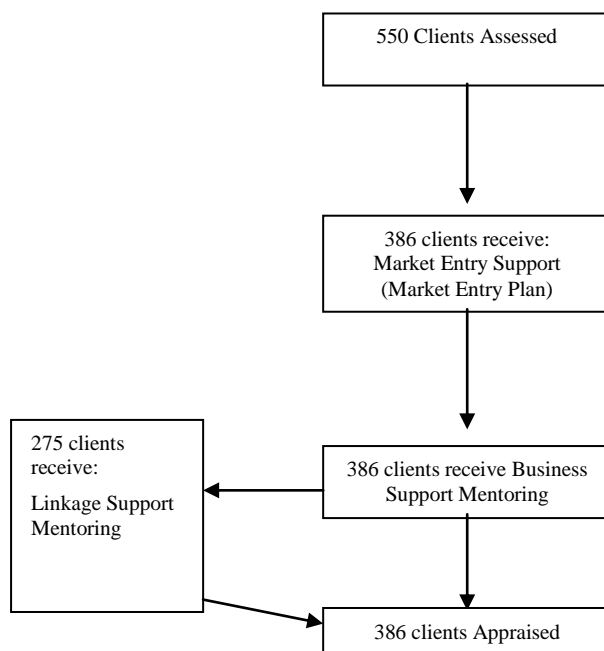
Tradelinks is specifically designed to assist the micro-enterprise sector across Northern Ireland and the Border counties of Louth, Monaghan, Cavan, Leitrim, Sligo and Donegal by:

- enhancing employment generation opportunities
- developing exporting capability
- addressing barriers to cross border trade.
- investigating the opportunities afforded by new technology
- encouraging new market and new product development
- encouraging innovation

Tradelinks will provide you with a range of benefits including:

- a wide-ranging suite of programmes specifically designed to address the issues unique to the micro-enterprise sector.
- a team of experienced assessors and mentors
- the opportunity to form linkages with similar micro-enterprises
- a full signposting service to other programmes

Tradelinks offers a range of programme elements tailored to meet the needs of micro-enterprises at various levels of development. The structure can be shown diagrammatically as:



Assessment

All clients will undergo an assessment, primarily focussed on cross border trade, sales and marketing. Preliminary market research will be carried out to identify potential cross border opportunities for the client. The research, along with the findings from the assessment will form the Business Improvement Plan for the client. Through this process it will be decided, in conjunction with the client, whether or not they are suitable to proceed further in the programme.

Cross Border B2B Linkages

This group of elements of client support represent the substantive phase of support. It is divided in to four elements, each of which is discrete in nature but they can be delivered consecutively, or as is more probable, in parallel to more accurately meet the needs of the

client company. The only element that must obviously come at the end, after other elements have been delivered is the end appraisal.

- **Market Entry Support**

As the focus of the programme is on cross-border trade, this element will be obligatory for all clients proceeding beyond 'Assessment'. The mentor will assist the client in identifying potential cross border linkages, carry out appropriate market research, initiate contact with potential cross border opportunities and produce a 'market entry plan' for the client.

- **Linkage Support Mentoring**

Additional mentoring support will be available to clients actually following up a cross-border B2B linkage. This will be available to help the client prepare for the meeting and/or for the mentor to accompany the client on his initial B2B meeting.

- **Business Support Mentoring**

Each client will receive additional mentoring to address the specific needs of the company in becoming better placed to benefit from cross border trading opportunities. Following assessment the mentor and client will agree a company improvement plan – the client and mentor will select appropriate modules of support from a selection of over 35 modules, derived from the wider range of modules available under the current programme. If, for example, the client wanted to look at developing an innovative product or process, the focus of the mentoring support would be on modules associated with innovation e.g. Prototyping, Product Development and Patents & Patent Searching.

The list of modules includes:

Financial Management	Human Resource Management	Researching the Market
Marketing & Sales	Product/Service Quality	Business Planning
Agency Support Services	Systems & Administration	Image & Promotion
Website Development	Stock Management	Pricing Structures
Export Potential: Self Assessment	The Logistics of Exporting - Distribution	Legalities of Exporting
Alternative methods of Market Entry	Managing Export Risk	Sub-supply
Licensing and Joint Ventures	Effective Tendering	Implementing a Quality System
Networking & Communication	Research & Development	Product Development
CE Marking	Patents & Patent Searching	Trade Marking
Copyrighting	Prototyping	Sourcing Materials
Applying Technology	Innovation	Business Innovation Linkages
Leadership	Managing Information	Accessing New Market Information
Strategic Planning		

- **End Appraisal**

On completion of the programme an end appraisal will be undertaken for each of the 386 companies. This will identify the benefits accrued by the client by comparing their baseline position, as identified in the assessment, to their position on completion of the programme. All clients will be monitored six months and 12 months after completion of the programme to monitor a range of business development criteria including; increase/decrease in home market sales, increase/decrease in cross border sales and increase/decrease in employment levels.