

BEST BUSINESS INCUBATOR IN Poland

1. Name of the business incubator and name of its head:

Name of the Business Incubator: Kalisz Business Incubator Foundation

Name of the Head: Mr. Piotr Sadowski

Address:

Street: Czestochowska 25

City: Kalisz

P.O. Box:

Telephone: +48 62 764 12 42

Fax: +48 62 764 50 16

E-mail: fundacja@kip.kalisz.pl

Internet address: www.kip.kalisz.pl

2. The year when the Business Incubator was established: 1994

3. The size of the Business Incubator in m²: 5,600

4. The purpose and type of the Business Incubator

- Classical business incubator with different tenants;
- Specialized business incubator oriented for certain businesses;
- Business incubators for service industries;
- Technological oriented business incubator;
- business incubator oriented for women entrepreneurs;
- Business incubator oriented for youth;
- Export processing incubator;
- Other type of business incubator (please specify)

5. What are the concept and the Vision of the Business Incubator?

Kalisz Business Incubator is a foundation, which is a non-governmental organization. It is a partner of local authorities supporting the economic development of the town and the region. The Incubator's objectives are to provide with assistance for small and medium companies and all the people who want to start their own business.

6. On which initiative was the Business Incubator created (Government, local authorities, business communities, others – please specify)?

Local authorities: Kalisz City Council.

7. Do you have a Business Plan?

Yes. There was business plan in 1993 developed and updated few years later. In 2005 new Business Plan for transformation into Technology Incubator was developed..

8. How is/are the owner(s)/stakeholders of the Business Incubator?

Foundation was established exclusively by the Kalisz City Council. Until now it is 100% City Foundation.

9. What is the legal status of the Business Incubator?

Foundation..

10. What kind of services is provided by the Business Incubator management? (underlined items means YES. There was no way to use the squares - KZ)

- Provides premises leased on fixed terms;
- Consulting services;
- Training of entrepreneurs;
- Shared office administration;
- Provides accounting for tenant;
- Provide access to financing;
- Provides marketing services;
- Provides technological services;
- Provides services in consumer protection;
- Provides services in quality management;
- Provides services in environment services;
- Provides coaching;
- Provides mentoring activities;
- Other services, please specify:
EuroInfoCentre, Specific EU Projects, Regional Centre for EU Information,

11. In average how many tenants do you have? 24

12. What is the incubation period – maximum year to be stay at the Business Incubator? 22
Maximum incubation period is 5 years.

13. How many businesses left the Business Incubator from the year of establishment? 22

30

14. How many businesses survived for those who left the Business Incubator? 22

15. How is the Business Incubator financed? (underlined items means YES. There was no way to use the squares - KZ)

- Renting:
- Providing general consultation services:
- Providing special services:
- Government/local government contribution:
- Donor contribution:
- Additional financing sources.

16. How many people manage the Business Incubator?

3

17. How many support staff has the Business Incubator? Please specify these people.

20:

BI manager -1 (President of the of the Exective Board of the Kalisz Incubator Foundation KIP)

Director for the International European Cooperation -1 (Vice President of the KIP)

Euro – Info Center Manager – 1

Specialist on European Economical Information -1

Manger of the Office for European Projects -1

Specialist on programmes – 1

Manager of the EU Save Energy project – 1

Manager of the Entrepreneurship Development Fund– 1

Specialist on Financial Loan Funds - 2

Manager of the Business Support Centre -1

Specialis on training – 2

Specialist on innovation and technology - 1

Office Manager/Secretary – 1

Bookkeeper -1

Deputy Bookkeeper -1

Engineer -1

Scrub-woman -1

ICT Specialist – 1

18. What is the education background of the Head of the Business Incubator? Please specify also his/her entrepreneurial background.

Master Degree in Engineering

- the initiator of Kalisz Business Incubator.
- the consultant of Polish Agency for Enterprise Development – experience in entrepreneurs advisory (EU financing for SMEs, general support sources for SMEs, establishing business)
- the participant of TOR 10- the project aimed at establishing Polish network of business incubators.
- the participant of international placements connected with SMEs support issues :
 - “An open learning programmes for SMEs “ Thames Valley Collage, UK
 - “Leadership and team building industrial placement” Centre for Industrial and Commercial Training”, UK
 - “Programme of Management Training in British Industry” Confederation Of British Industry, UK
 - “ Measures to support SMEs for the job creation” Japan Institute of Labour and Social Affairs, Warsaw, Poland

- practical business experience

19. SWOT analysis of the Business Incubator

You are kindly requested to list the main important characteristics in each category like Strength – Weakness – Opportunity and Threat (maximum 5 in each categories) starting from the most important feature and ending in the least important one.

STRENGTH:

- 10 years of experience
- Young, well educated staff
- National and international network
- Strong position in the local social and economical strategy
- BI facility, infrastructure and equipment

WEAKNESS:

- Small number of universities and R&D institutes in the City
- Limited territory of surrounding BI facility
- Lack of resources for new investments
- Limited number of high qualified local experts

OPPORTUNITY:

- New activities focused on technology and innovation, including intelligent energy
- EU membership
- International cooperation
- Innovation network in the region and in the country
- More funding from EU

THREAT:

- Changes in political situation in the city and the country
- BI depends very much on City authorities
- Salaries not high enough to hire the best experts
- Growing competitiveness of business and technology consulting firms

20. Does your Business Incubator reached the status of sustainability? Yes

21. What are the critical success factors in a business incubator operation?

Kalisz Business Incubator Foundation acts in two general areas : development of enterprise and European integration.

-**renting cheaper facilities** for small companies. Currently there are 25 companies in Kalisz Incubator which have created over 180 new workplaces, especially for unemployed people. The companies can use the conference and training rooms and obtain legal and financial advisory from specialists.

- **Entrepreneurship Development Fund** – the Minister of Labour and Social Policy has admitted only several institutions in Poland in the program. This Found was created in order to assist the unemployed with the establishment of their own companies. The loans granted from the Fund's resources have a lower interest rates than those offered by banks. The support of the Found has contributed to creation of 150 new workplaces so far.

- **Entrepreneurship Support Centre** – organize free of charge courses and trainings for unemployed or disabled people.
- Euro Info Centre (EIC) – programme directed by DG Enterprise. Our Foundation as the only in Wielkopolska region hosts EIC. This project supports SME'S with information about EU legislation, EU founding possibilities and other important information about running business on EU market.
- **Kalisz Energy Protection Agency (SAVE)**- program directed by DG Energy and Transport. The Agency seeks for solutions for problems of environment pollution and proper use of energy resources.

22. How do you measure the performance of the tenant and the Business Incubator as a whole?

- Periodical evaluation of the tenant performance
- Management evaluation questionnaire
- Annual reports of BI including: numbers of tenants, tenants turnover, number of jobs, implemented innovations, export sale, international cooperation, BI incomes and costs,
- Interviews with tenants, clients and local community
- Periodical reports and meetings with City authorities
- Board meetings and evaluation of BI performance
- Participation in studies and research of BI conducted by Polish Business and Innovation Centres Association, Polish Agency for Enterprise Development and other organisations,
- Collecting evaluation forms and references from tenants and clients
- Collecting articles, tapes, CD, DVD, Video tapes presented in magazines, TV and radio on BI activities
- Collecting certificates and acknowledgments from local community, government and partners
- BI activities are monitored by Board of BI, City Council, and Polish Ministry of Labour

23. What kind of assistance do you need to improve the operation and services of your Business Incubator?

Incubator?

More financial assistance from the Government and EU.

Support from City Council

24. Is your incubator stand-alone or part of a national incubator network?

Our incubator is stand-alone.

25. Any further issues, which you consider as important why designing and establishing business incubators.

Business Incubator should have facility to survive in the market to compete with other consulting companies and real estates. However big facility very often makes that BI managers lazy, and they do not care about services other than rent. They can easy survive with collecting rent . This is threat to many Incubation programmes.

It is extremely important in countries where money for financing incubation programmes is limited. Foreign aid programmes terminate, foreign experts leave the country and BI management stays alone with all contradiction problems related to business incubation (for example – business generation versus collecting revenues, etc.), competition of commercial service providers, lack of external financing, high expectations of local community, etc.

On the other hand financial analysis of investments on BI/STP should be done professionally from the very beginning and then financial issues should be monitored very carefully. It will allow to justify and balance qualitative and quantitative measures of Business Incubator/Science and technology Parks performance.

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