



NEWSLETTER
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gadget



Good Practice Pilot Action for Innovative Industries: Education, Training and Exploitation

WELCOME TO THE NEWSLETTER FOR THE GADGET PROJECT!



GADGET CAFE OPEN SPACE EVENT, AUSTRIA

The region of Fürstenfeld is losing every year hundreds of young, well-educated people due to emigration (brain drain). Despite the good education, it is very difficult for them to find appropriate jobs. Against the backdrop of this situation, the Start-up & Service Centre of Fürstenfeld invited student, inside teacher and entrepreneurs to an "open space event" on the 29th of April 2014, with

the aim to develop solutions in order to strengthen the region for the long term

One day in Fürstenfeld, one general theme, no fixed agenda, coffee-house atmosphere. Under the working title "active contribution to our active future - the future, we create together", several working groups discussed the central question: "What should we initiate in the region today to create better jobs for tomorrow?"

First concrete and sustainable action steps for common issues and future projects have been gathered in small groups and subsequently presented and discussed in a forum. To emphasize the working group "job / market / economy", one particular question has been developed: What kind of incentives does the region offer to companies in order to settle or to increase their site? Anyway, integrative education and infrastructure play a decisive role in the region. The main developed idea in this context could be summarized as following:

the establishment of new businesses from existing regional companies

through outsourcing of know-how, patents or product ideas (eg unused patents of the company Secop). In a long term this could lead to a new clustering.

In the frame of this event, the Lifelong Learning Project GADGET (Good Practice Pilot Action for Innovative Industries) with a focus on training for SMEs also used this occasion to introduce the project (gaining an insight into the European project landscape) and the planned 3-days trainings for employees in the field of energy and environment to the young participants. Ingrid Kienberger from RUN cared for the 4th GADGET Café and provided the participants with the latest news concerning the project. Therefore she could promote the first thematic workshop on methods of customer loyalty and analysis of market maturity, which will take place on 4th of June 2014 at the FH JOANNEUM. In the end, the German futurologist Erik Händeler closed the event with a lecture on the subject of "the future is ours". He argues that a "culture of collaboration" will be a cornerstone for prosperity in the future.



SANTANDER GADGET CAFE

GCU & SANTANDER UNIVERSITIES SCHOLARS AND ENTREPRENEURIAL RECEPTION

On Thursday 6th March 2014, Glasgow Caledonian University hosted a reception to celebrate a new agreement with Santander Universities. Glasgow Caledonian University are proud to be part of the prestigious Santander Universities Network. Over the years our partnership has benefited hundreds of staff and students at GCU thanks to funding for outstanding students and projects, help to encourage and inspire future entrepreneurs, and the opportunity for students and staff to travel abroad to continue their studies or further their careers.



Speaking on the night were Santander funded research interns who presented a current picture of the enterprise and entrepreneurial activity, and support, within GCU. The concept of an on-site incubator to support student and graduate business was well-received, and funding was secured to create an on-line self evaluation tool to direct enterprising students and graduates to the most appropriate external support mechanisms.

The event, which provided an informal networking opportunity was attended by Santander representatives, university faculty, students, graduates, and local SMEs including the Glasgow partner - AppleGreen Homes. The event was an opportunity for GCU partners of GADGET to explain the project and open discussion with a variety of critical stakeholders on the importance of entrepreneurial skills in current students and graduates.

RESEARCH DAY

GLASGOW CALEDONIAN UNIVERSITY ANNUAL RESEARCH DAY 2014



On Friday 6 June 2014, Glasgow Caledonian University held a research day which featured public talks, interactive displays and meet the expert opportunities. There was a central exhibition area, featuring guest speakers, but events were held across the entire campus, reflecting all GCU's unique research strengths.



Members from the Europe Office in GCU proudly displayed the publications from the GADGET project at the event which was open to the general public. The Europe Office develops and supports EU and international engagement opportunities in research, innovation, knowledge transfer, mobility and exchange.

INTERVIEW WITH A CLUSTER ORGANIZATION

ECO WORLD STYRIA (ECO)

ECO is focusing on the strengthening of cooperation between universities and companies. Permanent qualification for employees and know-how transfer between the organisations is essential for business success. The initiation of cooperative projects for products, processes and services in the energy and environmental business is the aim.

What is the organization?

■ ECO is the supporting organisation of the economic-political initiative in the areas of energy and environmental engineering of the province of Styria. In the Green Tech Valley more than 170 members from industry and science work on the innovations of tomorrow in the strength fields of biomass, solar

What does it do?

■ ECO offers a wide range of services, including the following:
Strategy support: consulting on the subjects of national and international markets, technologies and cooperation.

Innovation support: initiation of Technology Roundtables with experts from industry and science, evaluation of potential for innovations, identification of companies and project development.

Funding support: identify appropriate funding for projects and provide an exclusive funding map or select investors for environmental engineering innovations.

Public relation spreading technologies and innovations of the Green Tech Valley worldwide through newsletters, Green Tech Magazine, website and media work.

Networking: cluster events for members and community, networking with experts from science and industry, organisation of delegation journeys and fact-finding missions over the globe.

Where did the idea come from?

■ Between 1998 and 2004, the forerunner project Eco & Co was implemented by TRIGON Development Consulting. At the beginning of 2005, the successful network was upgraded, "Umwelttechnik-Netzwerkbetriebs GmbH" was founded, and the "ECO WORLD STYRIA" brand established. In 2009, the new Strategy 2010+ was developed.

Do you have a vision?

■ ECO is aiming at the so called "E-C-O 20-20-20" vision:

- E "Employment": increase in the number of employees in Styrian environmental engineering companies to 20,000.
- C "Competence": roughly doubling of the number of Styrian technology leaders to 20.
- O "On top": increase the international presentations in the media and at trade fairs to around 20 per year.

Have you ever worked with a university?

■ Yes. ECO coordinates the Styrian Research Association "Green Tech Research Styria". More than 1.200 researchers work in the main topic "Smart Environmental Living". ECO cooperates permanently with the universities and universities of applied science in different projects and in the organisation team of a network event for industry and science.

Do you believe that university-company collaborations are important for mutual benefit?

■ Yes, on the one hand scientific solutions are generated at universities, which are essential for innovative products and processes of tomorrow. On the other hand the companies can discuss their demand on R&D directly with the researcher. So they will get new ideas and improve the output of the project and business success.

How would you assess the level of cooperation between universities and companies in Austria? How could it be enhanced?

■ The R&D quota in Austria is 2.8%. In Styria this quota with 4.7% is very high compared to other regions in Europe with 4.7% very high, which underlines the importance of research in the Green Tech Valley. Networking and the commitment for cooperation are well established. To enhance cooperation the financing and funding systems for projects have to be improved. SMEs should also be stronger motivated and supported to cooperate with universities.

What advice would you give to someone thinking of creating a business start up in the Energy and Environment Sector?

■ The start-up should identify the demand for a new and innovative business idea – a new product in a niche or new service – first! A realistic business model is essential. The market conditions in the region and in an international context have to be analysed. Who are the competitors? What does the future customer need and what does the customer want to pay for the products/service.



INTERVIEW WITH A CLUSTER ORGANIZATION CNTD >>

Especially the financing of the first years of the start-up have to be secured and possible partners or mentors have to be found.

What are the challenges of being an SME in your country?

■ In Austria and especially in Styria there is a culture of SMEs. The tradition and spirit of family businesses and short ways of making decisions make SMEs more flexible than bigger companies. But the customer structures have changed and for staying successful regional businesses have to be expanded to international dimensions. Therefore SMEs have to be supported in international marketing, strategy development and in finding strong international acting partners.

What key skills do you feel graduates need in the current market?

■ Graduates have to be more flexible in the choice of the country. Internationalization is dominating and companies need employees, who are able and willing to move. Graduates should focus on results, be creative in finding solutions and self-confident in making decisions. In projects different parties, like colleagues, supplier, customer, are involved and graduates have to learn the "language" of the others to act successful and without troubles.

What skills would you look for in a graduate employee?

■ For our organisation the innovative spirit of an employee is very important and the qualification for project development is essential. Communication skills for successful networking and creativity in finding solutions for cluster members are necessary. Flexibility belongs to the daily business and a high motivation to reach the aims is a self-evident requirement.

TRAINING SESSION AT FH JOANNEUM

First training session conducted at FH JOANNEUM on the topic of "Methods of customer loyalty & analysis of market maturity"- 04/06/2014

Within the scope of the Specific Collaboration Schemes developed in the GADGET project, FH JOANNEUM decided to offer three free training courses to SME industry members on various topics to foster university-industry collaborations. The first training took place on June 4th, 2014 with 10 SME representatives from various industries in attendance.

The afternoon was opened by Mag. (FH) Lisa Mahajan and Mag. Rene Wenzel, who introduced the GADGET project to the attendees and explained the purpose of the trainings. The 6-unit training session was led by the experienced marketing lecturers Mag. Hildegard Liebl and Mag. Ing. Denny Seiger, who varied between direct lectures and interactive group exercises to enhance the learning effects of the participants.

Specific topics covered included external and internal marketing analysis tools, experience curve analysis and the Stage-Gate model among many others. Participants were able to ask direct questions about their own enterprises and receive advice on how to handle specific situations. The trainers and participants entered into lively discussions that went beyond the GADGET project and revolved around collaboration in the fields of bachelor papers or student projects. Feedback collected at the end of the training session showed a general satisfaction and a willingness to return for the other events.

It is furthermore planned to conduct a training session on June 26th, 2014 on the topic of "Internationalization, Development of market understanding and market potential analysis" and one on July 3rd, 2014 on the topic of "Project management, planning & controlling of R&D projects".



Lifelong
Learning
Programme



<http://www.gadget-project.eu>

