

How to involve firms in cross border innovation

The role of large corporations and mediator organisations



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ØRESUND – KATTEGAT – SKAGERRAK

Lessons learned

- Innovation is cooperation
- The research-to-SME cooperation often needs a mediator
- In dense, closely knit innovation systems, the role of the mediator is to open up research institutions and increase SME's accessibility to research
- In weak and thin systems the role of the mediator is to bridge gaps
- Cross-border programmes have been shown able to do both
- Opening up national innovation systems by bringing in new mediators and methods
- Creating a denser innovation system by bringing in large firms and different research institutes

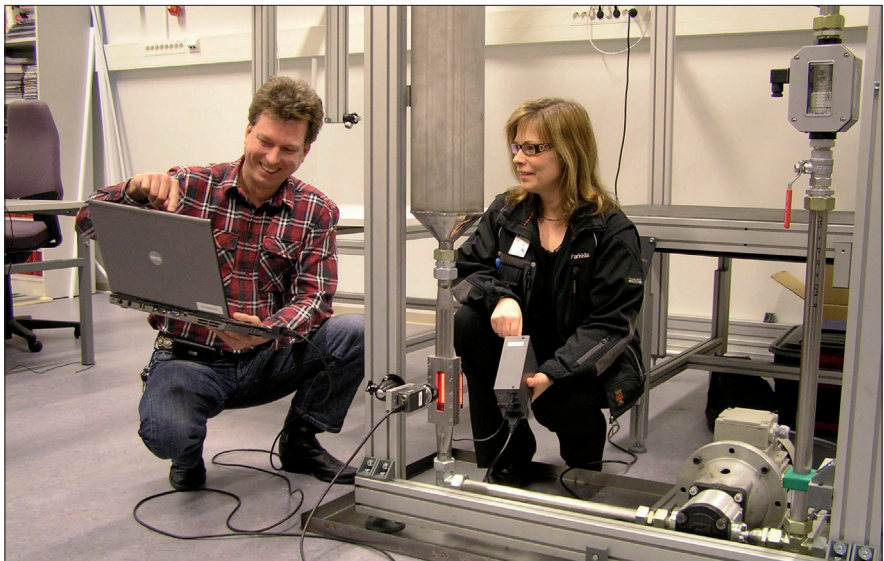
The Nord Programme

Challenges and possibilities in the Programme area

- Regional innovation system peripheral to national nodes, and weak cross-border links
- Low innovation capacity among SME:s
- Limited entrepreneurial tradition
- Large firms are important to region's business-structure
- Programme strategy to strengthen regional innovation nodes and system by cross-border collaboration
- Large firms play a key mediator role – linking SME:s to universities research institutes
- Cross-border collaboration helps create a dense system of SME:s, large firms, research institutes and universities

The Project: Oil Analysis

- Development of an online verification and measuring technology of particles in oils
- Initiated by a network of large firms (e.g. LKAB, Outokumpu, and Stora Enso) and Luleå University of Technology (LTU)
- Lack of SME:s for implementation
- Through cross-border cooperation between firms, LTU, and Kemi-Tornio college, a number of small firms in the region have now adopted new methods and deliver new standard services
- In some cases this lead to unforeseen technological spin-offs



The Öresund-Kattegat-Skagerrak Programme

Challenges and possibilities in the Programme area

- Regional innovation system central to national nodes, but weak cross-border links
- Uneven innovation capacity among SME:s
- Dense systems to promote SME Innovation, but sometimes strong barriers
- Diversified business landscape with less degree of large dominating firms
- Interest organisations, business chambers, incubators and other non-governmental associations play a key mediating role
- New cross-border partnerships on a non-governmental level help breaking barriers and enhance the involvement of SME:s in the innovation processes

The Project: CATE – Cluster for Accelerator Technology

- Offers companies in the ÖKS-region a competence development programme within accelerator technology
- Gives better opportunities to get contracts for the construction of international research infrastructure
- Cross-border-cooperation necessary to gather critical mass of companies because of the high specialisation
- Identification and recruitment of companies made possible through mediators close to the companies



During autumn 2011 and spring 2012 the two programmes *Interreg IVA Nord* (Finland, Sweden and Norway) and the *Interreg IVA Öresund-Kattegat-Skagerrak* (Denmark, Sweden and Norway) made a comparative evaluation. The focus of the evaluation was on the innovation processes in the cross-border cooperation.

The starting point was to look at challenges and possibilities for innovation in the two programme areas and to look for lessons learned in the Interreg-funded projects.

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