



**ENRD Coordination Committee**  
**Focus Group**  
**Knowledge Transfer & Innovation**

**ANNEX 2**

**Phase 2 Study Material &  
Information on Actors Supporting  
Innovation**

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**Important notice:** The case studies described in the current Annex do not necessarily correspond to or describe actual examples of innovation brokers. The case studies primarily refer to actors involved in supporting innovation, mainly but not exclusively in agriculture, and whose experience was considered by the Focus Groups as relevant to inform on how to improve the effectiveness of innovation brokerage.

## 1. BIO-COMPETENCE CENTRE OF HEALTHY DAIRY PRODUCTS, ESTONIA

### General information

**Country:** Estonia

**Innovation actor concerned:** Private company established on December 2004 by the Estonian companies and universities in compliance with the national Competence Centre Programme.

**Web link:** <http://www.tptak.ee/>

**Funding source(s):** The Competence Centre (CC) is co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund.

**Field / domain of activity; expertise:** The Bio-Competence Centre of Healthy Dairy Products studies the possibilities of biotechnological altering of milk production and biotechnological processing of milk as a healthy and irreplaceable foodstuff.

**Are there any other actors/partners involved in the provision of services supporting innovation and how they are organised amongst themselves (form of the partnership):** The shareholders of the Centre are the University of Tartu, the Estonian University of Life Sciences, Starter Ltd., Dairy Cooperative E-Milk and the Animal Breeders Association of Estonia.

### Activities

**Summary description of the actor's profile (e.g. experience, understanding of the agricultural and rural environment, communication capacities, market issues) and services offered (mission):**

The Bio-Competence Centre of Healthy Dairy Products is committed to act as a widely recognized interdisciplinary technological development centre for milk - an irreplaceable food product and valuable biological raw material. The focus of the CC is on cooperating with milk producers and processors which are engaged in applied research and technological development of projects aiming at providing consumers with highest quality and healthy dairy products.

Synergy benefits are expected to materialize as the biotechnological competence is integrated with agriculture and food industry. CC's projects combine the efforts of cattle breeders and geneticists, animal feeding scientists, microbiologists, milk technologists, nutritionists and biochemists, to cover the entire chain of production of milk, starting from cattle breeding up to making healthy milk products.

### Views and suggestions on success factors for effective innovation brokering

**What is the necessary skillset of the innovation broker?** Innovation brokers have an important role in driving projects. It is important to have communication skills, knowledge of the specific field, organizing experience.

**What are the enabling conditions offered by the policy environment at national and EU level (or not offered and therefore that should be created)?**

There is the possibility to apply the subsidy for cooperation projects under the National Rural Development Plan. Cooperation projects may include the following:

- Comparative studies carried out to estimate the suitability of technologies, varieties and breeds;

- Applied research focused on the production and processing of agricultural and forestry products;
- Product development focused on the production and processing of agricultural and forestry products;
- Under measure 1.7.1 support has been granted to 26 projects of a total €5,423,349.

It is also possible to apply the innovation voucher subsidy via Enterprise Estonia.

Innovation voucher subsidy is co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund. The budget of the programme during the EU budget period 2007-2013 is €2.9 million. By using the innovation voucher subsidy and in cooperation with universities, experimental laboratories or holders of a SMEs can study innovative solutions to obstacles to development, test new materials, collect knowledge about technologies, study intellectual property databases etc. Supported activities:

- Consulting on product or service development;
- Consulting on work organisation, production or technology;
- Development and introduction of design solutions;
- Performance of feasibility study;
- Performance of compatibility and product application tests;
- Legal protection consultation, regarding patents, utility models or industrial design;
- Registration of patents, utility models or industrial design.

## 2. KATILU, SPACES AND DYNAMICS FOR THE INNOVATION, SPAIN

### General information

**Country:** Spain / Basque Region

**Innovation actor concerned:** Combined Innovation Unit: "Public-private consortium". Katilu was born on September 8, 2011, being formalized through the collaboration agreement between the Basque Government (Department of Competitiveness and Economic Development, Deputy Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Policy), Innobasque, Hazi (IKT, Itxasmendikoi and Kalitatea Foundation) NEIKER-Tecnalia and AZTI-Tecnalia.

**Web link:** <http://www.katilu.net/>

**Funding source(s):** 50,000 euros for ordinary activities. Additional budget for cooperation projects quantifying the amount in each case.

**Field / domain of activity; expertise:** Katilu was established with two objectives:

- a. Strengthen and promote cooperation between the different stakeholders in the sector and the environment, promoting innovation projects in cooperation and the creation of partnerships.
- b. Improving the competitiveness of the agri-food, rural and marine sector of the Basque Country.

**Are there any other actors/partners involved in the provision of services supporting innovation and how they are organised amongst themselves (form of the partnership):**

Katilu is an initiative of public-private partnership promoted by the Basque Government, launched in cooperation between INNOBASQUE, HAZI, NEIKER and AZTI.

### Activities

**Summary description of the actor's profile (e.g. experience, understanding of the agricultural and rural environment, communication capacities, market issues) and services offered (mission):**

Katilu is a place for all, people and organisations, who want to learn, contribute and actively participate in cooperation in the development of the food sector and rural and marine environments. *It is a multidisciplinary, multi-agent space where the protagonist is diversity.*

It is diversity what guarantees the experience, knowledge of rural and agricultural environments, communication skills and the ability to identify market challenges. Moreover, the diversity of its members and the consequent experience and knowledge of other sectors facilitates hybridization of knowledge and technology and maximum capillarisation in the detection of the needs to be converted into innovation ideas, and communication.

Katilu has a significant social capital. Currently there are over 80 agents and around 300 people participating in different initiatives. The services offered emerge from the meaning of Innovation that inspires Katilu. The services go beyond what THAT is, the difference is HOW it is done.

Lead the transformation of ideas into value. For this purpose, Katilu's activity is oriented to:

1. *Generate dynamic environments* for individuals and organizations to develop their creativity and innovation ("prepare the ground and the people"), in order to generate the basic conditions for people and organizations to innovate in cooperation.

2. *Promote the generation of ideas and ensure their treatment ("seed")*, systematizing generating ideas (on issues and political strategy with future emerging trends and issues of concern in the sector), and defining a method of analysis to ensure the rapid implementation of the most interesting ideas.
3. *Turning ideas into projects*, accelerating the transfer of ideas, technology and knowledge between agents for production of products, services or innovative processes ("harvest"), ensuring that good ideas become results (product, service, process, organization, new businesses), accelerating this process and optimising the transfer of research results.

*How we do it?:* Printing to the dynamics a relationship style that allows:

- *Feeling different* from the positive emotion;
- Transforming problems and resolving conflictive situations;
- *Making different* through collaboration;
- *Thinking differently* from openness and curiosity.
- *Communicating differently* through listening, conversation and being action orientated.

### **Description of process steps and facilitation methods of the innovation processes:**

Katilu characterizes its activity around three totally independent concepts:

- *Community (Katilu BOX)*: identifying and characterizing the existing expertise in the sector, sharing and creating spaces and dynamics that favour and virtual communication, mutual understanding and transparency between the different agents.
- *Learning (Katilu OPEN)*: participatory workshops and meetings that promote the exchange of knowledge between people and organizations, mutual learning, sharing concerns, ideas generation and the proposed cooperation projects. Learning can occur in several ways, complementary and not mutually exclusive: experts (lectures, conferences, lectures), own experience (self-learning, trial and error, experimentation) and between equals (exchange of experiences and contributions among equals).
- *Cooperation (COOP Katilu)*: teamwork oriented innovation projects to enrich and challenge the development of new cooperation projects.

All KATILU innovation projects must meet several premises: must have a sponsor; must be engaged; should include the perspective of sustainable development and should add value to the business model. For the generation and exchange of ideas participation sessions are organized aimed at different topics, which are agreed at the Monitoring Committee. The topics can be:

1. Issues lines / strategic plans defined in Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry Plans. The objectives follow sectorial programming, target the value chain, with the cooperation or inter-organizational innovation, market, process or product; serve to address some of the weaknesses of the different sector or subsectors;
2. Emerging strategic issues and future or actual potentially strategic issues and issues with impact in the areas or sectors;
3. Other topics proposed by agents in the sector.

Depending on the issues concerned participation sessions may rely exclusively on agents of a particular subsector or be cross sectorial, and include agents from different subsectors. In both cases, is better to try to have representatives from all links in the value chain and external experts in the sector.

The *transformation in cooperation projects* can be classified into two types. In any case, is a fundamental requirement that the results of cooperative projects transcend the sector.

1. *Enrichment Projects.* A promoter or else an "owner" brings the need and is the responsible of finding resources. His proposal is enriched by the contributions and testing of individuals and organizations connected to Katilu, acting as partners.
2. *Innovation projects in cooperation.* Arises as an interest of a group of people or organizations to create a new solution, experience or methodology. Finally, a multi-partner project is set-up.

### **What works well in supporting innovative actions and the establishment of partnerships?**

1. *Solid bases.* For an innovation broker it is essential to have solid bases. To achieve this, in the beginning stage, we consider two fundamental elements: *Raising the rapprochement and connection* to/from different agents of the agri-food sector and rural and marine environments. *Generate different spaces* to offer to the agents the possibility to experience exchange, new ways of doing and working and of checking for themselves the value that can bring working in cooperation.
2. *Practice and transmit values, attitudes and behaviours.* Mutual respect, transparency, humility, action orientation, desire to transform situations, affection for the people and what is done, creative thinking, resilience, tolerance for ambiguity, ability to learn, to listen...
3. *Recognition.* The institutional recognition of the Innovation Broker facilitates the approaching of the different stakeholders. It also seems necessary and very important for the Innovation Broker to maintain its own style and autonomy. The relationship with the institutions should be a mutual cooperation relationship.
4. *Neutral Space.* Innovation requires connecting diversity and search common understanding spaces and advancement between divergent positions.
5. *People, regardless of hierarchies.* Transform certain patterns of representation and hierarchies. Participation in the dynamics of innovation should be voluntary for both individuals and organizations. Working this culture of innovation implies putting people at the centre, regardless of hierarchical role within the respective organizations who transform ideas into new businesses, new products and services or improve existing ones. To try to obtain these results it is important to focus on the innovation triangle-person-organization, promoting contexts and a learning framework to facilitate people to display their abilities.
6. *Focus.* To have a clear focus where the dynamics must be applied. In short, that the innovation broker answers to a need, a problem or a real concern.
7. *Sense.* Give to the dynamics a meaning, a purpose. Clarify why and for what it is going to work in the selected specific topic.
8. *Transparency.* Clarifying the framework and / or the conditions under which invites participation and collaboration, so that people and organizations can decide whether or not to engage. Sometimes there are limits, uncertainties, ambiguities... and you have to be aware of them and put them on the table.

9. *Vision.* Integrating vision for the future with short-term action. Avoid "*paralysis by analysis*" while avoiding the meaningless action for action.
10. *Methodology.* Provide methodology and experience oriented to innovation; creation and dynamization of networking, participatory dynamics, and management of the environmental knowledge.
11. *Technical support.* Funding sources, political and legal knowledge, and technological support.

**What are the constraints, difficulties or obstacles that have been encountered and how they were overcome?**

Individuals and organizations:

1. *The confusion and lack of shared meaning of the concept of innovation, especially for what it is useful for.* Depending on the case start by sharing what it means to innovate, in other cases not to mention innovation, lead changes, have the experience and then realize that it is to innovate.
2. *The hierarchy and the current organizational dynamics provide little support, and even hinder the participation of people who would like to be working in such processes.* Awareness and high-level work that really allows propose incorporating new dynamics as "each person can spend X% of their time to participate in innovation dynamics".
3. *Mental barriers to change.* Push people and organizations to experience the feeling of change, or to test it with a pilot innovation project.
4. *Each one sees only his own vision.* To share different perspectives and generating shared visions. Moving from the individual and partial view to the complete global view.
5. *"I have no time to innovate".* Causing reflection "how you spend your personal, professional, or organizational team time?", and realize that we lose time unproductively (complaining, unproductive criticizing...) we can devote to search different ways of doing things. It is also important for people to live the experience of innovation and see for themselves the time spent and the return you get on learning, knowledge and results.
6. *Effect "Golum: this is mine". Fear of sharing knowledge and experiences.* Generate successful experiences and visualize the value and potential of the results set when shared.
7. *Lack of real mutual understanding of what is being done,* conversations, sharing experiences and knowledge as a starting point before starting any project.

Related to the focus. What innovate and how?

1. *Put focus on complex problems without knowing the solution is scary.* Innovation means changing, and changing in collaboration implies that a priori the destination is not guaranteed. It will reach somewhere and, if done right, will be the people who have built the team, not what you want against the opinion of others. A broker must be willing to think and find new solutions that integrate the expectations and needs of the people involved, beyond the work sharing solutions that are usually found, and which are not sustainable for long periods.
2. *Bottom up - Top down dilemma.* Be aware of the tension between responding to the needs of industry and the deployment of strategic decisions; try to see that it is something constructive rather than a threat. Promote opportunities for further listening, connecting, and projects of public-private partnership.



## Views and suggestions on success factors for effective innovation brokering

### What is the necessary skillset of the innovation broker?

#### Personal skills and skills:

- Vision and direction;
- Orientation to action;
- Creative way of thinking;
- Be tactful and build trust;
- Negotiation capacity in the public and private sectors;
- Listen and watch for signs in the environment;
- Socio-emotional skills (especially autonomy and self-motivation, empathy, listening, social skills, social awareness);
- Access to the necessary equipment for innovation;
- Revitalization of networks and communities.

#### Challenges faced by an innovation broker:

- *Onward, ever forward.* Advance means to dare and to learn to change (think, feel, do and communicate different);
- *Real commitment to transformation.* Become aware of the necessity and complementarity exploitation dynamics (related to the management and day to day) and exploration (related to innovation and future construction of);
- *Provide methodology and experience to stimulate and facilitate work in teams of innovation in networks and communities;*
- *Enable dynamic mechanisms for self-knowledge and mutual understanding* of people and organizations own innovation ecosystem and environment;
- *Close the circle of innovation with the generation of evidence and documentation to extract and share learning, experiences and knowledge.* This promotes improvement in a new cycle and packetization and subsequent supply of these services;
- *Sustainability of network innovation communities* which leads to the need to find ways of providing: Effectiveness of dynamics, access to diverse funding resources, wealth creation and return to the inversion;
- *Reflection and learning for the coordination and stimulation of innovation ecosystems.* There are no magic recipes, but necessary ingredients: purpose, persistence, self-reliance, flexibility, trust, integrity, enthusiasm, work, effort, commitment, patience, resilience, cooperation, action... *"If it doesn't hurt you're not innovating!"*;
- *Sharing and transferring lessons learnt* and ways of making this experience useful to facilitators in other organizations and networks promoting, streamlining and coordinating learning dynamics or / and innovation in cooperation both in organizations and in networks and communities. And learn from them!

**What are (if any) the specific needs of the single actors to enable an effective performance (e.g. in terms of capacity building, training, funding etc.)? Who should be addressing these needs?**

*During the innovation process:*

- Focus and clarity of the framework of possibilities for action;
- Organization of the agenda. Give time and commitment to innovation. Include innovation on their agenda, which means that we must see that this is important and it's the future;
- Training in work in innovation oriented working teams, to be aware of what it means to work in a team oriented innovation: clarifying the common goal, commitment, contribution, responsibility and respect for the team, work plan;
- Collaborative tools for facilitating teamwork and a more sustainable;
- Development of social-emotional skills (self-knowledge, proactivity, empathy, listening and communication) as well as improving the level of personal and professional welfare facilitates teamwork and cooperation;
- Recognition and return of their participation in these processes.

*After the innovation process:*

- Training and learning to adapt to the new approach;
- Maintenance of contacts network and support to the facilitators.

**What are the enabling conditions offered by the policy environment at national and EU level (or not offered and therefore that should be created)?**

*Favourable conditions:*

- In the case of Katilu, the recognition in the Plan of Science, Technology and Innovation 2015 as a tool for the sector;
- Promote the creation of Innovation Broker public - private partnership;
- Existence in the Basque Country of a powerful innovation ecosystem composed by the government, social partners and industry, universities and training centres, advanced services ...;

*Conditions that should be created:*

- Mechanisms of recognition (a brand?) which could have impact or return in the communication, financial, fiscal aspects, for those individuals and / or organizations that spend part of their time and / or knowledge sharing and creating new solutions;
- Develop and incorporate elements that provide flexibility instruments such as the CAP (7 years);
- Speed up the payment of subsidies.

### 3. NEW FORMS OF COMMERCIALIZATION OF BY-PRODUCTS LIVESTOCK, SPAIN

#### General information

**Country:** Spain

**Innovation actor concerned:** Farmers Union / The applicant and beneficiary of the aid is the Agrarian Association of Young Farmers (Asociación Agraria de Jóvenes Agricultores, ASAJA). The role played by the Association is similar to the Innovation Broker.

**Web link:** <http://www.asaja.com/>

**Funding source(s):** Co-financing by the EAFRD. Aid co-financed by the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Environment and EAFRD Funds (Technical Assistant)

**Field / domain of activity; expertise:** ASAJA, was created on 14<sup>th</sup> July 1989 and is the biggest agrarian professional organization in Spain. It has more than 200.000 members who work directly in farms, not only owners but also tenants as well as family members that cooperate in the farms.

**Are there any other actors/partners involved in the provision of services supporting innovation and how they are organised amongst themselves (form of the partnership):** In this innovative experience (New forms of commercialization of by-products livestock), ASAJA is the only actor who acted as intermediary, facilitating and stimulating the contact between suppliers and buyers of by-products.

#### Activities

**Summary description of the actor's profile (e.g. experience, understanding of the agricultural and rural environment, communication capacities, market issues) and services offered (mission):**

ASAJA is a legal person subject to democratic principles. It aims to represent, manage and defend the interest of the agrarian professional and of its organizations members. ASAJA has its headquarter in Madrid, 15 regional centres and 40 provincial offices and 810 local offices, as well as permanent representation in Brussels. ASAJA considers all the different agrarian activities, including agrarian, livestock activities, forestry, environmental management and new activities related to the rural environment, i.e. agro-tourism.

The organization activity is mainly developed in the national level, but its presence is increasing in the international level, especially in European fora. As an agrarian organization, it takes part in negotiations with the Spanish Administration and livestock industry representing farmers (Inter-professional associations or agreements, regulating boards, river basin authorities, agricultural chambers, collective agreements, etc.). Besides, it represents farmer interests in any fora where the agrarian sector could be affected direct or indirectly (Spanish Economic and Social Council -ESC-, Confederation of Employers and Industry in Spain – CEOE). ASAJA does not develop any trading activity. It has a Web page to inform its members and other stakeholders.

**Description of process steps and facilitation methods of the innovation processes:**

Working as an intermediary is a necessity that derives from the farmer's actual circumstances. The existing problems are very important for the viability of the farms and the environment. An important niche was detected in the by-product sector (wool and manure), which is not economical viable in the

farms. This initiative tries to address the existing enormous demand for manure, while providing benefits for farms and the environment.

The farmers that take part in this project were selected from different national sheep and goat farms to tackle the wool problem. The wool is not sold, due to the competence of other vegetal and synthetic fibres. Some beef cattle farms were selected to address the manure issue, since the farms are not able to sell the by-product, which is a great organic fertilizer with enormous benefits for the traditional and modern agriculture.

ASAJA is able to access to all socioeconomic actors in the urban environment favouring the contact between them thanks to its presence close to the urban environment. It has played an efficient role in order to manage the whole process of the wool production, from the production in the farms to the intermediation with manufacturing companies according with their needs. In the manure case, ASAJA facilitates the contact between farmers with surplus production and farms that demand manure.

Some studies have been made as part of the project to better know the problems (wool and manure), and to offer some solutions to improve the viability of both by-products. Some of the activities carried on were: a pilot project to analyse the detected problems, study of the situation of the problems, and definition of possible solutions.

The sources used were bibliography on the matter, information compiled in the field, University studies and own studies.

The Project basis is technical data obtained by laboratory analysis done by the University and data obtained by the technical team of ASAJA. The possibility of creating a brand "Lanas de España" (Wool of Spain) is under consideration in order to improve the marketing.

The diffusion of the project has been done through ASAJA's Web Page, workshops with farmers and other stakeholders, emails to provincial organizations member of ASAJA and other public Administrations (with all the document result of the project: studies, leaflets, wool products, etc.).

### **What works well in supporting innovative actions and the establishment of partnerships?**

Transparency and communication. The initiative has been presented to all stakeholders (technical and socioeconomic actors) needed to improve the different project phases: searching of farms with the necessary criteria, University Laboratory, agrarian transport companies, farmers, companies, etc.

### **What are the constraints, difficulties or obstacles that have been encountered and how they were overcome?**

Farmers stocked the manure in an incorrect manner, making impossible the correct ripening process. In order to avoid this, farmers were trained to stack it in the right way.

Another problem found was the lack of farmers' knowledge about the different use of the manure. The publication "Commercialization and possible use of beef cattle waste", helped farmers to understand the manure and its possible uses and commercialization.

Most farmers did not have an adequate marking system to obtain wool of quality. The project taught them new marking systems not aggressive to wool.

Beef farmers were not preoccupied by their farms. The project has raise awareness of taking care of the wool production.

## Views and suggestions on success factors for effective innovation brokering

### What is the necessary skillset of the innovation broker?

- Professional technicians in agriculture with knowledge and/or experience in this area;
- Ability to reach the different economic agents and stakeholders that can constitute an operational group (farmers, rancher, universities, research centres...);
- Coordination and organization abilities;
- Knowledge about agricultural sector requirements and problems, and ability to put into practice innovative solutions for the main necessities.

### What are (if any) the specific needs of the single actors to enable an effective performance (e.g. in terms of capacity building, training, funding etc.)? Who should be addressing these needs?

In order to an effective development of the Innovation Broker's work, the requirements and problems affecting the agricultural sector should be known, as well as the tools which can identify possible partners implicated in solving specific problems.

The NRN can play a key role as Contact Point among different agents from the agrarian environment. Also, it could be the structure which provides the tools for the partner search.

### What are the enabling conditions offered by the policy environment at national and EU level (or not offered and therefore that should be created)?

It would be necessary to establish a European definition of Innovation Broker figure, either by a Regulation or Directive, either through the EIP in terms of sustainable agricultural productivity, or European guidelines, which will indicate the requirements and training needed to develop the activity.

It is also necessary to have additional information that clarifies which mechanisms and sources would finance the works carried out by Innovation Brokers, the required rules or if it should be considered as a new niche in the European labour market.

## 4. WINE TECHNOLOGY PLATFORM, SPAIN

### General information

**Country:** Spain

**Innovation actor concerned:** Technology Platform

**Web link:** <http://www.ptvino.com/index.php/en/>

**Funding source(s):** INNFLUYE Program (Spanish Ministry of Economy and Competitiveness)

**Field / domain of activity; expertise:** All the value chain of the Spanish wine sector.

**Are there any other actors/partners involved in the provision of services supporting innovation and how they are organised amongst themselves (form of the partnership):**

At present, the Network of Spanish Technology Platform brings together more than fifty institutions from eleven industries and five strategic areas, from Food, Agriculture and Fisheries to Security and Defense, through the Environment, Energy, Transportation and Infrastructure, Health and Biotechnology, Tourism, Telecommunications or Nanotechnology. These platforms contribute to the development and implementation of the State Innovation Strategy in all axes, as the transmission mechanism of R&D&I to the market and channelling qualified employment generation and creation of innovative companies. Platforms are intended to:

- Designing a sectorial strategic route in R&D&I;
- Identify the needs of scientific and technological infrastructure in each sector;
- Promote collaborative projects between technical agents, reducing fragmentation and avoiding duplication of efforts;
- Identify sources of public and private funding;
- Improve business productivity through innovation;
- Collaborate with various stakeholders and with the public administration;
- Articulate the Spanish sector representation in European and international initiatives;
- Promote dissemination of information about R&D&I.

### Activities

**Summary description of the actor's profile (e.g. experience, understanding of the agricultural and rural environment, communication capacities, market issues) and services offered (mission):**

The wine industry in Spain is undoubtedly one of the most important in the agrifood sector, not only from the economic point of view but also from a social perspective. The vineyard is an important rural sustainability and environmental conservation factor, which uses a lot of direct and indirect labour, and encompass traditional values deeply linked to our culture and our diet and, definitely, to our way of life. It is also a sector that has taken a profound technological transformation both in the vineyard and in the winery and product distribution.

However, until now there has been significant atomisation in research in this field, showing a high level of redundancy. There are many groups that carry out R&D in both viticulture and enology, under

different types of projects funded with public and private funds. A better definition of priorities and greater coordination of research activities supported by public funding can help a better distribution of the available resources, increase the effectiveness of their use and allow the introduction and development of new technologies.

In this context, in late 2010, the Wine Technology Platform of Spain (PTV) was established, thanks to the efforts of the then Ministry of Science and Innovation, which decided to fund it for three years (2010-2012) through the Program 'INNFLUYE'. The PTV is the first technology platform, at national and European level, which includes all the agents involved in the wine industry, with the aim of promoting and coordinating actions to position the Spanish wine sector as an international reference point through R&D&I.

The Wine Technology Platform currently has more than 400 partners from the business and scientific domain, and which together constitute the General Assembly of Members.

Technology Platforms have a clear business leadership as it is confirmed by the 50% representation of this area in the PTV, compared with 32% and 18% of the scientific sector and other sectors (government, other platforms, etc.). The PTV has incorporated into its organizational structure the best research groups linked to the Spanish wine sector, achieving a true network of company-science collaboration able to analyse and define the technological needs of the industry and make a strategic route for the future R&D.

In addition to the Assembly, the PTV has been provided with an organizational structure that allows optimal management of its activities and services.

### **Description of process steps and facilitation methods of the innovation processes:**

The WORKING GROUPS are the core of the most active discussion and reflection of the Platform, being the responsible of doing the diagnosis of the situation to identify the technological needs of the industry and realize these in R&D&I specific projects. In the PTV, two types of Working Groups have been established:

- *Permanent Working Group (PWG)*: This is the think tank of the PTV. It is comprised by several companies and research centres, its purpose being the diagnosis of the situation of the sector and the development of sectoral Strategic Agenda. Its duration is indefinite and aims to provide strategic technology solutions for the sector, setting long-term goals. Currently the PTV has a *Strategic Innovation Agenda of Wine*, adopted in General Assembly of Members in November 2012. This agenda reflects the priorities identified for this sector and its strategic objectives.
- *Dynamic Working Groups (DWG)*: Unlike the Permanent Working Group, the Dynamic Working Groups are temporary and are responsible for implementing specific diagnoses that can be made specifically around a particular technical-scientific discipline, a specific need or a specific demand.

Any member who wants may promote a Dynamic Working Group, either from business or the world of research, being this promoter the future coordinator of the DWG. The aim of these groups will to realize short-term projects, individually or collaborative, that meets a specific need. Therefore, the number of partners in a dynamic working group will feature the same technological demand and needs to cover. Three phases have been established defining the constitution of a Dynamic Working Group:

- *Initial phase or Constitution*. Since the initiative comes to the implementation of the project including obtaining financial support if any (maximum 12 months). Its spread is through intranet PTV partners, and through newsletters.

- *Phase II or Development Phase.* Project implementation and monitoring. Duration between 36 and 48 months.
- *Phase of Dissemination of Results.* 12 months after the conclusion.

The materialization of the work of a group in a given project and specific institutional support will be documented in the PTV to all agencies involved in the financing of the same or of their proposals.

For their part, *Technological Agents* are a support service that PTV offers to promoter members of the Working Groups to identify, among other things, ways of financing their projects. It is therefore a dynamic instrument and direct support to the Working Groups. Through this service, its coordinators have the opportunity to have specialized agents in the field of consulting and management services that will be able to advise on identifying potential R&D, and establish for each structure organizational, the technical content and the Potential Financing Plan for each of them.

During this first milestone the PTV has conducted extensive outreach in order to involve the largest possible number of companies in the process of defining and reviewing the Strategic Innovation Agenda. To achieve this purpose, the PTV has actively participated in numerous conferences and fairs in the sector. For this part, has sought close ties and synergies with other related bodies and other technology platforms, having specific closed partnerships with some of them. The purpose of these agreements is to develop joint actions to stimulate innovation towards competitiveness and internationalization of the Spanish wine industry.

After an initial start-up and intense organizational work, the PTV looks forward to working towards the development of the following:

1. Promoting the *Strategic Innovation Agenda (SIA)*: Perform proper communication campaign and dissemination of SIA will allow business sector involvement in a common strategic vision for innovation, while influencing the work programs of the agencies that develop R&D&I policies.
2. *Internationalization*: In the belief that the wine industry is a strategic industry that Spain should anticipate Europe, the PTV was born with a clear international vocation, the first specific wine platform that was created at the European level. This requires that Spanish companies should be involved with leadership in European projects and ensure the presence of the PTV in transfer channels of sectoral priorities in the new Horizon 2020.
3. *Completion of the First Strategic Plan 2011-2013 and implementation of the Second Strategic Plan 2013-2016.* One of the main indicators for monitoring and control of the activity and results of the PTV is the realization on R&D specific projects of the work of the various groups that are part of it. So, once defined the strategic route for the sector, the PTV will focus its efforts in boosting R&D&I derived from it. This will lead to the end of the first strategic plan by the end of 2013 and set a new plan of action that during the period 2014 to 2016 to identify and implement new projects.
4. *Boosting Web Portal as reference information platform of R&D&I sector.* Continuous updating of existing funding programs with specific alerts for specific calls, newsletters on current R&D national and international technological trends, offers participation in cooperative projects, etc...
5. *Control Results and Review of Strategic Innovation Agenda:* The PTV Technical Secretariat will conduct a periodic review to assess the implementation of the SIA and the results of the Strategic Plans for Innovation, duly informing the Governing Board of the progress and possible deviations for making decisions.



### **What works well in supporting innovative actions and the establishment of partnerships?**

The actions that are working better for the Wine Technology Platform is evaluating the projects promoted against the finally submitted and approved as part of the PTV, and the Dynamic Groups proposed and promoted by the companies in the sector. This is where companies talk and identify their needs and actions in R&D. Public-private collaboration is more effective and fruitful.

The Role of Technological Agents as a service to members of the PTV is very beneficial because they are specialized agents in the overall management of R&D&I from the identification of R&D projects to search for the source of most appropriate funding for that project or consortium.

### **What are the constraints, difficulties or obstacles that have been encountered and how they were overcome?**

It is difficult to identify R&D needs by companies, and their communication, mainly due to a lack of culture in the field of R&D or by the risk of sharing the know-how and / or the need looking like a possible competitive disadvantage.

The best way to encourage companies to boost R&D through projects is by conducting collaborative conferences, informative workshops, so that the company knows the possibilities of financing projects and existing technology offering group research.

## **Views and suggestions on success factors for effective innovation brokering**

### **What is the necessary skillset of the innovation broker?**

- Dissemination and organization capacity to a large number of companies and research centres of a strategic technology sector;
- Create a good management structure to identify the need for R&D activities in a sector, and blend the existing technological offer;
- Ability to combine agents avoiding redundancy in research;
- Generation and promotion of workshops that allow companies to meet and discuss technological plaintiffs and technology partners and research systems that provide solutions. Telematics powerful tool that permits the same interaction.

### **What are the enabling conditions offered by the policy environment at national and EU level (or not offered and therefore that should be created)?**

- Nationally, the public support Technology Platforms has been cut due to the economic crisis in the country. It is expected that future aid is to increase again so that the Technology Platform will have more resources for organizational work and knowledge transfer to their partners and wine sector.
- The Wine Technology Platform of Spain has a European vocation, and aims to be a driving agent of a European Network of Innovation in the wine sector. Currently various partnerships are being formed at European level with different types of structures and forms that allow to provide support programs launched in Future HORIZON 2020. The PTV is already part of some of these partnerships, and aims to establish more partnerships at European level.

## 5. eLIVINGLAB – PROJECT, FINLAND

### General information

**Country:** Finland

**Innovation actor concerned:** Private consultancy / Frami Oy, eLivingLab –project (earlier Agro Living Lab –project, ALL-action environment)

**Web link:** N/A

**Funding source(s):** ELY-centre of Etelä-Pohjanmaa, EAFRD, Agriculture machinery businesses (businesses, entrepreneurs)

**Field / domain of activity; expertise:** Regional development, specific know-how in development of agro-technology and improving the usability of machinery in the field of agriculture

**Are there any other actors/partners involved in the provision of services supporting innovation and how they are organised amongst themselves (form of the partnership):** Seinäjoki Polytechnic, University of Vaasa. Earlier also University of Helsinki / Ruralia-institute. Frami Oy works as a responsible project manager in the projects and partners are involved for example with transfer of aid, as project partners.

### Activities

**Summary description of the actor's profile (e.g. experience, understanding of the agricultural and rural environment, communication capacities, market issues) and services offered (mission):**

Frami Ltd has the experience of nearly 10 years, in particular, improving the usability of Agro-technology machinery and equipment, but also for the sports industry products and services. The expertise has been gained over the years considerably.

Agro Living Lab activities have been going on since 2009. Its purpose is to bring farmers and machinery contractors, as well as agricultural machinery manufacturers around the same table for product development. ALL's mission is to be the so-called neutral intermediary organization between the two groups. ALL arranges researches (surveys and interviews), usability testing, and innovative workshops, where farmers can give their opinion its sector products, equipment, services, and ideas. Interacting with the farmers and the company's direction is solid and inclusive. At the core of work is the network of farmers, which currently consists of about 220 farmers from South Ostrobothnia and machinery contractors.

**Description of process steps and facilitation methods of the innovation processes:**

Implementers are familiar with the Agro-technology industry, and based on their expertise they can identify innovative ideas and thoughts. In addition, manufacturing companies will provide direct new ideas and topics "to the table" with the farmers. In ALL they have developed methods for the production of new ideas, as well as the finished product and to evaluate business ideas. The methods are workshop-type events where a number of farmers engaged in the conception or rated by the manufacturer or another farmer on the topic. In addition, ALL has developed a storage method for usability testing methodology, which can be exploited to test and develop the machinery, equipment and services in either a centralized or a decentralized research conditions of farmers on their own farms. In addition to these more background research in the form of questionnaires and interviews.

ALL organize activation for its network of farmers that will inspire the members of the network to participate in the events and learn more about it through the operation. ALL activates the farmers to innovate in its field by providing Frami Ltd through a variety of development and evaluation of ideas related services.

Development of business is related to ideas that relate to Agro-technology sector. ALL is in the active co-operation in planning with companies and entrepreneurs, what kind of measures can be done with the farmers. In addition, companies are given knowledge about the possibilities that ALL can be used to provide in addition to the services.

ALL's main role is to be a neutral intermediary organization that organizes the different tests and workshops, gathers the information from farmers and carry out the necessary analyses based on them. Farmers network is easy platform for events. With the finished methods the events are also easy to implement in an appropriate manner. With the help of ALL the farmers get the opportunity to influence their own sector technology and businesses an easy way for your users' opinion in support of product development.

The possible funding sources for innovative projects are identified through research and negotiations. The results of the initial project targeting innovation are communicated and spread via press articles, newsletter, letters to stakeholders, events, seminars, trade shows, etc.

### **What works well in supporting innovative actions and the establishment of partnerships?**

Farmers Network is working well and actively. Network's maintenance requires a lot of effort from the manager of actions, but when it's doing well, different kind of pilot projects and organization of events is quite easy. To make members of the network active a lot of work needs to be done. Action is based on active "reminding" of the existence of such an activity, interest and usefulness of co-operation.

The participating companies have actively made their own contribution to the operation. Activity has been straightforward in every direction.

### **What are the constraints, difficulties or obstacles that have been encountered and how they were overcome?**

A major challenge for the functioning of the sector has been farming year cycle. During high season, there is not much opportunity to get action, because the farmers are focused at their own works. Because the operation is based on a voluntary basis, however, we can not force farmers to come along. This is why the activities are focused mainly in the period from autumn to spring.

Maintenance of farmer's activity and getting new members active have also been a challenge. The activity provides the necessary rotation into the pilot projects and workshops. It's important that participating members are not the same people from the conference to another.

Also the source of funding can affect and limit the operation. Financial instruments are difficult to find for such innovation activities, because "the fourth cycle" (users - public actors - companies - research) activities can not be pigeonholed directly under the particular instrument. Freer source of funding would allow more extensive innovation and give promoters a better chance to take action in the more efficient and innovative direction.

## Views and suggestions on success factors for effective innovation brokering

### **What is the necessary skillset of the innovation broker?**

Technical and substantive expertise of this certain industry is necessary. You have to understand both users and manufacturers in order to be able to work and communicate with the audience in between the two. The innovation broker must also have a continuous renewal and developing grip, so to be able to raise the interest of both the user and the manufacturer.

### **What are (if any) the specific needs of the single actors to enable an effective performance (e.g. in terms of capacity building, training, funding etc.)? Who should be addressing these needs?**

To create innovation, creativity is required, which may not be easily learnt by training or education. Open mind and a barrier-breaking cases consolidation are needed.

Great innovation does not necessarily arise if the actions are solely made at its own sector. Instead, different industries and interaction of different kind of people can produce a whole new range of approach angles, which may also have new innovations as result.

### **What are the enabling conditions offered by the policy environment at national and EU level (or not offered and therefore that should be created)?**

Develop and implement a funding source that allows the fourth thread-based implementation of the action.

## 6. LOCAL ACTION GROUP PÄIJÄNNE-LEADER, FINLAND

### General information

**Country:** Finland

**Innovation actor concerned:** Local Action Group

**Web link:** [www.paijanne-leader.net](http://www.paijanne-leader.net)

**Funding source(s):** EARDF / Leader and 6 local municipalities

**Field / domain of activity; expertise:** Rural development, funding, animating and advisory of small enterprise or third sector projects

**Are there any other actors/partners involved in the provision of services supporting innovation and how they are organised amongst themselves (form of the partnership):** The partners involved are mostly local municipalities and sometimes other actors, for example regional advisory agencies, farmers unions, Pro Agria, regional development agency or regional village associations.

### Activities

**Summary description of the actor's profile (e.g. experience, understanding of the agricultural and rural environment, communication capacities, market issues) and services offered (mission):**

The expertise is mainly in participatory planning methods, how to help local communities so that they keep their independency and ownership of their actions, as well as acting as a mediator between public and business sectors, and third parties.

- *Animation:* helping local communities or SMEs to realize their own resources and to find ways to develop the activities, services and products;
- *Advisory:* helping the communities and SMEs to apply for public funding and private co-funding;
- *Monitoring:* hand in hand through the project to the goal;
- *Rural local (regional) development:* creating and implementing together with municipalities, villages, associations and SMEs;
- *National rural development:* active part of national actions and policy making.

### What works well in supporting innovative actions and the establishment of partnerships?

A good approach is always to support cooperation. We help people, enterprises and communities to find partners with similar needs and to form small groups, if possible. The innovation lies in new relations and new development partners as well as in free formed local communities as villages, where different experiences and professions naturally meet. Of course, a lot of needs are simply economical and very practical and can be solved individually. If we are lucky there is innovation already behind the economic needs.

### **What are the constraints, difficulties or obstacles that have been encountered and how they were overcome?**

In Finland, at least in our area, the biggest obstacle is people's hesitation in taking part in new groups, meeting new people and new kinds of cooperation. But if they can be attracted to it, they do well. This can't always be overcome. Luckily some innovations start with simply telling the suitable organization about suitable things done somewhere else.

### **Views and suggestions on success factors for effective innovation brokering**

#### **What is the necessary skillset of the innovation broker?**

You have to be open to everything new anywhere you go. Someday, somebody, somewhere can use the things you have seen.

Social skills – how to tell about these experiences to other people, how to “sell” the ideas.

The ability to “kill your own babies” – the idea is not the same and not yours anymore when the actors start developing it further. If the process is good, they develop something unique and you must be the first one to tell them how good they are.

#### **What are (if any) the specific needs of the single actors to enable an effective performance (e.g. in terms of capacity building, training, funding etc.)? Who should be addressing these needs?**

Communication skills and tools. New and old. Everything depends on information from everywhere and to everyone.

The transnational cooperation is very important source of innovation. Different cultures have different ways of doing things. The old ways may be new ones somewhere else. Even joint actions are not always needed. Just meeting foreign people and experiencing different cultures is often enough to start real innovation processes.

Leader groups (LAG's) can help local communities and small businesses to go international but easier tools to this are needed. The most important thing is to travel the right people e.g. grass root people instead of important local politicians.

#### **What are the enabling conditions offered by the policy environment at national and EU level (or not offered and therefore that should be created)?**

Right now the most important thing at all levels is to simplify the processes. A lot of promising local potential is wasted in too heavy bureaucracy. Real innovation needs more space and flexibility to really succeed. There should be new ways to ensure the correct expenditure from national and European authorities without too much bureaucracy. This is a major obstacle in small projects which are cost effective until the bureaucracy strikes and makes them too difficult and heavy to implement and we lose a lot of innovation in vain.

## 7. RESEARCH GROUP OF RURAL RESEARCH (UNIVERSITY OF OULU AND MTT AGRIFOOD RESEARCH FINLAND)

### General information

**Country:** Finland

**Innovation actor concerned:** Professor Toivo Muilu of University of Oulu and MTT

**Web link:** N/A

**Funding source(s):**

- Finnish Research Funds (like Suomen Akatemia / Academy of Finland, foundations) and EU research funds;
- Ministries of Agriculture and Forestry, Employment and Economy, Environment, Education and Culture;
- EU Funds (ERFD, ESF, EAFRD / LEADER).

**Field / domain of activity; expertise:** Rural studies in Social Sciences, region and rural politics, rural development.

**Are there any other actors/partners involved in the provision of services supporting innovation and how they are organised amongst themselves (form of the partnership):**

There are number of partners like regional organizations and associations (e.g. units of The Centres for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment (ELY Centres), regional councils, Pro Agria, MSL / Union for Rural Education and Culture, municipalities, local action groups, village associations, etc.), other universities and research institutes, as well as the rural sector, domestic and foreign research networks.

### Activities

**Summary description of the actor's profile (e.g. experience, understanding of the agricultural and rural environment, communication capacities, market issues) and services offered (mission):**

I have participated in regional and rural research and development projects since the 1980s. Individual projects in which I have been involved with, are probably several hundred. Most of the projects have been carried out in cooperation with regional actors, the village level up to international networks.

**Description of process steps and facilitation methods of the innovation processes:**

*How are innovative ideas detected?* Innovative new research and development needs will rise in their own field (regional and rural research) mainly in three ways:

- 1) Individual discussions with regional and local actors, i.e. the operator level (bottom up), the emerging research and development needs;
- 2) Collaborative networks (for example authorities, planners and research colleagues proposals); and
- 3) A previous study.

*How are partners brought together around an innovative idea?* In general, any sector actor or operator takes the initiative to collect and call other actors to discuss how a new research needs to be carried out

(implemented). The initiative can arise in many different ways, often in informal contexts, and even random conversations. It should be noted that the majority of the initiatives will not lead to a new activity or project.

*How the innovation broker supports and interfaces between the possible actors (e.g. refining these ideas, formulate the research questions)* – The key issue is to assess whether the new initiative is interesting, realistic and achievable, if the right group of actors is collected and there is a possibility to get funding. All of this requires experience, good communication skills and networks of actors in the industry.

*Were the stakeholders' needs identified before the starting of the brokering processes?* To identify needs is essential: a win-win situation must be generated among the parties involved; otherwise there will be absence of appropriate working relationship, or a new project. It is very important to have a balanced partnership and clear distribution of duties already present since the very beginning of work.

*How is information to prepare the possible innovation project collected and shared?* In general, someone has to take over the responsibility of leading and maintaining e-mail discussion. If the preparation goes further, you can set up your own community in internet.

*How innovative ideas are piloted?* In general, there are certain areas as case-area in the projects (e.g. municipalities) or actors / operators (such as village associations), so the piloting takes place during the project.

*How are the possible funding sources for innovative projects identified?* On a case by case basis, by actively monitoring funding information sources such as newspaper ads and university research bulletins.

*How the results of the initial project targeting innovation are communicated and spread?* The results of rural studies are published frequently, as well as expository and scientific articles, and presentations to sector participants.

### **What works well in supporting innovative actions and the establishment of partnerships?**

In general, those in charge of the cooperation initiative are genuinely interested in cooperation and are experts in the field. Often, already during the first meeting occurs useful exchange of information: usually someone knows better than anyone the background details of such new theme and the required preparation. Meetings are always useful, even if it does not lead to further preparation or a new project.

### **What are the constraints, difficulties or obstacles that have been encountered and how they were overcome?**

The biggest problem in my field is that actors are getting tired with the project bureaucracy in the EU's rural development fund. A number of operators, in particular in northern Finland, are quite small and most of them are already committed to a number of projects. Even a good initiative can crash frequently because no one wants to take the lead responsibility. The tiredness of actors of project implementing is a major threat.

## **Views and suggestions on success factors for effective innovation brokering**

### **What is the necessary skillset of the innovation broker?**

- Strong research skills;
- Excellent co-operation networks;



- Good social skills;
- Resistance of uncertainty and bureaucratic;
- The ability to long-term, proactive thinking and action.

**What are (if any) the specific needs of the single actors to enable an effective performance (e.g. in terms of capacity building, training, funding etc.)? Who should be addressing these needs?**

- Good academic training;
- Further training of project and financial management;
- Participation in projects, preferably already during the training, in the guidance of experienced researchers and project managers;
- The courage to ask for things and the ability to search for new information.

**What are the enabling conditions offered by the policy environment at national and EU level (or not offered and therefore that should be created)?**

- In addition to the project activity, there should be the possibility to create more long-term, regional-scale working approach, such as the Finnish National Rural Network;
- There should be the possibility to release (at least) the innovative activators of researchers from the bureaucracy and let them participate in the projects and focus their expertise in the actual doing;
- The current innovation action is pressed too much into the programs with strict themes and boundary conditions: there should be more “free” innovation opportunities and funding. Innovation is, in principle, new things and ways of working, and it cannot be created under a strict supervision!

## 8. THE STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM IN HäME AREA, FINLAND, IMPLEMENTED BY MTK HäME

### General information

**Country:** Finland

**Innovation actor concerned:** Farmers Union

**Web link:** <http://www.mtk.fi/liitot/hame/>

**Funding source(s):** EAFRD / The Centres for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment (ELY Centre) of Häme

**Field / domain of activity; expertise:** Agriculture and food sector

#### **Are there any other actors/partners involved in the provision of services supporting innovation and how they are organised amongst themselves (form of the partnership):**

The strategic development program was drawn up at the beginning of the programming period 2007-2013 to develop agriculture and food sectors in Häme region. The strategic development program collects all the key players of food chain in Häme area, developers and investors. The development program is implemented through a number of different kind of sub-projects.

The main partners have been: ProAgria Häme (Farm advisory service), Polytechnic of Häme (University of applied sciences), Education Center of Salpaus (second degree education on natural resources) and food sector's development company Agropolis Oy. Also agriculture and food sector's research center MTT, Polytechnic of Lahti, development companies of regions, Regional Councils and food sector have been involved.

MTK Häme has the responsibility of co-ordination.

### Activities

#### **Summary description of the actor's profile (e.g. experience, understanding of the agricultural and rural environment, communication capacities, market issues) and services offered (mission):**

Cooperation between many different levels (producers, developers and industry) has been the key theme in implementation of the program. Exchange of information, experience and know-how among the parties is important. It needs transparency, good spirit of cooperation with all the parties and a strong commitment to common goals and measures.

Coordination is based on expertise and interaction, not so much on leadership. Network-based operating method is challenging because the coordination project has no control over sub-projects. It is estimated that co-ordination has been quite successful in Häme.

The co-ordination project has led the overall theme of the program, collected, analysed and transmitted information on this sector as well as the communication with industry trends and development activities within the industry and interest groups. In addition, the results of the implementation and monitoring of the effectiveness of co-ordination has been part of the district.

The co-ordination project has been responsible for the program's visual presentation and communication. In addition, the project has been responsible for coordinating the program's website construction and maintenance, public information, among others.

### **Description of process steps and facilitation methods of the innovation processes:**

Ideas and practical problems, as well as emerging development needs have been in the centre of work. The group of experts is needed to work around the idea / problem; the group is actively looking for solutions and monitors the progress of the operation with entrepreneurs. Small group activities are very successful in projects.

There has been a variety of future workshops. They are also developing the co-operation between the educational, research and advisory extension. It aims to find practical solutions to different issues, for example how to add production and use of protein feed. Networking and promotion of experts and the development of skills have also been important targets in sub-projects.

The managers of projects meet on a regular basis, they plan activities and information acts together. There is also sector based actor meetings, where the stakeholders evaluate and plan practical activities.

### **What works well in supporting innovative actions and the establishment of partnerships?**

Commitment of the involved actors (including donors) is a key factor. In addition to this, a transparent, confidential and cooperative atmosphere is required. It would be good if the coordinator has an "unbiased, industry-wide representative" body. It is also positive if the leader is a body which is not itself involved in the production of professional services.

### **What are the constraints, difficulties or obstacles that have been encountered and how they were overcome?**

- Network-based leadership is demanding;
- Co-operation is based on relationships between people;
- Turnover rate of centre persons participating in development projects is a big problem.

## **Views and suggestions on success factors for effective innovation brokering**

### **What is the necessary skillset of the innovation broker?**

To have a wide scope of expertise and a broad perspective.

### **What are (if any) the specific needs of the single actors to enable an effective performance (e.g. in terms of capacity building, training, funding etc.)? Who should be addressing these needs?**

Communication skills are the most important.

### **What are the enabling conditions offered by the policy environment at national and EU level (or not offered and therefore that should be created)?**

The current development activities and their funding should be possible also in the future. Unnecessary administrative burden should be avoided.

## 9. FRENCH CHAMBERS OF AGRICULTURE, FRANCE

### General information

**Country:** France

**Innovation actor concerned:** French Chamber of agriculture acting as farm advisory services

**Web link:** N/A

**Funding source(s):** Taxes, national policy for agricultural development, provision of services to farmers.

**Field / domain of activity; expertise:** Advisory services according to a systemic and global approach, local animation for groups of farmers and territories.

**Are there any other actors/partners involved in the provision of services supporting innovation and how they are organised amongst themselves (form of the partnership):**

Technical institutes, cooperatives and public local authorities: national and local agreements of cooperation with chambers of agriculture.

### Activities

**Summary description of the actor's profile (e.g. experience, understanding of the agricultural and rural environment, communication capacities, market issues) and services offered (mission):**

- Experience: chambers of agriculture are key actors in agricultural innovation since 1960's. Their skills have evolved from a linear innovation approach towards a more interactive one since 1990's. They have also a strong experience in animating local groups of farmers.
- Understanding of environment: From a technical point of view, chambers of agriculture own capacities on economic and territorial intelligence. From a political point of view, relying on farmers' representatives, they have a mission on defending agricultural interests.
- Communication capacities: French chambers of agriculture communicate with all kinds of farmers, farming systems, sectors and are present in every territory. Moreover, they run many technical magazines, websites and seminars.
- Market issues: French chambers of agriculture have no interest in selling products to farmers. Due to their understanding of the market, they can address market issues for farmers.
- Services offered:
  - 1) Provision of individual or collective advice to farmers on technical, business management fields;
  - 2) Experimentation on pilot farms.

### **What works well in supporting innovative actions and the establishment of partnerships?**

- Face to face meetings between different types of stakeholders: farmers, researchers, advisers. Meetings where everyone brings his knowledge and discusses it.
- Having a close link with farmers groups in order to identify new ideas, or ideas that are worth to spend time for developing innovative projects.
- A moderator who can speak with farmers and researchers and who understands the “language” of each kind of stakeholders.

### **What are the constraints, difficulties or obstacles that have been encountered and how they were overcome?**

The lack of time and money to spend for developing innovative projects. The advisers’ commitment is often needed in order to spend sometimes personal time for developing innovative projects.

## **Views and suggestions on success factors for effective innovation brokering**

### **What is the necessary skillset of the innovation broker?**

- Global and systemic approach of farm systems;
- Independent organisations;
- Technical expertise;
- Have some skills as moderator and facilitator and change management;
- Be in an organization which is involved in many networks at regional level;
- Have a mandate to act as innovation broker.

### **What are (if any) the specific needs of the single actors to enable an effective performance (e.g. in terms of capacity building, training, funding etc.)? Who should be addressing these needs?**

- Funding the silent work of animating farmers’ groups; who should be addressing these needs – EU and farmers;
- Have an official mandate to act as innovation broker; who should be addressing these needs – RDP authorities.
- Building capacity to speak equally to farmers and researchers; who should be addressing these needs – European Union.

### **What are the enabling conditions offered by the policy environment at national and EU level (or not offered and therefore that should be created)?**

- Enabling conditions: call for projects;
- Enabling conditions *not* offered: having a call for project to recognize innovation broker actors.

## 10. DEVELOPMENT AGENCY OF KARDITSA (ANKA SA), GREECE

### General information

**Country:** Greece

**Innovation actor concerned:** Local Action Group

**Web link:** <http://www.anka.gr/portal/>

**Funding source(s):**

- Projects financed by EU;
- Projects financed by local authorities;
- Services to local firms;
- Voluntary work.

**Field / domain of activity; expertise:** Rural Development / SMEs Support / Exploitation of Renewable Energy Sources and Environment Protection / Support of Social Groups threatened by social exclusion

**Are there any other actors/partners involved in the provision of services supporting innovation and how they are organised amongst themselves (form of the partnership):**

The partners involved they are the shareholders of ANKA SA:

- Local Municipalities;
- Local Co-operatives like Co-operative Bank, the Association of Farmer's Cooperatives;
- Local Chamber of Commerce;
- The Regional Association of Municipalities;
- Regional Authority.

The local authorities form the General Assembly (GA) of ANKA SA and every 5 years they elect Governing Board of the GA. In addition, every year the GA approves the annual Action Plan of the Agency. It includes the fields of intervention and the innovative initiatives which will be undertaken or supported by the Agency in local level. By this way, the GA of ANKA SA functions as partnership of the local authorities from development planning point of view.

### Activities

**Summary description of the actor's profile (e.g. experience, understanding of the agricultural and rural environment, communication capacities, market issues) and services offered (mission):**

ANKA S.A. was established in 1989 and has a broad experience in planning and executing projects and programs of local development, SMEs support (ADAPT), environment protection (LIFE), RES Exploitation (Altener), information dissemination (Europe Direct), human resources development (SF projects, NOW, Horizon, EQUAL) and Rural Development (LEADER).

The executives of ANKA forms a group of cooperated specialists (engineers, agronomists, economists etc.) trained additionally in animation, planning and project management. The training of the executives

on these fields is a continuous process in the Agency. The rules, methods and processes applied in animation, planning and project management are described in the "Regulation of Planning and Project Management". It is a Company's "know how". ANKA encourages its executives to get the International Project Management Association (IPMA) certification in Project Management.

### **Description of process steps and facilitation methods of the innovation processes:**

*How are innovative ideas detected?* The innovative ideas are the result of "participatory planning". It is a continuous process of the Development Agency in cooperation with its shareholders (local authorities). This process is focused in certain fields each time. The choice of the fields is depended on the priorities set by the local stakeholders. The "participatory planning starts with a diagnosis of the chosen field and finalise with a "vision" and an action plan as an intervention to the chosen field. This planning process is implemented using the method GOPP (Goal Oriented Project Planning). Of course, the action plan contains a mixture of innovative ideas as well conventional ones.

*How are partners brought together around an innovative idea?* The partners are brought together around the innovative ideas not as a means but as a result of their participation since the starting of the planning process. So the innovative ideas are not "proposals" to the local society suggested by an elite but it is a common agreement. The role of local stakeholders is not to apply the proposed by the specialists' ideas, but to implement their own plans with the support of the specialists.

*How the innovation broker supports and interfaces between the possible actors (e.g. refining these ideas, formulate the research questions)?* – ANKA is coordinating the planning process and is undertaking the support of the "difficult" part of the agreed action plan. The provided support includes "translating" the local needs of technology transfer, knowledge, innovation and research into a "language" understood by the Universities, the technology centres or the research institutes. ANKA invites in the field external specialists in order to offer their "know how" or to contribute to the searched solution.

*Were the stakeholders' needs identified before the starting of the brokering processes?* Some of the needs are identified before the start of brokering process, but the most of them emerged during the "on-going" process. Of course, these unexpected needs create uncertainty which is the most risky part of the process of successful innovations application. The unexpected needs change in most cases the time schedules and the pace of the project implementation. If the project is financed by EU programs these incompliances with the submitted plans may create serious problems. Generally speaking, the EU financed projects must have foreseen results and consequently they are "conservative" from the innovative point of view! According to our experience, we avoid to submit an innovative project in the frame of EU programs (at least those in initial phases). We chose to start them on our own (volunteer work, mainly, or local funding).

*How is information to prepare the possible innovation project collected and shared?* See point a.

*What sort of animation is provided for the innovative project and the partners?*– The animation has two phases. The first phase is part of the participatory planning process and the aim of animation is to raise the awareness of stakeholders in order to participate to the planning process and contribute to the "vision" formation. The second phase is the promotion of vision, aiming participation of local people in the implementation of the vision.

*How innovative ideas are piloted?* It depends on the case.

*How are the possible funding sources for innovative projects identified?* See point d.

*How the results of the initial project targeting innovation are communicated and spread?* Through local Media, conferences, case studies presentation, etc.

### **What works well in supporting innovative actions and the establishment of partnerships?**

- The broker (as organization and as a group of specialists) must be respected, recognized and be trusted by local society and no doubt by the local authorities or the local stakeholders;

- To undertake the responsibility and gradually to transfer it to the participants;
- To be transparent;
- To offer support, not to substitute the local partners;
- Positive thinking;
- Animation;
- Strategic planning,
- Project management;
- Spirit of Social Entrepreneur;
- Tolerance!

**What are the constraints, difficulties or obstacles that have been encountered and how they were overcome?**

See point D in section *"Description of the brokering methods, process steps and facilitation methods of the innovation processes"*.

**Views and suggestions on success factors for effective innovation brokering**

**What is the necessary skillset of the innovation broker?**

Animation, Strategic planning, Project management, Spirit of Social Entrepreneur

**What are (if any) the specific needs of the single actors to enable an effective performance (e.g. in terms of capacity building, training, funding etc.)? Who should be addressing these needs?**

The broker-organisation must have the available resources to address in a flexible way the needs of the single actors, immediately when they are revealed. If the needs stay unsatisfied for long period of time, the whole process of innovation establishment is delayed and in most of the cases is cancelled, replaced by disappointment.

**What are the enabling conditions offered by the policy environment at national and EU level (or not offered and therefore that should be created)?**

See point D in section *"Description of the brokering methods, process steps and facilitation methods of the innovation processes"*.



## 11. AN INDIVIDUAL INNOVATION BROKER, THE NETHERLANDS

### General information

**Country:** Netherlands

**Innovation actor concerned:** Henk Kieft, Consultant for Rural Development in private ETC-Foundation

**Web link:** N/A

**Funding source(s):** Own investment.

**Field / domain of activity; expertise:** Sustainable agriculture; increased efficiency of nutrient use; decreased emissions; agro-ecology or "closed-loop farming".

### Are there any other actors/partners involved in the provision of services supporting innovation and how they are organised amongst themselves (form of the partnership):

Around 40 other persons are involved in a regional network (in the 3 Northern provinces in the Netherlands) for this innovation. They include farmers, advisors, farmers union, environmental NGO, civil servants of the 3 provinces, agriculture teachers and agriculture researchers. It is an emerging network, still loosely connected, but anticipated to work as an Operational Group in EIP.

### Activities

#### Summary description of the actor's profile (e.g. experience, understanding of the agricultural and rural environment, communication capacities, market issues) and services offered (mission):

As IB (Innovation Broker) I have been the first convenor of the emerging network. It was meant to give continuity to a successful "Closed-loop farming" project in one of the provinces, where the IB had been project manager. I was involved in agricultural policy advise, in building a strategy of cooperation between provincial stakeholders (farmers, farmers union, environmental NGO, bank, feed industry, vet doctors, advisors), training advisors. I have strong communication capacities and not much marketing experience, but I can mobilize this.

IB-services offered: convening the network, coaching joint strategy of farmers union and environmental NGO, informing provincial authorities on the funding possibilities of EIP-OGs in RDP 2014-2020, informing and inspiring farmers to take their chance, analysing farm data on nutrient efficiency, sharing knowledge and experience with researchers, challenging agro-environmental collectives to also take up nutrient efficiency as objective.

#### Description of process steps and facilitation methods of the innovation processes:

*How are innovative ideas detected?* Ideas have originated from farmers. Farmers invited me 10 years ago to assist them in collecting and spreading their views and experiences. Ideas were confirmed in 10 years on-farm testing in 3 provinces.

*How are partners brought together around an innovative idea?* By suggesting and starting an emerging network anticipating on functioning as EIP-OG.

*How the innovation broker supports and interfaces between the possible actors (e.g. refining these ideas, formulate the research questions)?* Inviting participation, designing sessions, leading discussions, clustering and prioritizing ideas, presenting them as building blocks for own initiatives and a joint future project, suggesting new partners, informing researchers, participating in writing a book on the results and the potentials for up-scaling the approach.

*How innovative ideas are piloted?* The ideas were piloted in RDP-projects and research programs with agricultural universities. New piloting is foreseen in regional collectives, to operationalize 'performance based rewarding' under the second pillar RDP.

*How the results of the initial project targeting innovation are communicated and spread?* Communication via farmer study groups, newsletters, website, provincial price winning farmers, agricultural press articles, etc.

### **What works well in supporting innovative actions and the establishment of partnerships?**

- Confidential conversations with many partners, building trust;
- Engaging local stakeholders;
- Understand the perspectives of the huge variety of stakeholders (actors in the agricultural sector, universities, policy implementation, education, banks, watershed boards, environmental NGOs);
- Thorough preparation of meetings plus quick reporting;
- Let initiatives be taken by other stakeholders (do not control everything by yourself) and support them;
- Being well informed about funding opportunities;
- Taking time, being patient;
- Pro-active attitude of environmental NGOs and vet doctors towards farming in the future.

### **What are the constraints, difficulties or obstacles that have been encountered and how they were overcome?**

*Constraints:* in the emerging phase the IB-work is risky personal investment. It has been overcome because the company accepts the IB activity as an investment.

*Obstacle:* the mainstream interests may hinder innovative front-runners (farmers, water boards, farmers unions, feed industry, milk factories). It has been overcome by sharing experiences of others, by publicity, by inviting them in the network meetings.

*Difficulty:* the financial interest in future turn-over of advisors creates competition among them. It has been overcome by suggesting that who supports the initiative might have a share in future activities.

## **Views and suggestions on success factors for effective innovation brokering**

### **What is the necessary skillset of the innovation broker?**

- Being trustworthy, well-informed about current reality and about potentials of the innovation for all stakeholders;
- Having a wide and active network;
- Good process facilitator, knowing when to take the lead and when to keep quiet;

- Certain modesty, understanding the interests and speaking the languages of all stakeholders;
- Able to identify the weak points, anticipating risks.

**What are (if any) the specific needs of the single actors to enable an effective performance (e.g. in terms of capacity building, training, funding etc.)? Who should be addressing these needs?**

- Regular updated information about options, progress and constraints (who: by IB and others);
- Capacity building and training at all levels (who: by initiators in each branch of activities);
- Readily available budget:
  - 1) to 'oil' hesitating parts of the process; and
  - 2) to pay for activities that may not be expected from one of the partners;
- Innovation enabling policy with clear targets.

**What are the enabling conditions offered by the policy environment at national and EU level (or not offered and therefore that should be created)?**

- Clear innovation policy in RDP 2014-2020:
  - 1) But information about EIP and OG is still to be spread actively. Many authors of RDP 2014-2020 are not yet aware of the potential and operation of EIP;
  - 2) Freedom of OG to determine the most fitting course of activities;
  - 3) How financial risk is handled.
- Clear regional objectives for innovation:
  - 1) The relevant domains where innovation is really required;
  - 2) Eligibility and selection criteria;
  - 3) Indicators for monitoring progress or success.
- Public Administration should state: "Stakeholders, we need your active involvement for innovation as a society!". Policy from Public Administration alone cannot do it. National, provincial and local authorities should publicly request engagement of partners, as innovation is required for survival in a sustainable way. Therefore the Public Administration has a stake in the innovation efforts and should not stay outside the innovation playing field but should consider itself as a stakeholder.

## 12. COMPETENCE BROKERING, NORWAY

### General information

**Country:** Norway

**Innovation actor concerned:** Hans Olav Bråtå, Researcher/Competence Broker, Eastern Norway Research Institute (ENRI)

**Web link:** N/A

**Funding source(s):**

- Research Council of Norway;
- Innovation Norway – departments of Hedmark and Oppland;
- Hedmark and Oppland counties;
- Lillehammer University College;
- Hedmark University College.

**Field / domain of activity; expertise:** Manufacturing industry, tourism and bioenergy.

**Are there any other actors/partners involved in the provision of services supporting innovation and how they are organised amongst themselves (form of the partnership):**

There are three competence brokers in Hedmark and Oppland - Leif Estensen (Sintef), Ole Bakmann (Hedmark University College) and Hans Olav Bråtå (ENRI). They work closely with Innovation Norway. No formal partnership is established between the brokers, but they regularly get together at formal meetings within the regional VRI-project (Regional R&D and Innovation), and have extensive mutual contact by e-mail and phone.

### Activities

**Summary description of the actor's profile (e.g. experience, understanding of the agricultural and rural environment, communication capacities, market issues) and services offered (mission):**

Competence brokerage is one of the means within a large innovation programme administered by the Research Council of Norway (VRI-project). Each region (for example "The interior of Norway") applies for funding from the Research Council.

The primary profile of competence brokerage is to support the firms by helping them to acquire and use R&D. In the case of tourism a very wide definition of R&D is used.

The idea is to conduct projects in the firms. The firms are responsible for the projects, but under the supervision of the competence broker. The firm hire R&D personnel on a project and most of the expense for hiring is paid by funding available for the firms. Due to the EU rules funding may not exceed 50%.

The main idea is that the cooperation between companies, R&D institutions and public agencies shall improve the local and regional innovation systems.

The R&D project may be a preliminary study for a larger and more expensive innovation project, or the project itself could be enough to solve the problem of the firm.

Innovation projects are carried out in a wide range of areas like design, product development, process development, marketing, patenting, etc.

The primary mission is to increase innovation which is going to create additional value for SMEs. The need of the firm is in focus. Still, it is also a mission that R&D providers shall be more experienced in how to work together with firms.

The competence broker's profile is directed both towards single firms and firms working together in networks.

### **Description of process steps and facilitation methods of the innovation processes:**

*How are innovative ideas detected?* Ideas are primarily detected through discussions between the brokers and the firms, but ideas may also be proposed by R&D persons that know the industry and the firms.

*How are partners brought together around an innovative idea?* By organising meetings between actors, both at the firm and the R&D institutions.

*How the innovation broker supports and interfaces between the possible actors (e.g. refining these ideas, formulate the research questions)?* The broker, together with the firm, identifies which ideas are possible to be realised by the means of R&D. As part of that process, the broker identifies how realistic it is to carry out the given project, which R&D firm is suitable and the realism in funding. Still, more detailed research questions are often elaborated through a process primarily involving firm and the R&D institution.

*Were the stakeholders' needs identified before the starting of the brokering processes?* Yes, identifying the needs of the firm is the first and most important element in the brokering process.

*How is information to prepare the possible innovation project collected and shared?* Information is collected in advance by collecting information about the firms and possible themes. During a meeting, the firms are given detailed information about the brokerage. Experiences (like good examples on the use of R&D in firms) are presented for other firms, i.e. by the means of business advisors and seminars. Good project examples are presented on internet websites.

*How innovative ideas are piloted?* The piloting means of innovative ideas depend on the type of innovation and the firm that is supposed to take advantage of the innovation. The firm implement the innovation or tries it out in the real world.

*How are the possible funding sources for innovative projects identified?* Each competence broker in the counties of Hedmark and Oppland administer some funding that can be used to finance individual projects. Still the use of these funds has to be approved by the administrative leader of the VRI-project and the regional representative for the Norwegian Research Council. The brokers are well informed about possible funding sources, i.e. administrated by the Innovation Norway or the Research Council of Norway, and then inform and assist the firms to apply such sources of funding. Other possible funding sources are municipal or regional development funds.

*How the results of the initial project targeting innovation are communicated and spread* – The results are primarily used by each individual firm that take part in the development project. In general, the innovations are not spread systematically to other firms but other firms may be aware of the results and if possible take advantage of that.

### **What works well in supporting innovative actions and the establishment of partnerships?**

Creating a close contact between different actors and working in close relationship with the companies. The primary effort is to help the firm but most of all it is important that the “down to earth” and “non bureaucratic” organisation effort is based on the needs of the firms. Another positive aspect is that each broker administers some funding that easily can be transformed into projects.

### **What are the constraints, difficulties or obstacles that have been encountered and how they were overcome?**

There is some uncertainty from the firms’ point of view with regard to how the system works. This has been overcome by creating close contact with firms throughout the process of establishing the project and by informing about other projects. Showing good examples – which they may recognize – is also important. Some firms initially have few or none ideas, but working closely with them has often led to the discovery of possible ideas that may be suitable for a R&D project.

In tourism it is often put an emphasize on the “D” in R&D – that has opened up to use external actors as culinary academies and individuals that have the useful “hands on” experience which suites the firms needs well.

## **Views and suggestions on success factors for effective innovation brokering**

### **What is the necessary skillset of the innovation broker?**

- To be open-minded – to able to see that a wide variety of innovations are possible and that the innovation is based on the needs of the firm.
- To use as much time as necessary – accept that some ideas or projects are time-consuming to develop.
- To have an overview of the possible firms and R&D suppliers and funding sources.
- To be used to work in an informal or “non bureaucratic way.
- But most of all – have the will to develop projects to the best of the firm and use our knowledge to fulfil that goal. The broker should be able to see the world from the firm’s point of view.

### **What are (if any) the specific needs of the single actors to enable an effective performance (e.g. in terms of capacity building, training, funding etc.)? Who should be addressing these needs?**

The most important need is to have access to easy funding to be used by the firm in their projects. If it turns too complicated, time consuming or too uncertain if the funding will be granted, that destroys the motivation of the firms. Support in the administrative system for a “non bureaucratic” system with regard to funding is crucial.

### **What are the enabling conditions offered by the policy environment at national and EU level (or not offered and therefore that should be created)?**

The enabling condition is that the Research Council of Norway sees competence brokering as an important means, and that they fund the regions where the brokering and other innovation supporting activities are carried out.

### 13. PRIVATE CONSULTANCY "NJØS NÆRINGSUTVIKLING", NORWAY

#### General information

**Country:** Norway

**Innovation actor concerned:** Private consultancy

**Web link:** N/A

**Funding source(s):** Innovation Norway / Arena cluster programme / Regional funds / Nordic Atlantic Cooperation / National programs / private jobs.

**Field / domain of activity; expertise:** Fruit and berries

#### Are there any other actors/partners involved in the provision of services supporting innovation and how they are organised amongst themselves (form of the partnership):

The company is clustering with fruit cooperatives, suppliers, industry, advisory service, education (farming school, university, college), brokering bodies, public financing bodies. We try to develop a good AKIS in the region, also taking account national R&D and universities. Agribusiness Park Sandane and the Food Incubator in Sogn og Fjordane Knowledge Park are both also involved in innovation brokering services.

#### Activities

##### Summary description of the actor's profile (e.g. experience, understanding of the agricultural and rural environment, communication capacities, market issues) and services offered (mission):

Dr. Stein Harald Hjeltnes is CEO of Njøs næringsutvikling and is responsible for the cluster project Arena fruit and berries. This project is a spinoff of a long-term program for fruit and vegetables in the county of Sogn og Fjordane, with the aim to increase the value from the sector. In the board of this programme the industry has the majority of the position and dr. Hjeltnes is secretary. During the process since 2000, the systematic work in the "triple-helix" approach has taken the county from a small position in the Norwegian market to be the number one county concerning fruit and berries. During the process dr. Hjeltnes participated in the Interreg IIIC project UTTS (Unified Technology Transfer Network Strategy) in 2006. He is publishing regularly articles in fruit journals and has published several articles in newspapers during the year. In the course of years of experience in the sector he has also gathered a thorough knowledge to the sector in Norway, and has lead several projects involving the companies in the cluster. He also is a national appointed member in several scientific international networks.

The mission of Njøs næringsutvikling is to be the county's tool for innovation and development of fruit and berries and other prioritized agricultural products. We try to develop the company as a hub, together with other companies at the locality Njøs. The activities are development and running of projects both locally, regionally, nationally and internationally; long term projects and secretary/ hub-functions.

##### Description of process steps and facilitation methods of the innovation processes:

The brokering methods are both systematically developed, at request or at visit. During the years we have developed close relationships with the companies in the sector, and have good knowledge of their strengths and weaknesses both regarding human and financial capacities. We visit the companies and

also have regular seminars where we meet representatives from the companies in the cluster. Then we go through their business and possible ideas to develop their business. This may give rise to new innovations.

In some occasions we are contacted by the companies when they have project ideas, and need help to develop the project both concerning R&D partners and where to get financial support. We then develop the projects in close collaboration with the three partners. Njøs næringsutvikling also runs long term programmes to test out new fruit crops. When promising candidates arise, we present possibilities for the companies, and develop projects together with the companies and public financing bodies.

### **What works well in supporting innovative actions and the establishment of partnerships?**

To our mind the specific project on the innovation process has been very valuable to open the eyes on the companies on how to work on innovations in a systematic way. This type of open innovation is a bit troublesome for companies that are competitors; however this has not shown to be any major problem.

Secondly, direct contact with the companies works well, too. However, a deep knowledge to the whole industry, R&D, financing bodies, rural development programmes and political systems are needed to be a broker that the companies will listen to and open their mind to give ideas that could be worked on.

### **What are the constraints, difficulties or obstacles that have been encountered and how they were overcome?**

Many of the companies are small, and they have low focus on innovation. They focus on getting the wheel running every day. On the other hand, these companies are frequently taking part in the joint meetings and other activities concerning capacity building and knowledge transfer, as long as we keep these meetings short and with an agenda that they feel give them a pay-back.

To our mind development of a functional cluster is important for efficient brokering. This, however, needs continuous effort in keeping the members active. In the beginning of the process, we experienced that the members did not see any considerable results of taking participation, and we solved this partly by increased focus on communication. Now we inform the members by e-mail every week or every second week about what activities and actions have been made in the cluster, and which collaborative projects have been developed and financed. Furthermore, copies of articles that have been published in newspapers and other media concerning fruit and berries in the cluster are attached. This give all participants a view on what is going on, and give an impression on what could be achieved by innovation projects. We have also developed a system which records every year the creation of values from fruit and berries in the county that is communicated in the cluster and through media. In addition, we collect data from other regions that are presented together with our own results and this stimulates the companies both in our region and in others.

Small companies have small muscles; however, they can have big ideas. Our mission is to develop their ideas in a way that can make them grow.

## **Views and suggestions on success factors for effective innovation brokering**

### **What is the necessary skillset of the innovation broker?**

- Deep knowledge of the industry;
- Team builder to link businesses;
- Knowledge of public financial supporting systems;



- Knowledge of how academic institutions work, R&D and Universities;
- Relevant with experience as top leader of a business.

**What are (if any) the specific needs of the single actors to enable an effective performance (e.g. in terms of capacity building, training, funding etc.)? Who should be addressing these needs?**

The broker should have a position where he/she is mostly free from work considering financing of his/her own position. This will take resources from the main work. Innovation brokering should have a defined time-span in terms of years, however, a longer time-span than standard 3-year projects. It is also favourable to have forums where experiences could be exchanged.

**What are the enabling conditions offered by the policy environment at national and EU level (or not offered and therefore that should be created)?**

National cluster programmes as Arena and Norwegian Centres of Expertise and regional programmes to stimulate innovation (VRI).

Programmes for funding of R&D on a regional, national and EU-level, stimulate innovation in the companies and R&D bodies, however it has a limited effect of the sector as a whole.

There should be a more long term offer to support programmes for specific sector in agriculture, e.g. fruit and vegetables, animal husbandry and cereals. These programmes should have boards with selected high skilled personal from the industry, together with a skilled broker as secretary and representatives from public with an understanding of the sector. Long term strategic planning should be the main mission of these programmes, including strategic analyses, plans for recruitment, specific bottle necks and stimulation of innovation. Brokerage, business modelling and establishment of R&D project should also be part of these programmes.

## 14. NATIONAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE OF ANIMAL PRODUCTION (NRIAP), POLAND

### General information

**Country:** Poland

**Innovation actor concerned:** Research Institute / University

**Web link:** <http://www.izoo.krakow.pl/>

**Funding source(s):** Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, Ministry of Science and Higher Education

#### Field / domain of activity; expertise:

- Genetics and breeding of farm animals;
- Development of the methods for biotechnology of reproduction of male and female farm animals;
- In situ and ex situ conservation of farm animal genetic resources;
- Animal cytogenetic and molecular genetics;
- Animal nutrition and feed science;
- Technology, ecology and economics of animal production.

#### Are there any other actors/partners involved in the provision of services supporting innovation and how they are organised amongst themselves (form of the partnership):

The employees of the Department of "Research Commercialisation and Cooperation with Practice", take part in the realisation of innovation tasks of Technology Transfer Group - Cluster Lifescience team within the framework of the project "LifeScience Klaster Krakow – building the cooperation ability in the field of cooperation network of bio-regions of Europe". The project aims to support academic innovation and entrepreneurship, improve the effectiveness of activities in the scope of knowledge and technology transfer and to develop linkages between science and businesses in the field of biotechnology and life sciences. During this project, 4 study visits (Saragossa, Riga, Greifswald and Edinburgh), training in Evry (France) and two conferences in Krakow – Life Science Open Space were organized. These activities aimed at building scientific cooperation with foreign partners and disseminating the technological and cooperation offers of scientific institutes and companies in the field of life science.

### Activities

#### Summary description of the actor's profile (e.g. experience, understanding of the agricultural and rural environment, communication capacities, market issues) and services offered (mission):

NRIAP is the largest institute in the agricultural sector serving the whole country. The institute is engaged in research and development work, which comprises the breeding of all species of farm animals and the entirety of animal production issues. This activity is directed at the current and future needs for the production of safe food and the use of farm animals for biomedical purposes.

The Institute's accomplishments in the field of *genetics, cytogenetic, reproductive biotechnology and molecular biology* were particularly significant.

The remarkable increase in livestock productivity and the intensification of animal production resulted from the application of effective genetic methods, to which also Polish scientists have contributed. In order to utilize these genetically improved traits, it was essential to provide farm animals with more favourable environmental conditions. Scientists from our Institute keep working on this. Researchers from the Department of Animal Nutrition and Feed Science work to improve feeding methods and those from the Department of Technology, Ecology and Economics of Animal Production improve animal management methods to ensure better welfare.

In the field of reproductive biology and later reproductive biotechnology, the Institute has conducted pioneering research on embryo transplantation in sheep and rabbits, and succeeded in the birth of the first Polish lambs from divided embryos as well as the first transgenic animals, lambs and calves after the transfer of frozen embryos. In 2002, the Institute developed methods for identification of animal protein in feeds, which are helpful in BSE prevention. Pigs of line 990 were created which meet the highest requirements of breeders, the meat industry and the consumer market. A highly valuable and efficient breed of White Kołuda geese was also created. The National Research Institute of Animal Production also conducts research to determine the breeding value of animals based on their performance results; collects and standardizes reagents for blood typing research in order to determine the origin of animals; and runs the national feed information centre. A reserve of the genetic material of protected native breeds is being created at the Institute's Bank of Biological Materials, which is like a Noah's Ark. It is the National Research Institute of Animal Production that coordinates activities for conservation of farm animal genetic resources in Poland, among others by establishing conservation herds of old Polish breeds on farms and in the Institute's experimental stations.

### **Description of process steps and facilitation methods of the innovation processes:**

*How are innovative ideas detected?* The innovative ideas are detected by conducting research projects, cooperation with scientific entities and direct contacts with farmers. Cooperation with Cluster Lifescience gives additional possibilities of collecting and development of new ideas. Innovations are transferred to the practice throughout the realisation of various projects. Technology Management Offering System – base of scientific offerings, enables the members of Technology Transfer Group to place information about the technological and cooperation offers of their institutes. They can be at different stage of development (ranging from an idea, concept to a technology that is on the market). Through the cooperation with scientists, the relevant data are subsequently added as the project is developing.

*How is information to prepare the possible innovation project collected and shared?* Biodiversity protection using the Exitu method – collection of genetic materials in order to protect species. The whole genetic material of 5 species: cattle, horses, pigs, sheep, goats will be maintained in the bank of information. The innovation projects are implemented in the own research stations and then coordinators cooperate directly with:

- i) Farmers (80 thousand animals included in genetic conservation);
- ii) Breeders associations in the scope of value breeding evaluation;
- iii) Animal insemination stations in order to gain genetic materials;
- iv) Companies e.g. in the scope of creation the optimal feed system e.g. Helixia (snails breeders), Intermag (feed producers).

The institute cooperates also with international entities working in similar fields. For example, it collaborates with France for the reintroduction of Landes goose in the territory of France through providing hatching eggs free of charge.

*How are the possible funding sources for innovative projects identified?* The employees of the Department of Research Commercialization and Cooperation with Practice search for the information on

different grants and projects of European Union. The information is disseminated to the scientists. The Institute has realized various innovative projects e.g. RDP, Leonardo Da Vinci Programme Innovation Transfer, research grants.

*How the results of the initial project targeting innovation are communicated and spread?* Dissemination of the research results is realized by the use of ICT tools (via [www.izoo.krakow.pl](http://www.izoo.krakow.pl)). Other instruments for dissemination of results are:

- i) Trainings for farmers within measure 111 "Vocational training for persons employed in agriculture and forestry" within Rural Development Programme for 2007-2013;
- ii) Presentation of native breeds and dissemination of the Institute's scientific results during fairs and exhibitions.

### **What works well in supporting innovative actions and the establishment of partnerships?**

Participation in the Cluster Lifescience is a very efficient way for establishing and supporting a partnership between various institutions from business and science sectors. The form of Technology Transfer Group meetings is open to all the members of the Cluster. Thanks to the study visits, scientific conferences and Open Days of the Cluster, the representatives of different institutes can become acquainted with the technological offer and innovations in the field of life science and establish cooperation in the area of their interest.

### **What are the constraints, difficulties or obstacles that have been encountered and how they were overcome?**

The main difficulties and obstacles result mainly from administrative issues (bureaucratic procedures discourage business partners).

### **Views and suggestions on success factors for effective innovation brokering**

#### **What is the necessary skillset of the innovation broker?**

A good team with dynamic management seems to be a key for successful innovation brokering.

## 15. INTERFACE – THE KNOWLEDGE CONNECTION FOR BUSINESS, UK SCOTLAND

### General information

**Country:** United Kingdom / Scotland

**Innovation actor concerned:** Research Institute/ University

**Web link:** [www.interface-online.org.uk](http://www.interface-online.org.uk) / [www.interfacefoodanddrink.org](http://www.interfacefoodanddrink.org)

**Funding source(s):**

- Scottish Funding Council;
- Scottish Enterprise;
- Highlands and Islands Enterprise;
- European Regional Development Fund;

The service is completely financed through public sources and has limited possibility of generation fee based income due to the early stage businesses that are supported.

**Field / domain of activity; expertise:**

All academic disciplines from engineering, sciences, technology, arts, humanities, social sciences, etc.

**Are there any other actors/partners involved in the provision of services supporting innovation and how they are organised amongst themselves (form of the partnership):**

*Interface* provides a cost effective means for the 24 partner University and Research institutions in Scotland to identify SMEs and companies for collaborative working and the opportunity to build lasting relationships. The 5 staff members of the *Interface-food and drink* team specifically support agri-food businesses stimulating demand for knowledge exchange and facilitating collaboration partnerships. These team members all have industry relevant experience which is applied to their understanding of industry requirements/Higher Education Institution (HEI) offering.

### Activities

**Summary description of the actor's profile (e.g. experience, understanding of the agricultural and rural environment, communication capacities, market issues) and services offered (mission):**

Interface provides a central point of access for industry to Scotland's research base through its unique matchmaking and intelligent brokerage service. Its aim is to maximise business potential by stimulating innovation and matching a company with the relevant expertise at universities, which can help develop solutions to solve business challenges.

Interface hosted by the University of Edinburgh comprises 24 partner Universities and Research Institutes within Scotland. The partners have come together by mutual consent to provide a central point of access for companies to tap into their world leading expertise across a wide breadth of disciplines from science, engineering and technology to arts and humanities. Interface core aims and objectives are to:

- provide a central point of access to the knowledge, expertise, services and facilities available from Scottish Universities and Research Institutes for industry and commercial organizations;

- provide detailed expressions of interest on the capability and capacity in response to enquiries
- stimulate demand by companies across all sectors and sizes (in particular SMEs) for expertise and commercial opportunities;
- filter and direct enquires to individual research groups and monitor progress of enquiries until a conclusion is reached including support and guidance on funding options

We actively pursue a strategy for stimulating demand for knowledge exchange between industry and our 24 partner universities and research institutions across Scotland through creating sustained partnerships, proactive marketing, stakeholder engagement and infrastructure management including research into long term sustainability options.

Interface has introduced over 1,227 businesses to academic partners and 715 collaborative projects have been facilitated since 2005. Outputs include a wide range of collaborative projects with a majority being through feasibility studies, student assignments/placements and Innovation Voucher supported consultancy. Interface has gone from strength to strength over the last year broadening its reach across all industry sectors from food and drink to tourism and all regions both rural and urban.

The companies supported by the Interface team are already demonstrating significant business benefits from their academic partnerships including new products, sales and international links. As a result a new breed of companies are emerging that look to academic institutions as a partner of choice when considering innovating within their businesses. Many case studies can be found on <http://www.interface-online.org.uk/>

The Interface Food & Drink (IFD) project commenced in 2011 and is comprised of 5 team members representing private and public sector industry background including commercial, regulation, environment and academia. Our remit is to foster a culture of innovation within the industry sector by encouraging and promoting collaborations between the industry within Scotland and 17 of Scotland's universities.

The team's understanding of the food industry is strong, and has significant expertise in environmental issues. The team uses its close connections with trade associations and cooperatives, such as SAOS, SOPA and QMS to further its understanding of rural/agricultural issues.

Not wishing to further cloud a cluttered landscape, IFD uses other mechanisms to communicate to the industry, largely the Scotland Food & Drink newsletter and events. It is about to launch its own website ([www.interfacefoodanddrink.org](http://www.interfacefoodanddrink.org))

### **Description of process steps and facilitation methods of the innovation processes:**

In outline terms, the intelligent brokerage service is delivered as follows:

- in response to direct or referred enquiries from companies of all sizes and sectors, the team works closely with its 24 HEI partners to identify relevant expertise from the Scottish research base to meet the organisation's needs;
- from the initial approach the team works with the company to clarify needs and helping to articulate the enquiry. During these reviews the team gains a good understanding of the SMEs needs which will aid in highlighting areas where wider collaborative engagement with the science base may be beneficial.
- from the information supplied and following the decision of the company, Interface initiates a search to potential HEIs and gathers suitable responses. Interface then facilitates introductions to potential collaborators from across the entire Scottish research base;

- the programme is impartial and it is up to each individual company to select the most appropriate collaborative partner for their project

The project executives will also provide advice on potential funding options as appropriate to the nature and scale of the proposed collaboration.

It is important to note that the Interface team invests a significant amount of time and effort at the early stages of the process, in particular in helping companies to frame and articulate their enquiry. The feedback from the HEIs is this has greatly improved the quality of the enquiries coming through the system, enhancing the chances of successful outcomes.

The desirable outcome from an Interface enquiry is a collaboration/ partnership between a Scottish Higher education institution and the company. Collaborative projects once commenced are led by the Institution, but are closely monitored by the Interface team. Effective delivery of the Interface service depends on the close cooperation of the partners through the nominated Points of Contact based in the University and Research Institute Research and Commercialisation Offices. Their responsibilities are set out in an operating plan, signed by each institution. Progress with each enquiry and project is undertaken on a regular basis through emails and phone calls with the lead business champion.

Outcomes from the programme of activity will include knowledge exchange, business and product development, process or service improvement, or analysis and testing. These outcomes will be developed through leverage of existing support mechanisms eg. Innovation Vouchers, KTP etc. In many instances these short scoping studies will provide the SME with reassurance that their initial idea is worthwhile to develop further and put it in a stronger position to self fund or seek further funding from a 3rd Party eg. SMART: Scotland to complete the project. Furthermore the outcomes will in many cases result in a sustained relationship between the SME and the academic base leading to longer collaborative projects in the future.

Marketing and promotion of the role of Interface is critical to ensuring that relevant companies and other organizations that support businesses are aware of the service and the benefits of collaborating with academic groups. The marketing strategy includes the following key activities:

3rd Party events are attended by the Interface team either in a networking capacity or exhibiting/presenting. A series of events is undertaken in partnership with other locally based organisations e.g. Trade associations, Chambers of Commerce, Fusion etc. Given the rural nature some of these events will be delivered online via blended webinars to target specific sectors. Online delivery is of particular importance in the Highlands and Islands and other remote rural areas.

*Intermediary meetings* - Regular meetings will be held with a variety of stakeholders who will provide referrals including Scottish Enterprise and Highland and Islands Enterprise account managers, industry sector and innovation specialist teams, Chamber of Commerce, Trade Associations etc. to raise awareness of the service and outcomes

*Interface website* - is the primary source of information available to internal and external customers and features a considerable number of case studies, funding options, news and details of ways of collaborating with academic partners.

*Case studies* - Around 30 new case studies are developed each year to encourage companies by peer example to engage with the academic sector to grow their business

*Press/PR* – the programme has regular contributions and case study promotions through local and national press, trade association journals and e-bulletins etc.

*e-marketing activities* – including regular e-newsletter to over 3000 recipients, e- marketing campaigns to specialized industrial sectors eg. tourism, creative industries etc.

*Social Media* is regarded as strategic marketing tool by Interface. The primary objective of these activities is to raise awareness of the Interface service and create new opportunities through further engagement with current stakeholders, clients and potential clients. This includes the Interface LinkedIn Group, weekly Blog, Facebook and Twitter account. These are all regularly updated with news, discussion topics and news on Interface activities.

### **What works well in supporting innovative actions and the establishment of partnerships?**

- Free, impartial and bespoke brokerage service: to companies regarding the specialist expertise; including research and technology, consultancy, industrial placements and access to equipment and facilities. The team matches business need to academic expertise and provide support to facilitate productive R&D collaborations for mutual benefit.
- Unique model: that offers businesses the impartiality of understanding available academic capability and capacity and speed of response without having to individually contact many different research groups that may appear relevant to their business requirements.
- Face to face brokerage: through regional offices and acting impartially to help engage, catalyse and connect with businesses
- Proactive translation service: to the private sector to address the issue that they “don’t know what they don’t know” by promoting suggestions of relevant expertise from across the academic institutions
- Expertise: across both sectoral and regional capabilities within the operations team to ensure widespread engagement with the business community
- Identifying challenges the businesses are facing and help them understand how academia may be able to help them solve their technical or business challenge.
- Underpinning operational activity with proactive marketing activity in the form of a comprehensive website, case study materials from a wide range of sectors, organizing events, the use of social media, webinars and webcasting to offer new means of engagement. New innovative ways of delivering content has resulted in 17% of all enquiries originating from events and 22% directly via website or by phone.
- Networks: Being seen and staying in contact with 17% of enquiries from repeat business through focus newsletters/e-campaigns; attending, presenting and exhibiting at events
- Active engagement with a network of intermediary organisations (Enterprise agencies, Chambers of commerce and trade bodies) in all of Scotland’s regions and key sectors to generate leads through referrals which now account for 37% of the Interface leads.

### **What are the constraints, difficulties or obstacles that have been encountered and how they were overcome?**

Many of the activities developed by Interface have been informed by the client companies to ensure demand led approach. This close co-operation with businesses and key stakeholders can be distilled into the following success factors:

Supply side ‘push’ from universities is extremely important but is not itself the complete answer. Development of business demand for knowledge and expertise is crucial. This is a well-established



challenge - in Scotland and internationally - which involves culture change in both academia and in business.

Knowledge exchange works best when the partners work closely together and establish a lasting relationship based on trust, respect and an understanding of how their different talents produce mutual benefits. The Interface process is highly dependent on the quality of the staff and the personal contact at each stage in the process. While this face-to-face approach is resource intensive, it was consistently identified as a major strength of the Interface model by all stakeholder groups. Most notably regional offices are now established in Inverness and Glasgow to enable a more accessible face-to-face service for businesses in the Highlands & Islands and West of Scotland and deliver more proactive engagement with hard to reach SMEs.

Interface takes as its starting point the needs of its business clients, and seeks the expertise most appropriate to meeting those needs, regardless of where that is located. This neutrality allows Interface to act as an honest broker, a feature that was consistently identified as a strength by stakeholders and HEIs alike. It is also a 'one-stop-shop' offering a single point of entry for businesses seeking academic expertise.

From the initial phase of the project the team at Interface has developed a specific and central role in the knowledge exchange landscape, and has worked to ensure that this is understood by other actors and intermediaries in the innovation system. For businesses using the service, Interface effectively simplifies this picture by directing companies to the expertise that they require and any suitable sources of support.

## Views and suggestions on success factors for effective innovation brokering

### What is the necessary skillset of the innovation broker?

- Excellent interpersonal skills - facilitation, trust, curiosity;
- Tenacity and patience;
- Wide ranging experience and knowledge of business and academic disciplines;
- Able to see simple solutions when faced with complex challenges.

### What are (if any) the specific needs of the single actors to enable an effective performance (e.g. in terms of capacity building, training, funding etc.)? Who should be addressing these needs?

Expertise enquiries fall into two categories:

- Problem solving - where the company does not have the in-house capability and is seeking to collaborate/ subcontract a university partner to undertake this
- Horizon scanning - companies who are seeking to move into a new area of business/ develop a new product or process and wish to know what the current developments in technology or otherwise by collaborating with an academic group

### What are the enabling conditions offered by the policy environment at national and EU level (or not offered and therefore that should be created)?

Policy in innovation and higher education has long recognised the need for measures to help remove barriers, fill information gaps, facilitate interaction with the knowledge base and incentivise engagement.

Interface encompasses all of these elements, and has demonstrated consistently strong performance in encouraging new interactions between SMEs and academia. The strategic direction and enabling conditions for Interface is in line with the Scottish Funding Council Policy on knowledge exchange, the Scottish Government National Outcomes and Universities Scotland policy. Interface aligns with and contributes to a number of key policy objectives for local, regional, national and European strategies.

The key Scottish Government strategies and frameworks make clear the need for intervention via the Interface programme to allow practical application of the excellent R&D in the academic sector to drive economic impact in the business base. However, whilst there is clear strategic fit, market failure must be identified to justify public intervention. The feedback from both Interface's annual surveys of beneficiary companies and stakeholders, and in the evaluation of the programme (EKOS 2010), confirms the service continues to address systemic market failures in the innovation process.

Other enabling conditions include the availability of a Scottish wide innovation voucher scheme and other products such as knowledge transfer partnerships which provide a means to deliver the collaborative projects.

That demand for support from Interface has consistently grown, even through the recession period, suggests growing interest among companies in working with HEIs. Indeed, with growing pressure on businesses as a result of the recession, it is arguably even more important that they invest in innovation to improve company performance and develop new products and services.

Further enabling conditions include increased co-operation across business support organisations to ensure fast and effective referrals ie "no wrong door for business"

## 16. QUALITY MEAT SCOTLAND, UK SCOTLAND

### General information

**Country:** United Kingdom / Scotland

**Innovation actor concerned:** Non department public body

**Web link:** [www.qmscotland.co.uk](http://www.qmscotland.co.uk)

**Funding source(s):** Parafiscal Levy

**Field / domain of activity; expertise:** Livestock agriculture and meat production, processing and marketing and industry economics

**Are there any other actors/partners involved in the provision of services supporting innovation and how they are organised amongst themselves (form of the partnership):**  
There are no other partners involved.

### Activities

**Summary description of the actor's profile (e.g. experience, understanding of the agricultural and rural environment, communication capacities, market issues) and services offered (mission):**

The mission of "Quality meat" is to shape a sustainable and prospering Scottish red meat industry. This is underpinned by long standing expertise in the agricultural and rural environment, excellent communication capacities and a strong and successful marketing department.

The R&D strategy is developed by the R&D committee and approved by the Quality Meat Scotland Board, both of which comprise practitioners in the production, processing and marketing of meat livestock and their products.

Quality Meat Scotland offers innovation in R&D for both livestock and products, economics, marketing and communication examples of all of these can be found at the website above.

Quality Meat Scotland has an innovative communication opportunity for innovation in addition to the 'normal' routes. This is via the Monitor Farm Programme and Business Improvement Groups (see website above).

**Description of process steps and facilitation methods of the innovation processes:**

Ideas are generated by the industry stakeholders, Quality Meat Scotland or by discussions between the two. Innovation tends to be led from Quality Meat Scotland making contact with academics and other industry partners to form a consortium to undertake R&D, to deliver innovation to the industry. Ideas are refined and research questions formulated through iterative discussion, hands on pilot studies, reading the scientific literature and listening to the needs of the stakeholders. Increasingly, where possible, efforts are being made by Quality Meat Scotland to achieve both the R&D and innovation with as much stakeholder involvement – including the execution of the R&D and delivery and dissemination and implementation of the innovation as possible. Funding sources are identified by Quality Meat Scotland through their knowledge of the funding environment within the UK and globally.

### **What works well in supporting innovative actions and the establishment of partnerships?**

Direct communication between Quality Meat Scotland staff, stakeholders, academics and appropriate other industrial partners.

### **What are the constraints, difficulties or obstacles that have been encountered and how they were overcome?**

The major problem is access to funding – mainly through eligibility issues for some funding sources.

Intermediary linking, facilitating groups/organisations with no academic or sectoral expertise do not work well. Quality Meat Scotland has tried to use these but based on experience no longer will avail themselves of the service, because the concept is fundamentally flawed.

## **Views and suggestions on success factors for effective innovation brokering**

### **What is the necessary skillset of the innovation broker?**

- Expert knowledge of the academic or technical area relevant to the stakeholder sector together with the essential hands on experience and knowledge in terms of the stakeholder needs;
- Knowledge of other sectors and technologies and innovation cross-links;
- An ability to think out of the box;
- Expertise and experience in drawing together large disparate groups of people to form a unified consortium;
- Strong communication, organisational and management skills;
- The ability to listen;
- The ability to provide whole process support if needed;
- The ability to work at all levels from Government policy to factory floor.

### **What are (if any) the specific needs of the single actors to enable an effective performance (e.g. in terms of capacity building, training, funding etc.)? Who should be addressing these needs?**

Additional support in helping to develop knowledge of innovations and technologies outside the stakeholder specific sector would assist in cross-sectoral innovation.

More central funding should be available to support the formation of consortia and the execution of pilot level innovation.

Central Funding should be also provided to support innovation expert staff posts both within specialist organisations and within SMEs. This would help to develop a culture of innovation across the SME community, and would contribute to capacity building.

### **What are the enabling conditions offered by the policy environment at national and EU level (or not offered and therefore that should be created)?**

Policy should create a new strong focus of funding innovation support on specialist - front line organisations or consultants who can demonstrate direct stakeholder interactions, knowledge of the key innovation needs of the stakeholders, together with high levels of academic/technical expertise in the key stakeholder sector and knowledge of the innovation landscape in other sectors, particularly the

future and emerging technologies. The combination of direct stakeholder and academic/technological expertise is essential and critical to successful and sustainable innovation leading to business growth.

The balance of central funding is heavily weighted to supporting research in academic institutes. The costs of disseminating and implementing the knowledge gained from R&D into practise is very underestimated. Policy should rebalance funding the priorities of R&D and knowledge exchange towards a more realistic proportionality to ensure R&D is delivers concrete economic benefits to support sustainable economic growth. This rebalancing should focus more on funding for the front line, directly stakeholder-engaging organisations to ensure appropriate and timely impact.

## 17. SCOTLAND'S RURAL COLLEGE (SRUC), UK SCOTLAND

### General information

**Country:** United Kingdom / Scotland

**Innovation actor concerned:** Research Institute / University

**Web link:** [www.sruc.ac.uk](http://www.sruc.ac.uk)

**Funding source(s):** Scottish Government/ Scottish Funding Council / European funds / Commercial income from 12,000 customers, ranging from SME's through to large corporations, local government and charitable organisations.

**Field / domain of activity; expertise:** Agriculture and rural matters. Includes disciplines of business management, crops, livestock, environment, rural policy, veterinary.

**Are there any other actors/partners involved in the provision of services supporting innovation and how they are organised amongst themselves (form of the partnership):**

As a Higher Education Institution, SRUC operates in collaboration with Scottish and UK Government, NGO's, Universities, Colleges, commercial companies, supermarkets, international agencies. The partnerships are organised on an individual contractual basis. SRUC may be the lead partner or be a participant in a multi-partner initiative.

### Activities

**Summary description of the actor's profile (e.g. experience, understanding of the agricultural and rural environment, communication capacities, market issues) and services offered (mission):**

*SRUC Mission:* Committed to excellence in the advancement, communication and translation of knowledge throughout the rural sector.

SRUC is unique in Scotland and one of the largest organisations of its kind in Europe (1500 staff) with key strengths in the diversity of our assets and skills of our staff. A cornerstone of SRUC is its internationally-respected research, which seeks to address the major challenges of growing global demand for food, climate change and dwindling natural resources. Drawing on this foundation of cutting-edge research, a central SRUC emphasis will be on education and knowledge exchange.

Reflecting its ethos of knowledge exchange, it involves students and stakeholders, customers and clients in the rural sector as it continue to grow and develop. Its aim is to build a culture of excellence through the development of a Rural University College with degree awarding powers.

SRUC innovative research also helps rural industries: SAC Consulting, a division of SRUC, delivers leading-edge advice and consultancy to over 12,000 clients, in Scotland and across the rest of the UK. [http://www.sruc.ac.uk/info/20005/sac\\_consulting](http://www.sruc.ac.uk/info/20005/sac_consulting)

**Description of process steps and facilitation methods of the innovation processes:**

There are a multitude of methods that are used in a dedicated KTE-type organisation like SRUC. These are impossible to describe adequately in this document. The basic formula begins with an organisation

that has research and innovation as a significant capacity. Without this capacity brokers cannot hope to operate successfully or take a strategic view of need.

The interface between the potential beneficiaries (actors) takes many forms in a Higher Education Institution (HEI) – clients from public and private sectors. These can be single potential entrepreneurs or large corporations look for innovative solutions. Even single students can use innovative experiences to develop new businesses and become entrepreneurial success stories.  
[http://www.sruc.ac.uk/info/120069/rural\\_policy\\_centre](http://www.sruc.ac.uk/info/120069/rural_policy_centre)

Innovative opportunities may arise through consultancy demand (for example SAC Consulting, a Division of SRUC has 10,000 + customers every year). Exploitation opportunities will depend upon the idea itself, the assistance available, resources and the time frame for development. The nature of support and mentoring will vary across every project. This could be financial assistance, technical expertise, a pilot plan, a marketing programme or a fundamental piece of research. All HEI-type organisations are constantly looking for funds and methods to help create partnership opportunities for innovative ventures.

SRUC uses a range of approaches for KTE that bring together research, consultancy and education. Marketing of the successful impact of new innovative approaches is critical to the reputation and financial sustainability of organisations involved as major knowledge brokers such as SRUC. See innovation: [http://www.sruc.ac.uk/info/120423/behavioural\\_change\\_and\\_innovation\\_group](http://www.sruc.ac.uk/info/120423/behavioural_change_and_innovation_group)

### **What works well in supporting innovative actions and the establishment of partnerships?**

Some of the key factors include:

- An understanding of the working environment and local / national conditions;
- Correct intelligence re market demand and receptiveness to new ideas/products;
- Trust and long-term working relationships between partners;
- Independence and academic freedom to pursue innovation and research without external influences;
- Opportunities to illustrate mutual benefits and rewards to partners – not always financial, could be intellectual;
- A broad and comprehensive understanding of agriculture and rural disciplines – social, economic and environmental;
- The lead brokering organisation must have a strong recognised brand and be acknowledged by its peers;
- A strong customer-service culture and institutional ambition to serve agriculture and rural communities;
- Strong leadership in management and political awareness.

### **What are the constraints, difficulties or obstacles that have been encountered and how they were overcome?**

Typical constraints include:

- *Incompatible cultures and missions of the partners, or conflicting interests of partners* – choose partners with care, use experience and breadth of knowledge; refer to other host bodies where conflicts arise;

- *Requirements for confidentiality* – programme contract conditions as appropriate;
- *Lack of funding* – consider resources at an early stage;
- *Inadequate risk-taking* – use careful professional opinion, apply strategic and multidisciplinary reviews;
- *Poor communication and understanding* of the key issues including social drivers of behaviours and resistance to change – ensure behavioural elements are part of institutional expertise portfolio;

## Views and suggestions on success factors for effective innovation brokering

### What is the necessary skillset of the innovation broker?

- Broad base of expertise, multidisciplinary research-based;
- Ability to use KTE approaches;
- Sustain a reputation of excellent performance at national and international levels.

### What are (if any) the specific needs of the single actors to enable an effective performance (e.g. in terms of capacity building, training, funding etc.)? Who should be addressing these needs?

The innovation broker business has to be financially sustainable otherwise none of the above ambitions can be realised.

### What are the enabling conditions offered by the policy environment at national and EU level (or not offered and therefore that should be created)?

Most of the enabling conditions already exist, although these are commercially competitive across a sector that has a high proportion of SME's and a very low capacity to support research and innovation. In agriculture and rural innovation we require securing an environment where risk-taking and making the effort to develop innovative approaches can be rewarded. The environment requires displaying some market incentives coupled with cultural drivers that support entrepreneurship. Agriculture and rural industries require to be viewed as socially important and innovation is a key element in sustaining rural and urban livelihoods. The public must be convinced that supporting rural and agricultural enterprise is worthy for economic, social and environmental reasons. Support from the EU that appears to allow an industry to survive and not be innovative or progressive is unacceptable to the public.