



SCRI

Structure for Commercialisation of Rural Innovation

In rural areas many of the elements required for the successful generation and growth of SMEs are missing. The components required for the development process are often available, but not in one place, and the skills and experience may be distributed both geographically and sectorally. Often good, viable and innovative ideas are stalled due to lack of a unified approach to the process of valorisation. This innovative project aims to exchange skills and experience between research institutions, academia and the public and private sectors, in order to create a more dynamic use of the skills that are used for the sustainable exploitation of innovative ideas. Mechanisms will be devised to improve access for companies in the target region to academic and public sector expertise, in order to improve competitiveness and regional attractiveness through exploitation of information systems technology, and the new networking business culture. The project will create a pool of relevant opportunities and through spin-out activity will demonstrate, by creating new businesses, a sustainable approach to the creation and support of new and developing rural companies.



Objectives

The main objective is to enhance the competitiveness of companies through creating the innovation support structures required for improving their production-related conditions. There are 3 main objectives within the project:

- The sharing of specialist skills that exist in the partner countries and sectors to generate a clearer understanding of the combined best practice for the delivery of the support structures
- The generation and maintenance of a pool of viable and sustainable business ideas suitable for implementation by rural business and service providers
- The demonstration of the results of this knowledge exchange by the launching of 4 viable and sustainable companies using the results of R+D.

Project activities

The project will work in three main strands with the experience of each partner contributing to the end results.

- The first area of work is based on the valorisation of the expertise and know-how of Oulu University, acquired in similar collaborative projects with the Oulu high-technology cluster, for the benefit of the diverse production companies in the target region. This will result in enhanced competitiveness and new jobs through improved approaches to production and logistic chains, effective exploitation of ICT opportunities, and full utilization of the Oulu University and peer expertise in the context of a new, sustained and network-based business culture.
- Secondly, the dissemination of the expertise of Bodo Graduate School of Business in the training, development and support of entrepreneurs. The encouragement of entrepreneurialism is a fundamental requirement if new opportunities and innovative ideas are to be exploited.
- Thirdly Highlands and Islands Enterprise in partnership with the UHI millennium Institute will provide experience in the delivery of networked support to rural communities and, through the creation of an ICT research institute, will put in place a centre which can be used as the focal point for the matching of new innovative ideas to the best education and exploitation network

Expected results

The main outcome to be expected is a shared activity model or local business culture, tailored for the situation in the area and shaped by the participant companies, where it is possible to recognise the developmental challenges and meet them through networking.

During a series of meetings in each country a process of skills exchange and project monitoring will be undertaken. The final meeting will encompass a conference that will present the experiences of the project, the sustained valorisation of innovative ideas and the provision of the required business skills. The network of skills created in the project will be published and disseminated throughout the region. The maintenance and dissemination of this knowledge base will be the hub of a wide network of experts and support organisations. Such an organisation with membership throughout the Northern Periphery will act as a conduit for the continued dissemination of methods, links to central markets and business opportunities.

Partners

Learning and Research Services, Oulu University - Finland
Kunnskaparken Bodø A/S - Norway
Uminovacenter - Sweden

Project website

<http://www.scri.eu.com>

Measure

2.2

Total Budget

930 175

NPP Award

495 075

Project Period

01/02/2003 – 31/01/2005

Countries Involved

Scotland, Finland, Norway, Sweden

Lead Partner

Organisation

Highlands and Islands
Enterprise
+ 44 8700 636 300

Project leader

Ken Abraham
ken@pict.org.uk