

Tamana InTech Park: a model for the future of Trinidad & Tobago

T&T LEVERAGES ITS SUCCESS IN ENERGY TOWARDS A FUTURE IN KNOWLEDGE-BASED INDUSTRIES

There is little doubt that Trinidad and Tobago's abundant natural resources have contributed immeasurably to the country's prosperity and position on the world stage during the past century. While other Caribbean nations are known solely as vacation destinations, Trinidad & Tobago has a reputation of also being a serious – and ever growing – centre for business and commerce.

"Two questions are rightly asked of countries like ours that have been blessed with plentiful resources," says Khalid Hassanali, former president of Evolving TecKnologies and Enterprise Development Company Ltd – e Teck – the local state company responsible for leading Trinidad and Tobago's economic diversification through development of the light industrial sector.

"First, how effective are you at leveraging those resources to benefit society? And second, what are you doing to preserve and enrich that which you have been given," he adds.

Since its creation in 2003, e Teck's special focus has been the growth of the non-energy sector and downstream from energy production and export bases. The company manages a series of industrial parks and properties, and owns the lease for the well-known Hilton Trinidad and Conference Centre.

"Energy has obviously generated a great deal of wealth for Trinidad and Tobago, but it has also helped us attract and train great thinkers and build a world-class education system. We are putting all of those strengths and resources to work for an even better future," explains Hassanali, who recently returned

to state oil company Petrotrin following his secondment as President of e Teck.

One e Teck project, in particular, Tamana InTech Park, promises to lead the country's transformation from an energy-based to a knowledge-based economy – and in doing so, demonstrate how business and nature can co-exist. Tamana is designed to strengthen the country's information communication technology (ICT) sector and to attract foreign companies by creating a microcosm of efficiency and connectivity customised specifically for ICT.

Tamana stands out for its cutting-edge technology, tailor-made for cross-linked business opportunities and resource clustering. Situated among moriche palms on a natural reserve, supported by the on-site campus of the University of Trinidad and Tobago (UTT), and fitted out with state-of-the-art telecom and security systems, the Park will be both naturally relevant and technologically advanced.

Even before construction got under way, Tamana attracted interest from a wide variety of potential clients – including software developers, biometrics researchers and business intelligence incubators – because of the Park's many advantages for investors. Trinidad & Tobago's highly educated, English-speaking workforce and global access make it a desirable location for business. Moreover, Tamana's Tier III data centre will be the only one of its kind in the English-speaking Caribbean.

"The focus for Tamana InTech Park is on innovation and best-in-class infrastructure, systems and processes," says Wendy Fitzwilliam, Vice President of Business Development at e Teck,

the Division responsible for promoting Tamana. "The presence of UTT and other businesses will create opportunities for research and development and foster an environment to incubate local innovations and active public-private partnerships."

Leveraging resources, maximising innovation

Tamana, the largest of e Teck's industrial park holdings, occupies 1,100 acres west of Piarco International Airport on the site of the former Wallerfield air base, approximately 45 km from Port of Spain. Tamana is organised into four business clusters, including:

- A computer-related zone that will engage in data processing, software development, programming and business process outsourcing

- A high-value manufacturing zone for technology-based and specialised manufacturing
- An agro-industrial zone catering to food and organic farming, and agro-industrial and forestry activities
- A mixed use services zone providing technical support and maintenance for media consultancy and healthcare

UTT stands ready to apply its capabilities to produce cutting-edge technology and innovation based on indigenous Research and Development. UTT has partnered with international universities, including Johns Hopkins University for biomedical engineering and allied health initiatives; the University of Cambridge's Institute for Manufacturing; the University of Texas, Austin for its energy production and offshore technologies; and the Danish Technical University of Denmark for biotechnology.

With UTT as a partner, businesses at Tamana will have access to the University's intellectual property, leading edge research and development, and quality graduates. A business incubator will help accelerate the development of start-up and fledgeling companies.

Achieving harmony with nature

As part of Tamana InTech Park's vision to achieve harmony between physical development and natural and social environment as the premier eco-industrial park in the region, special focus has been placed on adding value by utilizing ecological spaces. This is symbolised through practical features of sustainable development design and the establishment of a world-class Butterfly Emporium.

The emporium, which will be located on five hectares of land, will operate 365 days a year and will facilitate two live exhibits. The emporium will be in the shape of a typical butterfly, which will allow the park to blend seamlessly into the environment and will be in keeping with the park's eco-friendly appeal. Other features of the emporium include the incorporation of IMAX technology. While contributing to the environment, the



Tamana's eco-friendly design balances physical development with the natural environment

emporium will also add to the work/life balance expected by world-class scientists and researchers.

Perfectly positioned to lead

In a nation-by-nation overall infrastructure comparison, Trinidad & Tobago ranks among the best in the Caribbean in terms of ICT sector readiness and growth. Strategic initiatives are focused on making this country the leader in ICT Services in the region, and on providing e-Government services to local and international businesses and investors. Trinidad & Tobago's leaders also point to a number of advantages for companies looking to site in the country, including a well educated, English-speaking population, a prime position at the crossroads of North and South America, one of the lowest energy rates in the world and plans already in progress for extensive transformation of the country's physical infrastructure.

The designers of Tamana are proud of the balance struck between a commitment to being a world-class Park and a promise to protect and promote the world's resources. "That balance is important to us," adds Hassanali. "We want partners who share the same values."

To learn more, visit www.tamana.tt or call +1 868-638-0055. □



Spearheading T&T's transformation from an energy-based to a knowledge-based economy