

Swedish Open Innovation Learning Week: positive appraisal from the participants

The “Swedish Open Innovation Learning Week”, a programme organised by the CISB and held in three Swedish cities between 7 and 12 June, had the participation of twelve company representatives, research institutions, consultancy service providers, and organisations of the Brazilian Government, as well as special guests, at some moments. The results, as assessed by the participants, were highly positive because, apart from expanding the networks of relationships and the possibility of partnerships, it also supplied an overall wide understanding of the Swedish innovation system.

“The week was highly profitable, both regarding the information obtained as also the contacts and ideas that arose”, said André Alves Macedo, a Technology Engineer at Akaer, and one of the participants in this mission. “New paths were opened, working towards collaboration in innovation projects with clear understanding of how these processes occur on the Swedish side”, he highlighted. He explained that Akaer already has partnerships with institutions such as ITA and IPT, in Brazil, and Saab and KTH (Royal Institute of Technology), in Sweden. Akaer also has great interest in developing joint projects with Chalmers University and Linköping University. Contacts made during the Innovation Week should be a great help in this regard, in his opinion.

An advanced model

According to Alessandra Holmo, Managing Director of CISB, one of the core goals of the “Swedish Open Innovation Learning Week” was that of explaining the operation of the Swedish innovation system and also its culture, which makes Sweden a leader in innovation. “We have been able to show Swedish practices, its collaboration models, and also brought part of the values and culture of Swedish society, particularly those aspects which have made it so efficient. For Sweden, it is important that possible partners find out more about the country, and CISB has provided this opportunity.”

Rozangela Curi Pedrosa, director of the Technical Innovation Department of the Federal University of Santa Catarina (UFSC), feels that the trip to Sweden was very important in this regard. Ms Pedrosa studies the open innovation systems in several different countries. She highlighted that the Swedish model is a clear improvement on the French system, proposing a relationship between research institutions, the Governmental companies and society in general, with a greater level of integration between the parties, at all levels – local, regional, national and, most importantly, international. “Different from the triple helix model operated in countries such as the United States, Israel, Germany and China, the Swedish system clearly adds society as being the fourth player in the process of innovation”, she said.

Technological development and innovation, she adds, is guided by demand from society, not just by market demands. Ms Pedrosa also noted that the Swedish innovation system also stresses small to medium technology companies, but at the same time does not exclude major companies and corporations from the processes. “Another interesting difference is the concentration on one single agency, VINNOVA, for policies of innovation and also financing of R&D.”

She also highlighted that the visit has been a great help in the formation of her networking. “We can pool information about some UFSC research projects that could be worked upon in partnership with the universities that have been visited, and possibly with SAAB itself”, she said.

Schedule

So that the participants could get a wide view of the Swedish innovation system, CISB put together an extensive schedule of events. In Linköping, visits were made to Linköping University (LiU) and to the Air Force Museum. The group also attended lectures about the Swedish programme for innovation in the aeronautics segment, about the programme for financing for research and innovation in this segment, the triple helix model, and the future needs of the Swedish Armed Forces. The participants were also able to visit the Gripen production line in the Saab

group, where they found out more about the FX-2 and also about the future technological advances that face the company.

In Göteborg, they visited the Lindholmen Science Park (LSP), discussed the Open Innovation Arena with a researcher from Chalmers University of Technology (CTH), and also checked out the operation of a simulator of maritime traffic management. They also watched a lecture about collaboration in the areas of transport and logistics, and another two lectures about two projects of the Security Arena of the LSP. They also had the opportunity to attend a lecture about a methodology to speed up the transfer of technology from Lund University (LU).

In Stockholm, the group went to the Royal Institute of Technology (KTH), where they became aware of the challenges of the University. They were introduced to the LIGHTer Arena, and were also at the Swedish Security & Defence Industry Association (SOFF), an association which brings together different companies active in the defence segment. They also attended a lecture given by the Swedish Defence Research Agency (FOI), a research agency of the Swedish Armed Forces.

This Group was also at VINNOVA. The Brazilian Ambassador, Marcos Pinta Gama, participated in the last day of the mission. The INNOVAIR programme, which nurtures research and innovation in aeronautics, was then discussed. The programme ended with a round table, bringing together the Brazilian participants.

Next steps

As the next steps, the CISB shall share information about the 26 pre-studies in the areas of aeronautics and defence, which they have been supporting, to that the participants in the mission may check to see if there is any similarity with their research lines or technological demands. If common interest is identified, then the CISB intends to support and catalyse the partnership. Due to the success of this mission, the CISB is already planning a new mission, scheduled for 2016.

According to the Brazilian Ambassador, the CISB, as an institution which brings together business and academic players, has a fundamental role to unleash the two countries' potential for co-operation. "The partnership in research and innovation between Brazil and Sweden shall bear fruit to the extent that agents from both these

countries consolidate a relationship based on trust, based on successful experiences that shall gradually lead to more ambitious projects. In this regard, CISB may offer an environment where these Swedish and Brazilian players may dialogue with more and more intensity, and hence act with more and more proximity”, he stressed.

Please see the list of companies and organisations that have participated in this mission: Akaer Engineering; Aerotron Industry and Commerce; Department of Science and Aerospace Technology; Institute for Industrial Nurturing and Coordination; Centre for the Management of Strategic Studies; Embraer; Nuclep – Nuclebrás Heavy Equipment; Federal University of Santa Catarina (UFSC) and INVENTTA+bgi.