

SUPER: eco-innovation for active and effective business development

At the end of 2017, in mid-December in Valmiera, entrepreneurs, representatives of various organizations and local governments and specialists from the Vidzeme planning region gathered at one table to discuss how IT solutions can help developing eco-innovative business. It should be acknowledged that IT solutions often can promote the development of eco-innovations, and at the same time they are also economically feasible.

In Latvia, the focus of IT solutions has been chosen because of the high potential of the Vidzeme Planning Region and basically the stakeholders attending the meeting were invited to express their views whether they agree this inference.

Considering that in early December 2017 the European Commission announced the upcoming program for research and entrepreneurship for sustainable urban, agricultural and eco-energy development and allocated 9 billion euros, it is time to encourage entrepreneurs to think about the development of their businesses and to use the financial support currently available more actively and also efficiently.

As the gathering took place in a venue that brought together creative and intelligent minds, the participants also went on a short excursion through Vidzeme University College's IT and Multimedia Labs to get acquainted with the opportunities in the field of lifelong learning and the use of IT technologies.

During the meeting participants were informed about activities of the Latvian IT cluster and its organized hackathons, where teams come together to create a solution for a specific problem. Participants had discussions also with one of the Latvian technology scouts to understand better available support.

At the end of the seminar, a discussion was encouraged, inviting entrepreneurs to identify what would be needed to help develop eco-innovations and what would encourage them to use more eco-innovations and IT solutions for the development of their companies. Participants acknowledged that there is still a lack of good knowledge about the nature of eco-innovations, as well as ways and means of putting them on the business agenda. It was also concluded that local entrepreneurs should be encouraged to talk more about their experiences and discoveries to encourage others.

The discussion ended with the conclusion that high-tech sector has a great potential - information technology and its solutions are applicable in a wide range of industries, so it might be worthwhile for Vidzeme to specialize in this field. There is a potential and there are lot of enterprising people.