

## CASE STUDY

## QED BIO-ENTREPRENEUR SCHOOL 2008

**Sunil Kadri**

**OptoSwim Technologies Ltd**

**Glasgow Scotland**

New Zealander Sunil Kadri's marine biology training has taken him through academic study in fish behaviour, development aid work in aquaculture and senior management in the aquaculture technology sector. Sunil's knowledge into the effective rearing of fish has led to the development of a means of promoting sustained optimal swimming in farmed fish to improve production, fish health and product quality. A moving light source introduced into a tank encourages fish to swim at a particular speed – the equivalent to a gym workout!

Sunil decided to apply for a place on the 2008 Bio-Entrepreneur School aware that he already had experience as a bioscientist in business but ready to learn more from the experts and to identify alternative sources of funding.

"I currently support the development of the business through my consultancy work, awaiting the moment we secure significant investment," says Sunil who, along with his business partner Neill Herbert, took the idea through Proof of Concept from 2005 with Glasgow University backing. "The early testing in a tank environment showed huge potential benefits to the fish farming industry. The fish grow faster which reduces the risk of disease; their food conversion is improved thus lowering costs and the overall product quality is improved."

Sunil took advantage of early advice from Scottish Enterprise 'Proof of Concept' fund and the Life Sciences Business Advisory Service. Support has covered IP consultancy and investor readiness and he benefited from a Scottish Government SMART award for an R&D feasibility study. Technical support of this kind has been crucial but where Sunil needs most support now is in the securing of investment funding and the negotiating of the IP licence with the University.

"Nothing prepared me for the frustrations and the amount of time it would take to move the business forward. I now have plenty of experience in pitching to investors but I wanted to see if the Bio-Entrepreneur School could teach me a few new tricks!"

Sunil wasn't disappointed as the 'friendly' Dragons' Den required him to deliver a very short pitch and face questioning which really made him think. As a direct result of the School, he has found a new investor/mentor who happens to be based in Glasgow and he is also clear about his own potential as an entrepreneur.

"I'm a go-it-alone sort of guy. I have plenty of experience but no particular business training. I know that I want to work on an equal footing with a team of business colleagues whose skills compliment mine".

Sunil's advice to other bioscientists looking to venture into business is just as clear. "Ensure you are well aware of the implications of going into business and that you are fully devoted to working in the commercial world. Get all the training and support you can, and ensure you have someone on board as a partner or mentor who has already succeeded in business."