

Wrap up and Conclusions of the Conference

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As shown, inter-regional networking by means of linking science parks was the first step in linking clusters in the Baltic Sea Region.

Science parks facilitate selected networking between local organisations on both sides, but their networking ability is limited by their structure and scope.

Empirical analysis has shown that the structure of science parks in the Baltic Sea Region differs:

- KISTA in Stockholm and Otaniemi in Helsinki have emerged around focal companies (Ericsson and Nokia) and are highly specialized on one technology sector
- Berlin Adlershof includes a broad range of sectors.

This structural bias in combination with the limited geographical scope of science parks requires the integration of a higher level of networking between the regions in order to max out their full cooperation potential.

When reaching a certain development stage technology or innovation fields become clusters, which are usually managed on a regional level either by networks, political institutions or other organisations (Culminatum, TSB, ...).

These institutions typically deal with strategic aspects of regional cluster development and often are the source of goal-oriented innovation initiatives.

One of the mayor obstacles in inter-regional networking is the necessity of creating aligned strategic goals and initiatives.

Many inter-regional innovation projects are coordinated by dominant company (mainly OEMs) - pure SME-projects are the exception rather than the rule.

Many SMEs are unable to judge

- future market conditions due to insufficient information about activities in other countries / regions and therefore
- overestimate the risk of investment in certain R&D projects, especially regarding implementation of own ideas or interests by initiating project calls.

Moreover SMEs are often unable to cope the efforts for project coordination
⇒ resulting in a shortcoming of pure SME-projects.

Summarizing - inter-regional strategic initiatives could:

- Establish a strategic dialog between partner regions about future development trends and goals in certain technology fields
- Provide matchmaking for companies and research institutions on regional level
- Pool information about research activities and thereby avoid redundancy and foster bundling of complementary capabilities
- Function as a platform for implementation of R&D initiatives
- Facilitate exchange of cluster development best practices in certain technology fields
- Support inter-regional cooperation initiatives through providing information about
 - funding instruments,
 - market conditions (market access conditions),
 - EU-programmes, process moderation etc.
- Act as coordinator in inter-regional cooperation projects

Thank for your Attention

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