

'Brains Trust' open for business



Northern Rivers innovators now have a powerful new business development tool at their disposal.

The Byron Innovators Network (BIN) – launched in May by the Community Learning and Innovation Centre – has just completed its pilot program. It is now fully operational and seeking more innovators to mentor in 2004.

Five local innovators have so far enjoyed and benefited from three-hour workshops, with up to six fully-briefed BIN panelists firing opinions, suggestions, ideas and leads at them. From the feedback received, the innovators have found the process challenging, stimulating and extremely valuable. All are looking forward to their follow-up workshops next year.

One wrote in that he couldn't get over the group's generosity in freely providing such high quality, focused and yet diverse assistance – unobtainable anywhere else in one location. BIN provides its mentoring and advisory services free of charge, with strict rules about members becoming commercially involved with the innovators – to prevent conflicts of interest.

The BIN brains trust comprises Ken McLeod (founder and Chairman), George

From left clockwise: Michael O'Brien, Paul Jameson, George Lewin, Mitra Ardron, Bill Radcliffe, Bernard Grinberg, Virginia Eddy, Christine Lucke. Absent: Linda Gately, Max Leslie.

Lewin, Michael O'Brien, Virginia Eddy, Paul Jameson, Christine Lucke and Bill Radcliffe, with additional assistance from Bernard Grinberg, Mitra Ardron, Max Leslie and Linda Gately.

Collectively they have a wealth of experience and success in innovation development, intellectual property protection, licensing, business and financial planning, software development, manufacturing, training, sales and marketing, and public relations – in short, just about everything innovators need to get their business off the ground.

Acting Chairman George

Lewin invited any local innovators with novel, socially beneficial and economically and environmentally sustainable ideas to contact BIN, provided they had themselves already invested some significant time, energy and money into their ideas.

'We don't want applicants who've had their world-beating idea that very morning in the shower, and who expect us to do all the hard work for them,' he said, 'but we'll happily help those who've helped themselves.'

To find out more, contact Christine Lucke on 6684 4850 or at clucke@iprimus.com.au.

Local on lands review group

Commonsense Lands Group convenor Laurie Stubbs has been appointed to the Review Group for the National Competition Policy Review of the Rural Lands Protection Act 1998. The Group is to report in 2004.

Speaking from Rosebank, Laurie Stubbs said, 'I've been asked to represent the State's minimum ratepayers in the Group – that's about 71,000 people statewide. Over half of them live in the seven Coastal

Board areas, and the three around Canberra. Now I have two hats to wear about RLPBs, because the Review Group is a personal appointment.'

'This Review is the minimum ratepayer's chance to get the Act changed. The real issues here are that minimum ratepayers pay rates, but see little or nothing in return. And they are not represented in any formal way on the 48 local Boards.'