

New Factory Innovation Platform

Received via the Prize for Innovation in the Public Administration

**UUSI
TEHDAS
/NEW
FACTORY**

Published On: 03 June 2014

Organisation: Council of Tampere Region

Country: Finland

Level of government: Local government, Regional/State government

Sector: Economic affairs, Education

Type: Organisational Design

Launched in:

Overall development time: 2 years

Like this innovation

0 persons like this innovation

Description

New Factory (NF) is a historic cotton factory turned into a community-driven innovation, incubation and start-up centre in Tampere, Finland. It provides students, entrepreneurs, researchers and businesses an environment for open innovation, allowing them to process ideas into concrete action, like developing prototypes, pilot projects, products and services, new business and new jobs.

NF is a living laboratory and developer of novel innovation platform concepts. Besides its own methods, NF utilises global best innovation tools available. New Factory's significance for the local community and regional innovation policy has been exceptional. It has brought together essential stakeholders like no other initiative before in Tampere region. It has transformed the way we think about innovation in the region that has been one of the innovation leaders of Europe.

Through New Factory, we have:

- Strengthened the links between education, business and innovation.
- Modernised the higher education.
- Improved the employability of people – it helps students and professionals acquire new skills and networks to adapt to changing conditions.

Why the innovation was developed

With 7% of DGP invested in R&D, the Tampere region is one of Europe's innovation leaders. This has motivated the region to develop novel innovation models in order to respond to the global competition for talent and RDI operations. The concept of New Factory was developed based on the great results and first experiences received from the Demola initiative. By 2010, and only a year after it was launched, Demola was up and running with dozens of projects and partner companies. In 2013, Demola developed into an international co-creation platform engaging thousands of students, more than 100 companies, and tens of HEIs in Europe. The mission of New Factory is to leverage the learnings and assets regionally and globally by developing and integrating new platform components to support growth, economic renewal and prosperity.

Objectives

Develop staff capacity, Improve effectiveness, Increase citizen engagement, Support economic growth

New factory aims to support growth, economic renewal and prosperity. The objectives for the following areas are set annually:

- Number of co-creation projects.
- Number of participating innovators and users.
- New startups.
- New jobs created.
- Amount of private funding for students and start-up innovators.
- Amount on new Demola nodes.

Main beneficiaries

Academia, Businesses, Civil Society, General population, Students, Young people

- Higher education institutes.
- Students.
- Startup companies.
- Corporations.
- Public sector organisations.
- User communities.
- Pilot customers.

Results

Efficiency

More projects, companies and jobs have been created for the local economy with the same amount of investment.

Effectiveness

The amount of new high-tech start-ups has doubled in 2011-2012.

Service quality

Other:

Wider community engagement.

Evaluation

Several research projects have taken a look at the initiative. No formal longer term evaluation has been carried out yet.

<http://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-951-44-9239-6>

Development

Design

The idea was generated by frontline staff and directors of regional innovation agency and industry representatives. The initial concept was approved by regional and city policy-makers resulting in pilot funding.

Design time: 4 months

Testing

- Each of the developed platform components are created together with potential user groups.
- They are also implemented first in trials (a set of pilot projects) and continuously developed based on customer feedback.

Testing time: 6 months

Implementation

Tools used:

- The development of all platform components is based on the concept of the "Lean Startup."
- Services are co-developed with users and customers with minimal upfront investment, starting with a minimum viable product.
- The concept of Open Innovation has been among the guiding principles.

Resources used:

- Currently the total budget is EUR 1.5 million annually in local operations.
- With international operations of the Demola network, the total value of the platforms operations is approximately EUR 5 million.

Implementation time: 12 months

Diffusion

- In the beginning, the major challenge was to reach a critical mass of businesses and students as users. Successful piloting and active engagement of communities was the solution.
- Later on, the main challenges have been related to the sustainable funding models to be applied after pilot phases funded by project funding.

Diffusion time: Still ongoing

Challenges and solutions

- An international Demola network was created by establishing a separate service company (New Factory International Ltd). NFI is dedicated to support interested regions and universities in Demola adoption and to enable global co-creation for corporations and public initiatives on the Demola platform.
 - A national network of Protomo centres was established with support from SITRA and the government.
-

Partnerships

Companies

Private sector

Companies supply New Factory with coaching and some financing for the innovators, like rewards for the student teams. More than 160 companies have operated as partners.

Citizens and customers

Civil Society

Citizens and customers have an important role in developing the solutions. New Factory activates the enthusiastic members of the community to find innovative solutions for the grand European and global challenges.

Universities, students

Other

Instead of filtering ideas or mastering the content and details of the projects, New Factory concentrates on enabling the activities and facilitating the collaboration between different organisations and people. So far, more than 3 200 people from age 2 up to 83 have participated in the innovation projects or user tests carried out by New Factory.

Lessons Learned

Lessons Learned

- New collaborative innovation processes can be created at the regional level. They may have a fundamental impact on the innovation culture in terms of collaboration climate, entrepreneurship attitudes and readiness for global co-creation.
 - A platform centric regional innovation strategy can help regions to transform their innovation policies and modernise the cluster policy. Platform thinking in general may open new horizons for the design of regional innovation environments.
-

Conditions for success

- Presence of innovation anchors or an open willingness to collaborate with them.
 - Enthusiastic innovation policy developers and development agencies that can collaborate locally and internationally.
 - Critical mass of talent available for co-creation.
 - Availability of funding for pilot processes.
-

Copyright OECD. All rights reserved.