

GENERAL DATA AND CRITERIA FOR PRIZE AWARDING

The Jury's decision is definitive and cannot be appealed.

The criteria listed below will be used by the candidate in the auto-evaluation process and then by the Jury in its evaluation. During the self-evaluation process, the institution should assign points for each criterion.

In addition to the self-evaluation criteria, the filling in of some general data is required. In this way, evaluators can have a general idea of the organizational size

and activities of the regional institution concerned.

The Jury will not evaluate the general information; it will use it as a context in the pre-selection process.

The general information and the self-evaluation criteria are listed below.

GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE REGIONAL INSTITUTION AND THE PROJECT:

Name: Department for Economic Affairs & Innovation,
Government of Styria,

Type of the institution: governmental

Number of employees in 2006: 26

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Project name:

RIST - REGIONAL INTERNATIONALISATIONSTRATEGY STYRIA

Person in charge: Mr. Michael Azodanloo-Melzer

EVALUATION CRITERIA

1. Innovative nature and quality of the proposal (originality and creativity)

What has made this project innovative and why?

RIST is the first program for interregional cooperation, that first bundles all relevant players of a region in the field of Economy (Regional Government, Chamber of Commerce, Association of Industry, Universities & Research Organisations, EuroInfoCenter, Innovation centers, Technoparks, Impulscenters, Chambers of architects and chartered engineering consultants, all relevant networks & clusters, mayor cities ecc.). We created a new common public company, called Internationalisationcenter Styria that converts the strategies of the owners into a common one-stop-shop.

Styria is an Austrian region characterized by its high R&D and innovation intensity both of its firms and its R&D institutions. Nevertheless Styria is a very small region in European comparison that is highly dependable on exports (i.e. of a GRP of EUR 30 Bill., Eur 16 Bill. are gained through exporting goods and services). Therefore networking with other European regions is a key challenge for regional economic and innovation policy. Styria regards itself in particular as a gateway to Middle and Eastern European Countries. In order to enable better networking of Styrian firms and thus to enlarge the regional export base with neighbouring regions (in particular to serve international markets) RIST has been initiated and successfully run by the Government of the Province of Styria.

What are the important novel elements of the project?

Being itself an innovative policy instrument RIST comprises various innovative elements:

First RIST is aiming at an Interregional adjustment of regional economic policies.

Through the means of bilateral co-operation agreements between Styria and partner regions economic development strategies are coordinated and mutual adjusted leading to jointly targeted pilot projects.

Second RIST is fostering European economic integration on an interregional level. With its aim of creating new intense interregional value chains regional economic specialisation patterns are nurtured. Such regional production networks encompassing several European regions are helping to foster and to deepen integration and also to provide an intelligent division of labour in order to supply third country markets.

Third sustainability of the RIST outcomes is ensured through key accounting and cooperation agreements (with regional administration) with the partner regions.

Through this kind of institutionalising of the relevant project structures, the long term functioning of the interfirm and policy networks is ensured.

Fourth RIST is aiming at building up critical masses both in terms of economic and innovation potential in order to overcome the small size of Styria and other European regions. As a secondary effect also power of the regions involved is strengthened in the policy dimension.

Last but not least RIST is characterized by a clear cut SME focus. It is addressing the particular needs of these firms helping them to overcome both language barriers and also transaction and information costs.

Did you gain or develop new knowledge, useful for the creation of new products, services or business processes?

A one stop shop has been created in order to fulfil SMEs needs of a flexible support while building up collaborative links with partners in neighbouring regions. Services offered within

this one stop shop also include extensive financial consultancy, thus addressing the difficulties of SMEs to get access to funding sources.

As internationalisation is an issue that has not fully entered the mental landscape of most Styrian entrepreneurs, a large portion of activities within the RIST initiative is devoted to the creation of awareness.

The initiation of the RIST initiative has brought fourth new knowledge leading to a better absorption of EU structural funds in Styria and its partner regions. By the means of joint pilot projects and a mutual adjusted regional policy framework EU funding in the new programming period can be utilized more effective both in infrastructure and enterprise development.

The RIST initiative is also offering new ways of territorial cooperation complementing existing ERDF schemes. As Styria and its partner regions are also developing joint policies beyond ERDF funding, RIST is providing ways for delivering policy on an innovative level for interregional cooperation, thus adding to the objectives pursued in the framework of structural funds.

RIST has brought fourth a digital knowledge base comprising both projects and information about particular relations between Styria and partner regions. This database is publicly accessible and thus provides in a structured way relevant info for SMEs, and fo0r B2B co-operations.

EVALUATION: from 0 to 20 SELF-

EVALUATION: points ___19_

2. Impact on results

What is the project's impact on institution's results? Take into account improved productivity and costs, more products and services offered.

Describe the contents.

RIST has produces so far 18 cooperation agreements with regions in Croatia, Serbia, Poland and Hungary; more than 400 common projects with participation of Styrian companies, worth more than one billion euros;

an increase of Styrian companies in international projects from 1.800 to 2.300 participating firms;

more than 40 common EU-projects (6th Framework program, INTERREG, ecc.)mainly in the fields of establishing common policies and policy learning, benchmarking, preparation of infrastructure measures, creation of new value added chains, construction of interregional networks for engineering and service;

and the creation of 3 (private owned) business enters for Styrian companies abroad (Zagreb - Croatia, Novi Sad – Serbia, St. Petersburg - Russia) so far.

What is the project's impact on internal aspects, such as activities management and organization within your institution?

Describe the contents.

RIST has had an impact on internal aspects in three dimensions:

1) With the initiation of Internationalisationcenter Styria (ICS) the RIST programme has led to new public private partnership model in order to broaden the institutional basis of the activities that have been carried out in the past by public administration.

2) RIST has been involving several departments of the Government of the Province of Styria thus leading to a better internal coordination in the regional government.

3) RIST has lead to a continuous policy learning cycle. The programme is subject to external evaluations on a regular basis in order to provide regional policy actors with information about necessary improvements and adjustments caused by external trends and emerging endogenous developments.

EVALUATION: from 0 to 20

SELF-EVALUATION: points ____20

3. Management of the institution's innovation

Does the institution have a business process or a management system devoted to innovation?

The Government of the Province of Styria is having an innovation oriented internal Information system called WIBIS (regional policy information system) that helps regional policy actors to craft and monitor new strategies. WIBIS is comprising both regional economic data showing structural differences between several subregions, and also short terms forecasts for employment and value added.

Regional innovation policy is in Styria embedded into a sound system of strategic policy intelligence (with the external support of Joanneum Research and other R&D institutions). This concept comprises on the one hand the development of strategic documents like the technology policy concept, on the other hand monitoring and evaluations are ensuring the adjustment of strategies and instruments to ever changing framework conditions.

In the last years, did the institution make any benchmarking visit, to study the best innovation management practices, adopted by other organizations (belonging or not to the same field)?

The Government of the Province of Styria has been taking part in benchmarking exercises with the following regions within the last two years:

Stuttgart region (i.e. Economic Promotion Agency)

Stockholm region (i.e. KISTA Science City)

Oresund Region (i.e. interregional Oresund University)

Biovalley (i.e. Management of the Biovalley Initiative)

EVALUATION: from 0 to 15 SELF-

EVALUATION: points _14__

4. Participation of outside actors in the innovative process.

Do the stakeholders, such as customers, suppliers, partners, communities, take part in the innovative

process regularly?

Describe the systematic approaches adopted to guarantee this participation.

RIST is the first program for interregional cooperation, that first (preface) bundles all relevant players of a region in the field of Economy (Regional Government, Chamber of Commerce, Association of Industry, Universities & Research Organisations, EuroInfoCenter, Innovation centers, Technoparks, Impulscenters, Chambers of architects and chartered engineering consultants, all relevant networks & clusters, mayor cities ecc.). We created a new common public company, called Internationalisationcenter Styria that converts the strategies of the owners into a common one-stop-shop.

In the last years, how many agreements for the research and innovation activities did the institution conclude with public or private research centres, Universities and so on...?

Active Technology Transfer: The Technology Transfer Agency of the Technical University Graz has been appointed to approach SMEs actively in order to make them aware about the need to innovate.

Research contracts with JOANNEUM RESEARCH (JOANNEUM RESEARCH is an applied R&D institution owned the Province of Styria): The institution has been appointed with the maintenance and development of WIBIS; several projects have been undertaken in order to supply the regional policy makers with relevant knowledge on innovation and technology policy.

Are there innovation-oriented active partner relations with other actors of your territory, country, or foreign countries?

Styria has active relations with the following regions (selection):

Slovenia (Ministry of Science)

Hungary – West Transdanubia (West Pannon Development Agency)

Hungary – Northern Great Plains (Northern Great Plains Development Agency)

Friuli Venezia Giulia (Friuli Innovazione)

*Austria – Carinthia (Carinthian Economic Promotion Agency,
Carinthian development agency)*

Austria Burgenland (BIC Burgenland)

Austria (Austrian Research Promotion Agency)

Austria (Federal Ministries for Economic and Labour, Infrastructure, Science ecc.)

Slovakia – Kosice Region (Kosice Self-Governing Region)

Czech Republic – Zlin Region (Regional Authority of the Zlin Region)

Bulgaria – Stara Zagora (District Authority of Stara Zagora)

Spain – Castilla y Leon (Junta De Castilla Y Leon)

Germany – Thuringia (State Development Corporation)

Germany – Saxony (Saxony Economic Development Corporation)

Does the institution take part in projects of economic development, financed by the European Union?

Describe the contents of the agreements and relations.

The Government of the Province of Styria is the Managing Authority of Structural Funds for the region of Styria.

EVALUATION: from 0 to 15

SELF-EVALUATION: points _14__

5. Participation of employees in the innovative process.

Do the employees take an active part in the innovative process of the institution?

Describe the systematic approaches adopted to guarantee this participation.

The Government of the Province of Styria is ISO certified and maintaining its level both through internal and external audits. Through this quality assurance system employees are actively involved into the process of innovation. On the one hand continuous improvement processes are implemented on all levels of the organisation – making use of employee's innovation potential in order to enlarge the organisation's performance incrementally, on the other hand an active involvement of all relevant employees into the process of strategic policy intelligence ensures innovations also on a macro scale.

EVALUATION: from 0 to 15 SELF-

EVALUATION: points ____14__

6. Innovation diffusion.

Has the institution received any innovation awards from special bodies,

associations or experts in the past? Has the institution been mentioned for its innovation in the press or other mass media (please attach photocopies or media transcripts)?

This is the second time that our institution is running for an award. The first time the Department for Economic Affairs & Innovation establish a program called "TECHNOFIT" (Technologie-Zukunft-Information-Transfer) that was financed by ERDF and Styrian Government. One successful project of this program was "Tanno meets Gemini", which won the European Regional Innovation Award, category Regional identity/sustainable development

in April 2004 in Brussels. Aim was to encouraging manufacture of energy-efficient, low-cost homes using natural wood and other resources native to the region. (Project-website: <http://www.tanno.at/>)

Media (selection of press reports):

http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/innovation/pdf/award/styria.pdf

<http://cordis.europa.eu/aoi/article.cfm?article=1392&lang=en>

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/04/520&format=HTML&aged=1&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

http://www.innovating-regions.org/content_db/cddb.cfm?action=article&publication_id=2171&is_article=1

http://www.cor.europa.eu/en/press/infonews_04_03.html

<http://www.diepresse.at/Artikel.aspx?channel=i&ressort=ij&id=538045>

Does a social reporting exist in your institution?

Social reporting does exist, but is done by other departments of the government of Styria (for the whole institution)

EVALUATION: from 0 to 15

SELF-EVALUATION: points ___12___