

Thimphu TechPark, Bhutan's First IT Park



Thimphu TechPark (TTP) is the flagship IT development in the Kingdom of Bhutan, a kingdom located on the lap of the Eastern Himalayas, known for its strong environmental conservation policies and the unique development philosophy of Gross National Happiness. It is the country's first IT Park - promoted by the Department of Information Technology & Telecom, Ministry of Information & Communications, Royal Government of Bhutan, supported by the World Bank and developed jointly by Assetz Property Group of Singapore, a leading development management corporation focused on South Asia, and Druk Holdings & Investments.

The project is located in Thimphu, Bhutan's capital and is being developed as a 250,000 square feet IT-focused mixed use development spread over 18 acres. The first phase of the project which became operational from May 2012 comprises 50,000 square feet of IT office and data centre space. 10,000 square feet of space in Phase 1 has already been absorbed by the Royal Government of Bhutan to house Bhutan Innovation and Technology Centre, which is an initiative to promote innovation and entrepreneurship in the country.



What does Thimphu TechPark have to offer?

- TTP offers a range of business benefits to occupiers - predominant amongst them being stable, power supply; ample Internet & telecom infrastructure, strong local talent base and governmental support.
- TTP offers Grade A infrastructure and amenities to occupants, such as redundancy in mains and back-up power, with power available at under 30% of the cost in other parts of the region. TTP also offers high-capacity dual feed internet connectivity through redundant optical fibre connectivity.
- Thimphu TechPark has achieved a pre-certification for LEED Platinum from USGBC, and processes are underway for obtaining the LEED Platinum Certification.
- Bhutan has a highly educated base of manpower, who are able to deliver high quality solutions for the IT / ITES and BPO sectors. Most Bhutanese youth also have strong English language skills and can act as a strong resource base for diverse industries, including BPO.
- TTP has been designed to capture, promote and enhance the inherent resources of the Kingdom - including physical infrastructure, natural resources and human capital, thereby offering a powerful combination of key success factors.
- TTP is positioned to attract local and international occupiers as a unique premises solution through flexible occupation structures - leases or licences, long or short term, serviced office style or traditional warm shell.
- TTP also has a mixed-use Incubation centre as part of Bhutan Innovation and Technology Centre to promote start-ups by Bhutanese IT professionals / entrepreneurs.

In addition, the amenities provided at the Park ensure the creation of a world-standard business estate:

- Video-conferencing Centre: a powerful collaboration solution for occupiers of the Park as well as the broader Bhutan business community to connect with companies around the world in a cost effective and eco-sensitive manner
- Cafeteria & Coffee Shop space for collaboration and interactions
- Pan-park wireless LAN
- Shared conference centre to allow small businesses to have benefit of larger space for training, customer presentations
- Online centralized services to external vendors to allow for printing, courier, refreshments, transport services

Governmental Incentives for IT/ITES companies at Thimphu TechPark

- A tax holiday of ten years from the actual date of the commercial operation/production of goods and services, to the IT/ITES businesses operating within the IT Park and exporting 80% of their products/services. Tax holiday shall be applicable only those IT/ITES businesses operating exclusively from the IT Park at Wangchutaba, Thimphu.
- Import of capital goods forming direct inputs for the IT/ITES companies in the IT Park shall be exempted from customs duty and sales tax, subject to the production of a valid exemption certificate issued by the Department of Revenue and Customs at the point of entry.
- IT/ITES businesses/companies as defined within the purview of the IT Park shall be exempt from TDS (Tax deducted at source) for the duration of the Tax Holiday.
- 100% foreign equity participation shall be permitted for the IT/ITES companies in the IT Park.
- Flexibility to obtain investment capital globally after obtaining prior permission of the Ministry of Finance/Royal Monetary Authority.
- Export earnings in convertible currency by IT business/companies operating from the park shall be exempted from tax for the duration of Tax Holiday.
- Application for Tax Holiday must be submitted to the Regional Revenue and Customs Office concerned in prescribed form duly certified by Department of IT and Telecom, within one month from the date of commercial operation.

Bhutan Innovation and Technology Centre



The Bhutan Innovation and Technology Centre (BITC), located on the ground floor of the Thimphu TechPark, is the first of its kind in Bhutan. It is a pioneering initiative of the Department of IT and Telecom, ministry of Information and Communications, financed by the World Bank/International Finance Corporation through its *Bhutan PrivateSectorDevelopment Project*. The Department of IT and Telecom has leased the management of the BITC through a public-private partnership (design-build-operate-transfer) model to Thimphu TechPark Private Limited.

The BITC comprises three pillars: a Business Incubator, a Shared Technology Centre and a Data Centre. The BITC will contribute to the economic and social development of Bhutan by supporting and facilitating high potential individuals and start-ups to grow into successful businesses.

The **Business Incubator** provides the ideal environment for the start-up and development of Bhutan's enterprises of tomorrow. It provides rental space, business services, mentoring, networking and access to financing for incubatee firms. As a mixed-use incubator, all innovative start-ups and existing firms are welcome to apply, so too are international joint ventures with Bhutanese partners.

The **Shared Technology Centre** offers comprehensive facilities to all businesses and entrepreneurs in Bhutan including first class meeting and conference rooms, various short training courses, networking events and product launches. The meeting and conference rooms offer state of the art facilities for professionals looking for a venue in Thimphu. The cafeteria

provides a central, convivial atmosphere for business meetings and collaboration between Bhutan's best entrepreneurs.

The **Data Centre** provides data storage and management services for government, for occupants of Thimphu TechPark and for third party commercial users. It has been designed and built as a multi-tier facility - tier 2 and above, closely following TIA 942-2005 standards. It conforms to exacting international standards, while at the same time ensuring that it will have minimal adverse impact on our environment. The Data Centre harnesses the innate advantages of Bhutan - the abundance of low cost sustainable green hydropower in the country, and low cooling costs due to its year-round cool climate, two major cost factors in data centre operations, to deliver a global standard facility which will rank amongst the best in the region.

The Bhutan Innovation and Technology Centre marks an important step forward in the private sector development efforts of the Bhutanese government. It serves as a hub for entrepreneurship, innovation and enterprise creation in Bhutan; a vital ingredient for sustainable economic growth, job creation and Gross National Happiness in the country.

BITC Overseas Expert Programme

Bhutan Innovation and Technology Centre is looking for international experts to live and work in Thimphu as a part of its Overseas Expert Programme.

To gain access to international experience and mentoring, BITC runs an *Overseas Expert Programme (OEP)*. The objective of this programme is to facilitate training and teaching of the Bhutanese business community by visiting experts in subject areas relevant to business entrepreneurship, technology, management, sustainability and development areas.

The OEP is an initiative where non-Bhutanese experts are given the opportunity to work based in the BITC for a period of 3-6 months and, in return, these experts share their knowledge and experience through mentoring and coaching of Bhutanese entrepreneurs operating in the BITC Business Incubator.

This initiative is open to individuals of all ages, with a clearly proven skill or expertise in particular subject area. BITC is looking for open, collaborative and experienced business people who can help develop local Bhutanese entrepreneurs and link Bhutan up with international stakeholders.

Being an open and collaborative working environment, overseas experts are expected to contribute to this environment. Overseas experts are expected to share their experience and advice with Bhutanese entrepreneurs operating out of the BITC Business Incubator and in this way, build a more entrepreneurial and innovative culture in both BITC and Bhutan at large.

Candidates express their interest in joining the *BITC Overseas Expert Programme* by submitting a Letter of Motivation and CV on the BITC website at <http://www.thimphutechpark.com/bitc>

Contact details and further information

For further information, please contact:

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Websites:

Thimphu TechPark: <http://www.thimphutechpark.com>

Bhutan Innovation and Technology Centre : <http://www.thimphutechpark.com/bitc>

Data Centre Services : <http://www.dcs.bt>

Department of IT and Telecom: <http://www.dit.gov.bt>

Information on Bhutan's macroeconomic policies and details on Bhutan as a business destination can be found at <http://www.moea.gov.bt>
