

business

In association with



INNOVATION drives success  
A unique opportunity to  
become more profitable

# Partnership : 1 + 1 = 2+++

*Working in partnership and collaborating with others is acknowledged across the business world as a driver of success. Here HOVIP demonstrates that working together can produce great results for everyone involved.*

THE Heads of the Valleys Innovation Programme (HOVIP) is all about helping businesses survive, develop and grow. HOVIP Manager, Phil Burkhard, explains, "Innovation often stems from sharing ideas and we encourage businesses to think collaboratively and to work together, especially through our successful business clusters."

He continues, "But partnership is not just for the businesses we support. Within HOVIP we have actively sought links with other organisations so that we can open up opportunities for the businesses we serve. Team HOVIP includes a range of different partners – from the members of our Steering Group (the Welsh Assembly Government, five Heads of the Valleys local authorities and South Wales Chamber of Commerce) to the sponsors of the Innovation Awards, and delivery partners and support organisations, from both public and private sector – all proving that 1 + 1 can equal many times more than 2."

The Heads of the Valleys Innovation Awards and Marketplace event – held this year on 24 June at Bryn Meadows Golf, Hotel & Spa – is one example of public and private sector organisations working together. The event sponsors – University of Wales Global Academy, BT, HSBC, Capital Law, South Wales Chamber of Commerce, FS4B and Equinox PR – have linked with HOVIP's Partners and suppliers to celebrate and promote innovation across the region.

HOVIP has also recently supported three local authority partners. HOVIP sponsored the Innovation Award at the 2010 Merthyr Tydfil Business Awards for the second year. The winner was Rollspack UK, a family owned and run business with the only Class 10,000 Pharmaceutical Grade clean room facility in Western Europe manufacturing wet and dry wipes for a wide range of industries. This business has also earned a Swan Label – the highest eco-standard in the world.

HOVIP sponsored the Innovation Award at the 2010 Rhondda Cynon Taff Business Awards, a category introduced for the first time this year. The winner DecTek Ltd and sister company, DecTag Ltd, caught the eye of the judges for their cutting edge product development, as a result of extensive partnership working, for their ruggedized intelligent tags which can tag anything from luggage to livestock. Innovation was high on the agenda at the June Torfaen County Borough Council business event, when guest speaker Dr Paul Thomas, The Business Doctor, urged businesses to manage people more creatively. HOVIP's sponsorship of the event was aimed at encouraging newcomers to join this business forum.

"Involvement with these Business Awards dovetails well with our own Innovation Awards," explains Phil Burkhard. "We are creating an 'innovation ladder' with winners of the Innovation categories in the local



Proud winners of the Merthyr Tydfil 2010 Innovation Award

authority awards gaining automatic entry to the HoV Innovation Awards. In turn, the winners of the HoV Innovation Awards are entered into the Wales Innovation Awards – a great encouragement and additional benefit for all entrants as well as another way to embed a culture of innovation in the region."

As well as awards and events, HOVIP is partnering with further and higher education institutions in unique ways.

In response to a research exercise with HOVIP businesses, Cardiff University, in partnership with HOVIP, has developed and run a series of marketing workshops for local businesses in the area. The success of this pilot programme is driving future collaborative projects.

HOVIP is in the early stages of a joint initiative with Coleg Morgannwg and other partners, such as the Taste of Enterprise, to develop an International Trade Fair – 'China comes to Merthyr' – at Easter 2012.

"We are keen to develop relationships with other third parties," says Phil Burkhard. "John Lewis Partnership is sponsoring an event for our Turning Heads Club members in September and BT is hosting us in December. These are excellent examples of how working together produces results for everyone."



If you would like to find out how you can benefit from HOVIP, contact Phil Burkhard on 01685 725469 or Email [phil.burkhard@merthyr.gov.uk](mailto:phil.burkhard@merthyr.gov.uk) or visit [www.hovip.org.uk](http://www.hovip.org.uk)