

# Terms of Reference for Management Development Council

Management Development within Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (SMEs) is an issue of critical importance for enterprise development policy in Ireland. There are benefits from management training over and above those which accrue to the individual manager or enterprise. As high-growth SMEs are “large net job creators and drivers of economic growth”, enhancing the managerial skills of small firms is justified i.e. better managed small firms will contribute to overall economic growth and the well-being of society as a whole.

Several recent reports have identified a number of specific issues inhibiting management development in Ireland. These include the supply led nature of designing and targeting courses without taking sufficient account of the actual demands of entrepreneurs and businesses; the existence of unrealised latent demand for management training due either to lack of knowledge of the value of management development or lack of knowledge of provision available and issues around content relevance and inflexible delivery mechanisms.

Building on available and ongoing work, specifically that of the Small Business Forum and the Expert Group on Future Skills Needs<sup>1</sup> the Management Development Council will:

## Strand 1

### Objectives:

- *Establish the profile, adequacy and relevance of management development provision in Ireland.*
- *Identify good practice management development provision in Ireland and internationally and examine how such models could be extended or rolled out in Ireland.*
- *Develop action plans to close identified gaps in management development provision in Ireland.*

Delivering upon these objectives will involve the following key tasks:

- 1 Profiling the current provision of management development in Ireland. A broad definition of management development will be employed to include formal course provision, mentoring, networking opportunities etc. This will be achieved through a survey of public and private management development provision. The profile of funding of management development will also be established as part of this process.
- 2 In consultation with SME owner managers, reporting on the relevance and adequacy (coverage) of existing provision. This will involve identifying gaps in current provision and making policy

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<sup>1</sup> For example, the Expert Group on Future Skills Needs report ‘SME Management Development in Ireland’

recommendations in relation to State funded provision and the stimulation of the private provision market.

- 3 Action item 2 with reference to good practice in other jurisdictions.

## Strand 2

### Objective:

- ***Promote the development of a coordinated approach to building awareness and appreciation in the SME sector for the value of and need for upgrading leadership and management skills.***

Delivering upon this objective will involve the following key tasks:

- 1 Formulate a coordinated plan with associated targets to effect the stimulation of demand for Management Development in SME's; identifying any practical responses from the State or private industry to overcoming barriers to participation unique to management development participation;
- 2 Report annually (in a format to be determined in consultation with DETE) on progress in relation to the incidence and effectiveness of management development provision.

The Council will meet 4 times per annum.

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