

Dear Colleague

There's no doubt that we are in unprecedented times but there is a wealth of publicly-funded business support available to help your business in today's challenging economic environment. **In this region alone businesses can access over £30 million worth of support in the next year.**

As an entrepreneur and as chair of the East of England Development Agency (EEDA) - the agency tasked with improving the economy of the East of England - businesses across the region have often told me of their frustration and confusion in accessing publicly-funded business support.

Based on the concept of an underground map, The Business Map from EEDA helps you find your way through the publicly-funded business support available to you. The Business Map, which can be found at www.bizmapeast.co.uk, enables you to navigate easily around seven key areas of help and advice. I have enclosed a copy for you.

At the heart of The Business Map is **Business Link, funded by EEDA and providing you with a gateway to all business support in the region.** Business Link is currently offering **free 'health checks'** to businesses for early identification of potential issues and support. Their advisers can also help you access the most appropriate funded-support on offer, including:

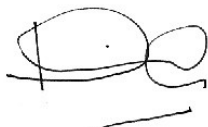
- A free, independent and impartial assessment of skills and training requirements from Train to Gain
- Developing international business or trade through East of England International and UK Trade & Investment
- Expert advice for manufacturers through hands-on support, training and events from MAS East
- EEDA's own initiatives such as Finance for Innovation, a package of targeted financial support for innovative business ideas.

You can find out more about these programmes on the reverse of this letter.

As the largest funder of business support in the region, I would encourage you to take advantage of the wealth of specialist support available to you.

I wish you a successful 2009.

Kind regards



Richard Ellis
Chair

Funded-support you can access now includes;

from Business Link

Business Link is the gateway to the full range of public-funded support available in the East of England. We have also introduced a range of specific services to help your business through the economic slowdown, including:

- A free and confidential 'healthcheck' which takes stock of where your business is currently and looks at what needs to be done to prepare for the slowdown;
- Free briefings on key subjects like managing money and improving your marketing
- Our free 'recession survival guide' - call for your copy.

Call 08457 17 16 15 or visit www.businesslink.gov.uk/east/healthcheck.

from Train to Gain

Train to Gain is a government-funded initiative that can help businesses within every industry get the skills and training they need to succeed. Expert skills brokers can provide:

- A free, independent and impartial assessment of skills and training requirements.
- A tailor-made training package to determine which qualifications employees will most benefit from.
- Information on possible sources of funding for the training.

For further information on Train to Gain please telephone 0845 600 5024

from East of England International and UK Trade & Investment

East of England International and UK Trade & Investment provide the support that businesses need to grow internationally. We work with overseas-owned companies locating in the region and local businesses exporting their services and products. Our services include:

- Investor Development programme - offering coordinated support to overseas-owned businesses located in the region
- Export advice - flexible and subsidised support to help you make the most of export opportunities.

For more information visit www.eei-online.com or call 01223 450450.

from MAS East

The Manufacturing Advisory Service for the East of England (MAS East) provides manufacturing businesses with expert advice through hands-on support, training and events. Services offered include:

- One-day fully funded diagnostic and advisory visit
- Subsidised support
- Access to an expert help line and web service.

Visit www.mas-east.org.uk or call 0845 300 4443 for more information.

from EEDA

EEDA funds a number of organisations and programmes that deliver business support within the region. This includes some of the services already mentioned, plus:

- Finance for Innovation – targeted financial support to turn new ideas into reality
- Enterprising Women – to help women start or grow a business
- Response to Redundancy – through Beyond 2010, which provides advice, guidance and re-training opportunities.

Visit www.eeda.org.uk/business-support for more information.