

Based in Midrand, Gauteng, Softstart BTI is an ICT business and technology incubator that stimulates, grow and launches early-stage, technology-rich businesses through world-class technology incubation, professional business support services and resources, and a network of expert incubation and coaching professionals. In particular, Softstart BTI focuses on incubating young IT graduates and professionals, as well as previously disadvantaged groups, with the intention of these individuals pursuing entrepreneurship as an alternative to traditional employment.

Key services include strategic, operational and technology mentoring and coaching, furnished “plug and play” office space in a secure environment, shared resources such as reception and conference facilities, internet access, access to service providers and networking opportunities. Softstart BTI also offers virtual incubation as a component of its incubation model and through the Tertiary Education Satellite Incubation Programme (TESIP), hosted at a number of tertiary institutes throughout South Africa.

Softstart BTI improves enterprise performance, enhances profitability and growth, and offers technology and management support to South African ICT SMMEs and is geared to help early movers maximise the value of their ideas. Businesses within the Incubator fall within various stages of being built, from concept phase where a first-cut assessment of the strategic environment is being made, to development phase, where feasibility and go-to-market strategies are being explored and ultimately, commercial phase, where profitable market opportunities are exploited and the focus is on growing the depth and breadth of the venture. To build an optimal, sustainable business, an entire multitude of building blocks will have to be assembled over time. Softstart BTI assists in doing so by ensuring that the following business development areas are addressed:

- **Business:** The analysis of the potential of the business venture to make a profit and the development of business plans and strategies that will ensure that the venture meets its desired profitability goals; this also includes strategies to access business funding, growth strategies, etc.
- **Market:** The understanding of the market in all its aspects and the design and delivery of strategies that will fully exploit the product's potential.
- **Technology:** The design and development of the actual products and services that will be delivered to the customer.
- **Operational:** The design, documentation and operation of the business' activities as a professional legal entity.

Thus, businesses within Softstart BTI can rest assured that the challenges of starting a new company will be eased and that by being integrated into a community of entrepreneurs, they will be surrounded by like-minded individuals and have access to all the resources that the Incubator offers to build their businesses to full commercial potential.