

**THE INNOVATION FUND
(TAP) TECHNOLOGY ADVANCEMENT PROGRAMME
EVALUATION TEMPLATE**



Project Number	T50024
Project Title	Pneumatically actuated exercise platform
Evaluator (Title, Name and Surname)	Prof. Kit Vaughan
ID Number	
Indicate whether business or technical evaluator (or both)	Both
Contact telephone number and e-mail	
Place of work	University of Cape Town
Report submission date	4 March 2005

Indicate Evaluation Phase

Evaluation	Mark with an X
1. Pre-Proposal	
2. Site Visit	
3. Presentation	
4. Full Proposal	X

EVALUATION SUMMARY

Rank each criterion on a scale of 1-5

- 1: Poor
- 2: Fair
- 3. Good
- 4. Very Good
- 5. Excellent

The product of the mark and weighting equal a score per criterion

e.g. Mark = 2, Weighting = 20, Score = $2 \times 20 = 40$

Criterion	Mark	Weighting	Score
1. Technology, Novelty	5	30	150
2. Market need, competitiveness and commercialization potential	4	30	120
3. National/Social benefits	4	20	80
4. Consortium	5	20	100
Total		100	450
Overall rating			

Overall Rating

Poor: 100-150

Fair: 151-250

Good: 251-350

Very Good: 351-450

Excellent: 451-500

Please comment on each of the criteria below in relation to the scores allocated (include comments on project risks). The comments recorded below will serve as verbatim feedback to applicants.

1. TECHNOLOGY, NOVELTY

I found the exercise platform, using the bi-directional pneumatic cylinder, to be extremely innovative. While SA provisional patents were taken out in 2003, I wonder if the opportunity still exists for taking out international patents? This was not mentioned in the proposal. While the Data Exercise Management System (DEMS) is also quite novel, I am concerned that the team may have underestimated the effort that will be required to bring this component of the package to market.

2. MARKET NEED/COMPETITIVENESS AND COMMERCIALISATION

It is clear that after the debacle of LeisureNet the gym market in South Africa has been consolidated and has stabilized. While there is certainly a market opportunity for a local equipment manufacturer (look at the relative success of Zest here in Cape Town), it is in the overseas market where a real potential exists. That's going to be a tough nut to crack for a company that does not yet have an established track record.

3. NATIONAL/SOCIAL BENEFITS

This project focuses on exercise which obviously has a huge role to play in the health of the nation. Bringing an innovative product to market in this country will make a significant contribution to those who are fortunate enough to have access, either to private or corporate gyms. Of course, many South Africans will not have this access.

4. CONSORTIUM

I am impressed with the credentials of the principal member of the consortium, ProVecta Fitness Solutions and its head, Mr Newton Fortuin. They have original ideas and have clearly researched their market very thoroughly. In addition, they are black-owned. The other members of the consortium – the Department of Information Technology at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology, the Department of Human Biology at the Sports Science Institute, and the pneumatic equipment supplier FESTO – bring great balance and the correct mix of technical skills, enhancing the likelihood of the project's success.

COMPLETE SECTION 5.1 or 5.2

5.1 Comments in support of the project advancing to the next stage of the business process

Based on the written document, I would certainly recommend that this project go forward to the next stage. If it hasn't already taken place, I would strongly support a site visit at which *all* the consortium members should be given an opportunity to demonstrate what they would be able to contribute to the project.

OR

5.2. Comments in support of the project being rejected at this stage

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6. Highlight any concerns with respect to the project budget

The consortium has asked for the maximum amount provided by the Innovation Fund – R15 million – and I am concerned that no other sources of funding are being sought. I am also skeptical about the income statement where the revenue to be generated from operations will be up to R3m in year 2. This is quite simply unrealistic. In fact, if the revenue projections in years 3, 4 and 5 are met, then the Innovation Fund would probably need to invest far less than R15m. So, as part of a site visit, the financials would need to be thoroughly interrogated.