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What firms can learn from artists

Wysing Arts Centre at Bourn is the first venture to receive a grant from the 2012 ideaSpace funding programme.



Each year this provides funding to a number of organisations which foster innovation and enterprise in the region.

Wysing has developed a programme of Creative Accelerator Workshops to help companies harness their creativity both in generating new ideas for products and services and in improving their business processes to become more productive and efficient.

ideaSpace has awarded the centre £40,000 to trial and support its artist-led workshops designed for early stage businesses and small and medium-sized companies.

Wysing says that through its research it has shown that the way artists work can be enormously valuable when translated into a business context.

ideaSpace says: "Businesses often find unforeseen events difficult to deal with but artists see them as an opportunity to change the way they approach a problem and, by doing so, come up with a completely new outcome.

"We were impressed by the scale of thinking behind the workshops.

"When they first had the idea to offer their skills to the business community, Wysing invested considerable time talking to Cambridge companies and commissioned students at Judge Business School to undertake a scoping project on their behalf.

"Research undertaken by Prof Giovanni Schiuma, chairman of the Arts for Business Institute and professor of Innovation Management at Italy's Università della Basilicata, which has assessed the impact and value of arts-based training has also been applied to their methodology.

Donna Lynas, director of Wysing, said: "Through ongoing research, we've identified a niche within the business sector in Cambridge and across the wider region, for business workshops that offer intellectual space to grow.

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"Artists can provide a creative and experimental approach to overcome barriers and blockages to success, problem resolution and a different perspective to overcoming organisational issues to improve business effectiveness and prepare for change."

The one-day workshops will begin in spring next year and will be run in association with Cambridge Event Management.

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