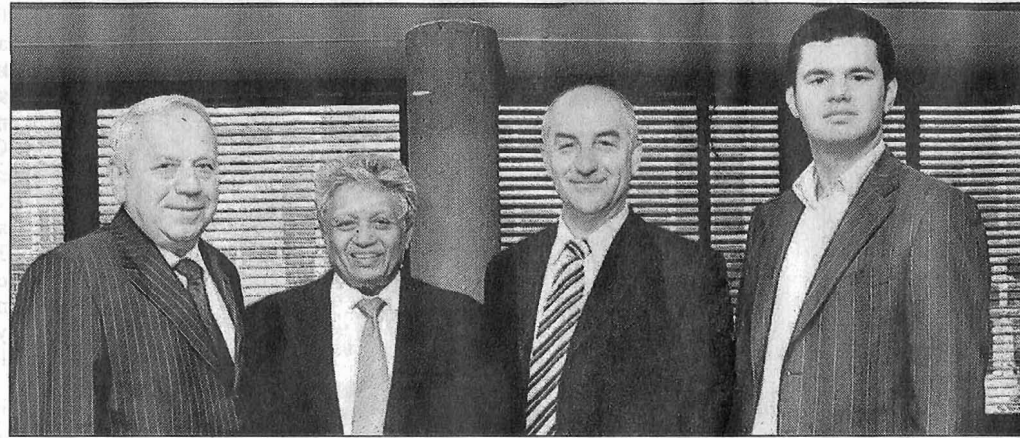


Warwick to sign deal for first science park in Russia

By John Revill
Business Staff



Professor Alexander Gogol, rector of Bonch-Bruevich Saint Petersburg State University of Telecommunications; WMG founder and director Professor Lord Kumar Bhattacharyya; Oleg Zolotokrylin, vice-rector; Pavel Erochkin of the UK Russia Round Table

have come to Warwick because neither our university or Russia as a whole has any experience in setting one up.

"This would be the first technology park in Russia, this will be a pilot project for the country, and we hope to get some experience from Warwick in how to do this." The link came about following a suggestion from Leonid Reiman, the Russian minister for information and technology and communications, who is a graduate of Bonch Bruevich University and who visited WMG in January.

Prof Gogol said setting up the technology park would help the university harness the skills of the people around St Petersburg and develop companies and products. He said: "We have access to the manpower in Russia, there are a lot of resources and people with the skills.

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Professor Gogol

"The sector is quite developed, but we need to see the results of these people, the products of their work. We want to move from making things by hand to the latest technology as well. We hope this connection will help us do this.

"It is true we have strong scientists and scholars, but much of the manufacturing is done in either the Far East or western countries. We need to develop and make our own products. We can make something as a one off, but not in line production. We do not think about the difficulties of the processes and the costs of these products. Now we want to learn how to do that.

"This sector is most important to us." Prof Gogol added he was looking forward to the partnership which would see academics from Warwick visit Russia on

a regular basis. He said: "If we start this co-operation, it could go on for a longer term. We hope to sign a memorandum of understanding, so we can develop the relationship. We are looking for ways how we can help and support each other in the IT community."

The university said it has 45 hectares of free land on which to develop the science park, of which it expects to use 35.

The site could create 10,000 jobs in computer science and communications.

The park is currently under construction, with several firms already signed up to occupy part of it.

Dr David Mullins, director of research at WMG, said: "This will be our first presence in Russia to provide education and R&D for local and global companies. There will be mutual benefit between the universities."

There will be no cost to the UK, said Dr Mullins, with funding coming from the companies being assisted.

"We will agree what the costs are going to be and then both universities will share the profits. It is a good university with R&D opportunities for the strong science base there already is in Russia.

"We work with global companies and support them wherever they are based, this is part of the internationalising of what we do. Knowledge and organisations are global, and we have have to work at a global level, otherwise you can become parochial."

WMG founder and director Professor Lord Kumar Bhattacharyya said: "This new collaboration will benefit both Warwick and Saint Petersburg universities as well as Russian companies and global organisations with a base in Russia."