

## Innohubs Study Visits, North Down, 7th to 11th November 2011 Good Practice

**Good Practice:** Advantage NI

**Categories:** Mindset, Training, Operation, Collaboration

**Target Groups:** People aged 16-30

<http://www.advantage-ni.com>

**Advantage NI** is an award-winning project management company, specializing in economic development programmers for young people.

For over 25 years, **Advantage** has designed and delivered enterprise awareness and training programmers on behalf of public, private and voluntary organizations, nationally and internationally.

Our visit will include an overview of the organization and some of its projects – for example, Business Boot Camp and The Big Idea! We will also preview an exciting new online resource for young people.

**Good Practice:** Focused Partnerships – La Salle Matrix Thinking

**Categories:** Mindset, Training, Operation

**Target Groups:** Existing businesses that wish to increase their capacity for innovation

<http://www.focusedpartnerships.com>

**Focused Partnership** offers facilitated business solutions in the following areas:

Business Thinking

Learning and development

Coaching and mentoring

Innovation

Project management

We will experience an innovation workshop based on La Salle Matrix Thinking.

In 1999 Roger La Salle set about documenting a simple thinking methodology that underpins successful business building. *Matrix Thinking* was the result and can be applied to creativity, innovation and finding business opportunities.

**Good Practice:** SIGNAL Centre of Business Excellence (owned by North Down Borough Council)

**Categories:** Training, Operation

**Target Groups:** Existing businesses that wish to develop and grow

<http://www.signalni.com>

Opened in 2004, **The Signal Centre** is a purpose-built business venue in the main commercial area of North Down. It houses Council's economic development department and offers world-class meeting rooms and conference facilities to local businesses and organizations.

We will tour the facility and hear about its history and contribution to the Borough's economic wellbeing.

*Full-time courses*

Further education – Advanced Vocational Certificate of Education (AVCE), Business and Technology Education Council (BTEC) qualifications, A Levels

Higher Education – Foundation Degree, Higher National Diploma (HND)

Work-based training – apprenticeships, Training for Success

*Business services*

The provision of staff training, research and development, and consultancy services for local businesses and organizations.

Promoting Entrepreneurial Mindset:

Our study visit will focus on the range of initiatives SERC has developed to promote enterprising behavior in its students – what it describes as “enriching the learner's experience”.

**Good Practice:** Fingerprint Learning Ltd – the EntreBraineur research project

**Categories:** Mindset, Training

**Target Groups:** All

<http://www.fingerprintlearning.com>

In 2010 Dr. John Kelly of Fingerprint Learning Ltd and Dr. Brain Cummins of Stranmillis University College Belfast researched the learning preferences of 55 entrepreneurs in Northern Ireland. The study considered questions such as:

Is there a common pattern to how entrepreneurs are motivated to learn?

Why do many entrepreneurs not perform strongly in school or reject formal education?

What elements, if any, in their school experience contributed to their entrepreneurial success?

How can formal education better contribute to fostering an enterprise culture?

How should government agencies that stimulate and support enterprise adapt to encourage entrepreneurship?

Research reports at: [www.stran.ac.uk/informationabout/research/entrebraineurproject/](http://www.stran.ac.uk/informationabout/research/entrebraineurproject/)

A presentation by Dr. Kelly will be followed by questions and answers.