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A CELEBRATION OF 20 YEARS OF EUROPEAN FUNDS IN WESTERN SCOTLAND

Project Title	Equal Enterprise Scotland Development Partnership
Lead Partner	Kilmarnock College

Background

Equal Enterprise Scotland is a Scottish Development Partnership under the Theme C of the Equal Programme. The priority under Theme C is *'Opening up business creation to all'*.

The DP operated both in Round 1(2002 – 2005) and in Round 2 (2004 – 2007) of the Equal Programme with 8 partner organisations in Round 1 and 10 in Round 2 including Colleges, Local Authorities, Voluntary Organisations and private sector.

DP Aims and Objectives

The Development partnership from the first round has developed a regional framework to boost entrepreneurial potential. Working within the principles of EQUAL and the pillar of Entrepreneurship, the DP aims to develop a hub and spoke model to stimulate and support entrepreneurial dynamism by targeting those most at risk of exclusion (young people, older people, disabled and rural excluded) to access mainstream business support services and support Framework for Economic Development priority of infrastructure and learning skills.

In the second Round the DP also aims to support the European Entrepreneurship Action plan and Scottish Enterprise strategy "Generating Entrepreneurial Dynamism" through centres established in first round (Centre for Entrepreneurship and Creativity; Centre for Social and Entrepreneurial Activity) by developing and promoting intervention strategies and sustainable support structures, which will enhance localised capacity to provide continued development towards unlocking people personal potential and enhancing competitiveness.

DP Outcomes

In the first Round of Equal the DP was extremely successful in embedding the projects outcomes into practices. A Centre for Social and Entrepreneurial Activity has been established and piloted by Clackmannanshire Council. The Centre provides Social Enterprise clients with advice on market research, business and financial planning. The support element of the project attracted funding from ERFD. Other successful outcomes from Round 1 are the European Centre for Creativity piloted to devise and develop sustainable processes, networks and practices to facilitate entrepreneurial mind set in young people from disadvantaged backgrounds; and the Working with Offenders programme aiming to develop entrepreneurial skills within Scottish Prisons and currently funded by the Scottish Executive.

Some of the outcomes emerging from Round 2 include;

The 'Young Chambers' piloted by the Glasgow Chamber of Commerce. The best practices of the project are now being shared between Scotland/England in incorporating enterprise skills development into school curriculum. A representative of Scottish Chamber of Commerce is attending the U.K. British Chambers Advisory Group to assist in developing a national strategy for an effective Young Chambers network.

The Kilncraigs Incubator Unit, piloted by Clackmannanshire Council, developed a holistic start-up and aftercare, resource-intensive workspace and outreach service that combine the needs of Social Enterprises with every SMEs.

Finance

	Round 1	Round 2
Total Eligible costs	2,305,298	1,459,552
Total ESF Award	1,152,649	729,776