

Scientific ‘hypermarket’ aims to house promising sci-tech ideas

New database becomes venue for business and science

The saying goes that giving those in need a fishing rod is more useful than giving fish. To support businesses, it's necessary to teach the strategy of fishing, as well as how to cook fish and where to sell it at a profit. In establishing a database of promising sci-tech ideas and projects, specialists from the Belarusian National Technical University's Polytechnic Technopark have used this approach.

In 2004, the Technopark realised a similar project for the Education Ministry and now has a new task: to add new functions to the already established portal. As a result, the latter will become a search and negotiation site for the University and country's sectorial, branded and academic science, allowing industrial enterprises to place requests of science. Organisations such as the Industry Ministry and the Health Ministry are also keen to join the project.

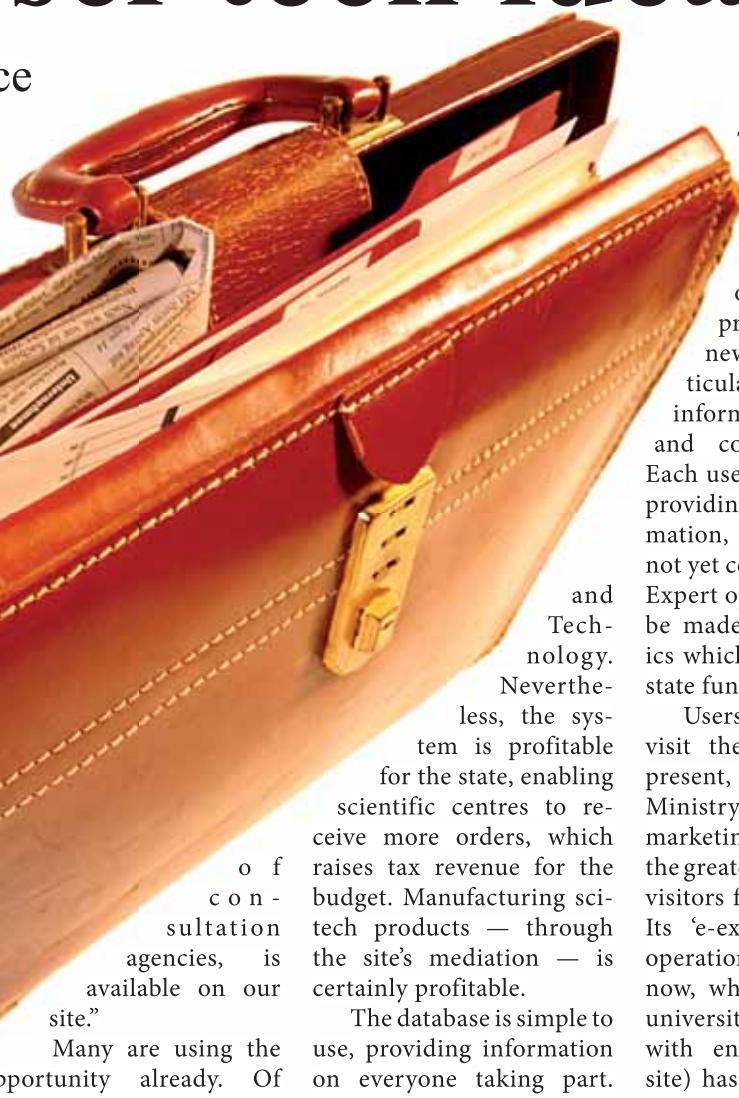
Independent examination shows that others with

similar search systems and databases still lag behind the Technopark, which unites resources and synchronises the promotion of developments. At present, the Polytechnic Technopark ensures up-to-the-minute support via its database, showing the many Belarusian universities' developments. Virtual intellectual exchange is promoting projects by independent developers and the Belarusian Society of Inventors and Rationalisers; proposals are available at www.belarus-project.by.

“On organising meetings between scientific inventors and those interested in their application, we aren't acting as a classical mediator paid for introducing would-be partners,” explains Polytechnic Technopark General Director, Yuri Alexeev. “We offer services free of charge. On being matched up, partners then conduct business independently, although we give help in preparing contracts, as well as legal, economic and infor-

mation assistance. In working with a foreign partner, you need to understand the legislation of their country, while having an account in foreign currency. You need to be able to translate

documents into foreign languages and solve many other tasks. However, everything you require, including the address



of consultation agencies, is available on our site.”

Many are using the opportunity already. Of course, these services cost money — funded by the State Committee on Science

They then gain access to partners and can update their information at any time, order services and products, receive news updates on particular themes, browse information resources and conclude contracts. Each user is responsible for providing accurate information, since materials are not yet centrally monitored. Expert opinions are soon to be made available on topics which might qualify for state funding.

Users from 40 countries visit the database site at present, with the Education Ministry's information-marketing section enjoying the greatest popularity (with visitors from 59 countries). Its ‘e-exchange’ has been operational for five years now, while the number of universities' agreements with enterprises (via the site) has risen hundreds of times. The website hopes to see even greater popularity in the future.

Two pathways in each direction envisaged

Belarusian capital — Minsk — to be soon connected with regional centres by first class motorways



Logistics specialists take country's new road possibilities into consideration

“We've suggested an idea — which has been already approved — to connect Minsk with the regional centres by first class motorways,” stresses the Deputy Transport and Communications Minister and the Director of Belavtodor Department, Anatoly Lytin. Four routes are planned, two in each direction.

Belarusbank has allo-

cated a two-year loan for the construction of the M-4 Minsk-Mogilev road, connecting the Belarusian capital and Mogilev by 2012. Moreover, a World Bank \$150m two-year loan also envisages road construction. Works are to commence this year, with most conducted from 2012-2013. “As a result, we'll have a first class motorway connecting Minsk and Bobruisk,” Mr. Lytin tells us.

A Chinese loan may also

be used for this purpose. “It's now being negotiated, though a credit agreement has already been signed. We plan to launch work next year, spending money on the reconstruction of the Zhlobin-Gomel section of the Minsk-Gomel motorway,” notes the official, adding that Belarus has no plans to construct absolutely new motorways. The aim is to ensure Minsk's connection with regional centres by first class roads.

Professionals for city economy

By Kristina Kurlovets

Academy of Management under President of Belarus soon to train city management

The Head of the Academy's Enterprises' Economic Department, Yelena Rusak, tells us that a new specialisation — ‘Economics and Management of City Transport’ — is to operate as part of the ‘State Management and Economics’ course. Training of city managers will be organised for the first time. Ms. Rusak notes, “The

topicality of this new specialisation is guided by our need to increase the share of services in our GDP and improve their quality — including services rendered to the public. Professional management of the city economy and its subordinate organisations should aid this task.”

Students are to be taught special applied knowledge in the field of economics and city management, in addition to fundamental knowledge in the field of technologies and methods of state

and company management. Alumni will be able to work as state managers — overseeing urban economies, reducing costs and increasing the quality of services.

The Academy is ready to teach city management, having highly qualified staff and rich experience of training economist-managers as part of its ‘State Management and Economics’ course. Moreover, it has conducted research into the topic, while keeping strong ties with state management bodies and foreign institutions.

Teachers' readiness tested

By Denis Ampirov

Education Ministry, High-Tech Park Administration and Intel Corporation sign protocol of intentions regarding co-operation in information-communication technologies in the field of education

It seems paper textbooks will soon be consigned to the past, as computer technologies advance. Tablet computers are to be given to some senior schoolchildren in the coming academic year as an experiment, while the ‘One child — one computer’ project

is being launched at four Belarusian schools.

The experiment is to cover Minsk, Novopolotsk and the Shchuchin District's second and third grade pupils. Ordinary classroom desks will each be equipped with a netbook, while the ‘command centre’ will be situated at the teacher's desk. All computers will be united into a single network, allowing the teacher to quickly send messages, invite a pupil to solve a task or check work.

The High-Tech Park Administration's Deputy Director, Alexander Martinkevich, speculates on how children may be taught nature studies

with help from a computer. He tells us, “Modern schoolchildren have been born into an information environment. There's no need to rely on textbooks — even electronic — in teaching, although interesting resources are vital. Pupils can take their netbooks into a field — to video record a butterfly flying for example, later downloading film or photos onto a social network. These are 21st century skills: finding, processing and spreading information. It's more likely that teachers will need help with the technology, since the system falls down if the teacher is unprepared.”