



## SCOTTISH INNOVATIVE ACTIONS PROGRAMME FINAL PROJECT LEARNING REPORT

- The final project learning report should be submitted to SEP Ltd **no later than two months** after the date of completion of the pilot project.
- The information included in this report will be used to assist with evaluating the learning and outputs from the pilot projects supported through the Innovative Actions programme.
- This form is separate to the final grant claim and progress report form, which should be submitted within four months of the completion date of the project.

<b>PROGRAMME</b>	<b>Scottish Innovative Actions Programme 2004-2005</b>
<b>PROJECT TITLE</b>	<b>Structured Innovation Thinking for Scottish SMEs</b>
<b>PROJECT REFERENCE</b>	<b>IA/TIL/SIT/AL2/002</b>
<b>ACTION LINE (Please Highlight)</b>	Action Line 1 – The Scottish Innovation System <b>Action Line 2 – Stimulating SME Demand for Innovation</b> Action Line 3 – Knowledge Access & Knowledge Management Action Line 4 – Innovation Marketing & Product Launch

### PROJECT APPLICANT

<b>Project Contact</b>	Dr Arthur Slight / Joe McArdle
<b>Organisation Name</b>	Targeting Innovation Ltd
<b>Address</b>	Atrium Court, 50 Waterloo St, Glasgow G2 6HQ
<b>Telephone</b>	0141 572 1600
<b>e-mail</b>	<a href="mailto:aslight@targetinginnovation.com">aslight@targetinginnovation.com</a> <a href="mailto:jmcardle@targetinginnovation.com">jmcardle@targetinginnovation.com</a>

### PROJECT DELIVERY & LEARNING

<b>Describe how the pilot project was actually delivered in practice.</b>
<p>The project followed a five phase implementation model covering the following activities:</p> <p><b>Phase 1 – Programme Learning</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Desk research other Innovative Actions projects and possible innovation methodologies;</li> <li>• Conduct a learning journey to The Netherlands to find out about TRIZ and SIT methods;</li> <li>• Prepare a recommendation to transfer the Systematic Inventive Thinking model to Scotland.</li> </ul> <p><b>Phase 2 – Programme Design and Launch</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engage the Dutch consultant to conduct SIT ‘Train the Trainer’ sessions for the project team;</li> <li>• Launch the SIT programme with roadshows in Glasgow, Aberdeen and Inverness.</li> </ul> <p><b>Phase 3 – Project Implementation with SMEs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Source possible SME referrals, present SIT and conduct a pre-workshop meeting;</li> <li>• Conduct a two day SIT workshop to generate new product / service concepts.</li> <li>• Follow up with up to three days support to help select and implement the new ideas.</li> </ul> <p><b>Phase 4 – Evaluation and Reporting</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepare a file of SME results from ideas and projects generated to actual products improved;</li> <li>• Survey the participating SMEs online and have an independent consultant audit results.</li> </ul> <p><b>Phase 5 – Dissemination and Close Out</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disseminate results through event/s with project results and case studies.</li> </ul>

**Describe the top 3 learning points from delivery of the pilot project.**

- 1) The Systematic Inventive Thinking (SIT) method for stimulating innovation in SMEs has been generally well received by participating companies. It has been an *inclusive process* allowing input from various sections of the company (management, marketing, engineering, etc), who in some cases were not used to meeting and discussing ideas together.
- 2) SIT has brought a *sustainable, structured system* of new product development into companies, and a number have confirmed that this will be applied in future. This indicates a change in innovation culture within participating SMEs.
- 3) The method of marketing SIT should be considered carefully as it proved challenging to convince some SMEs of the benefits of joining the pilot project, although eight companies did eventually participate.

**Describe the most successful aspects of the pilot project and why.**

- 1) The most interesting aspect of the programme has been the volume of ideas / concepts that were generated on the SIT workshops – averaging 50 new ideas per workshop. The original project scope asked for ‘at least one new idea per company’. The method almost became a victim of its own success in that handling and filtering the ideas to a manageable number became a challenge itself. We recommend in our experience that a few key ideas with team buy in should be taken forward (and preferably ‘quick wins’).
- 2) The project has yielded real improvements in that five out of the eight companies have used the SIT process to either develop product/service improvements or actually implement the Systematic Inventive Thinking process as part of their New Product Development (NPD) process.

**Describe the least successful aspects of the pilot project and how these aspects would be changed in the future.**

1) It was difficult in some Scottish regions to engage SME’s to participate on the programme. Any promotion and marketing to potential SMEs in the future will be carefully considered to appeal to prospective companies. It should be easier now that some Scottish Case Studies of successful companies applying SIT are now available.

- 2) The companies that did not take any ideas forward had either:
- a) Too much pressure on other aspects of their business to follow up;
  - b) Picked an off line product for analysis using SIT that was not particularly important to them;
  - c) No product champion or high level management buy in / sponsorship to take the ideas forward.

In any subsequent training events we will ensure that an active product that needs upgrading is used and that senior management are seen to sponsor and value the process.

**Describe the next stage planned for the delivery and rollout of the pilot project.**

Targeting Innovation has now a standard workshop and support programme that can be used for SMEs and larger companies. We are currently looking at options for improving the offering for SMEs (although even with the heavy ERDF subsidy during the project it was difficult to engage SMEs). It may be that due to the nature of the time commitment and multifunction team required to successfully implement SIT, that the method may be more suited to medium – large companies rather than micro or small enterprises.



## **INNOVATION POLICY**

**Describe how the learning from the pilot project will be used to influence future innovation policy in Scotland.**

The SIT method has been demonstrated as a useful tool for some of the participating companies, and the project has contributed to Innovative Action's objective to pilot new interventions to stimulate demand for innovation among SMEs. It will be a useful addition to Targeting Innovation's suite of products in the longer term and promoted where appropriate to other organisations at innovation policy making level through contacts with the Scottish Executive and Scottish Enterprise.

## **INNOVATION PRACTICE**

**Describe how the learning from the pilot project will be used to influence future innovation practice and delivery in Scotland.**

The Targeting Innovation and Fusion consultants who completed SIT "Train the Trainer" coaching have now benefited from the structure, content and practical 'hands on' nature of Systematic Thinking. Targeting Innovation has four staff that are fully trained in the method including: Joe McArdle, Dorothy Burke, Ewan Macpherson and Dr. Arthur Slight. As well as delivering full SIT workshops each person over the last year has delivered SIT seminar / taster sessions and communicated the benefits of the method. In particular some of the excellent SIT thinking exercises and methods have been incorporated into other workshops e.g. Creativity Day sessions. When we are quoting for new business in Innovation Training, SIT will be a mainstay offering on any of our proposals.

## **COMMUNICATION & DISSEMINATION**

**Describe how the learning from the pilot project will be communicated and disseminated within your own organisation, to other organisations in Scotland and elsewhere in Europe.**

Targeting Innovation completed a SIT Dissemination Seminar on 12 October 2006 to communicate the successful programme results and deliver three case studies. In addition Targeting Innovation has set up filming opportunities and case study interviews to assist Innovative Actions to produce a DVD to disseminate the results.

Targeting Innovation will also give SIT talks and short sampler workshop sessions in the future to further stimulate interest in the method and provide a creativity / implementation consultancy service to any companies interested as a result. We have had a few enquiries as a result of the SIT programme to speak at larger events and will continue to do this.

## **PRIVATE SECTOR**

**Describe how the private sector was engaged during delivery and how they have responded to the new approach or mechanism delivered through the pilot project.**

Private SME's were engaged on the project through promotion with Scottish Enterprise Account Managers. A SIT Roadshow was held to give workshop taster in Glasgow, Aberdeen and Inverness to Account Managers and interested SMEs. Leads were then followed up by Targeting Innovation to convert SMEs to participate on the SIT programme.

SMEs who were committed to, completed the SIT programme and either implemented a new product, process or service improvement were delighted with the results (5 out of 8 companies). The remaining three commented that the process had been valuable but that existing business and lack of resource meant that they were unable to progress any of the ideas.



## OUTPUTS & RESULTS

<b>Describe the main qualitative outputs and results from the pilot project.</b>	
<p>“The project has met its ERDF target for the generation of at least one new product idea per company, and indeed a number of more concrete results have been achieved by five of the eight participants. The method itself, based on generation of innovative ideas through examination of existing products, and using a structured process of innovative thinking, has been demonstrated as a valid system of stimulating innovation within SMEs.”</p> <p><b>EKOS SIT Final Report October 2006</b></p> <p>The EKOS report has also validated the results below.</p>	
<b>Please complete all the quantitative outputs and results relevant to your project in the list below. Please also add any others that are relevant to your project but not listed.</b>	
<b>OUTPUTS</b>	<b>Total</b>
No. of SMEs assisted by the project.	<b>8</b>
No. of new innovative mechanisms and approaches introduced by the project	<b>1</b>
No. of new links made between SMEs and universities / the research base as a result of the project	
<b>Other</b>	
<b>RESULTS</b>	
No. of new processes developed	<b>4</b>
No. of new products developed	<b>11</b>
No. of SMEs with active plans <sup>1</sup> in place to manage and exploit their intellectual assets	<b>0</b>
No. of SMEs with active plans in place to develop longer term relationships with universities / the research base	<b>0</b>
No. of SMEs with active plans in place to create new markets from their innovation / take their innovation to market	<b>5</b>
No. of instances of actual knowledge / technology transfer from universities / research base to SMEs (e.g. spin outs, licence agreements, technical co-operation, etc)	<b>0</b>
<b>Other</b>	
Total number of new product / service improvement ideas generated over 8 companies	<b>393</b>

<sup>1</sup> Please note that the project applicant will be required to record the number of active plans in place with companies using a method suitable for the project concerned.