

TECHNOLOGIES

BEST BUSINESS

Northwest facility offers a clean start in Sligo



A Northwest Life Sciences cleanroom: offers facilities for start-up firms

ASGARD CLEANROOM SOLUTIONS

By Leslie Faughnan

The town of Collooney, Co Sligo has had a Community Enterprise support company

since 1997, when it opened its enterprise centre for start-ups. Its latest venture is the €16 million Northwest Life Sciences facility, which offers cleanroom facilities for start-up firms or pilot programmes in medical devices, pharmaceuticals and biotechnology.

"We received a grant of about 25 per cent of the investment from Enterprise Ireland, but in fact the bulk of the capital has been raised locally," said Wendy Lyons, chairwoman of the Community Enterprise Centre, which has a healthy rent roll from its full quota of tenant businesses.

"The new facility is on the N4 and beside B. Braun Medical, so we believe it is ideal for start-up enterprises which might be daunted by the up-front costs of cleanroom facilities up to today's mandatory standards. But it is also aimed at R&D units and expanding businesses which need to undertake pilot production, process development or advanced equipment testing. Larger corporations often need accre-



Wendy Lyons, Collooney Community Enterprise Centre

dated training environments, which are not readily available in production plants."

The facility offers three units, fully validated cleanrooms of 1,500 to 3,000 sq ft, with space for support areas such as administration and warehousing or storage. Detailed fit-out is for each tenant's individual specifications.

"We were expertly guided in this venture," said Lyons, "with Sligo County Enterprise Board helping us all the way, as well as Enterprise Ireland, while Sligo IT was very much our mentoring partner in planning and specifying."

For more information, visit www.northwestlifesciences.com