

connect-VET

[June 2014]

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING CONNECTING HIGHER EDUCATION AND RURAL COMPANIES

Highlights:

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

10 September, San Sebastian

Businesses join discussions in
Bath

From traditional to new age
marketing

The project aims to support improvements in quality and innovation in vocational education and training (VET) systems, institutions and practices by systematically increasing and strengthening the co-operation between VET, rural micro enterprises and Higher Education/Research (HE/R). This improved cooperation will create a more effective link between education and working life, build up the expertise of VET staff and enhance the competitiveness of VET organisations as part of regional innovation systems. The project website:

<http://www.luontoyrittaja.fi/connect-vet/>

Working together to develop the rural economy



2nd project meeting in Bath, May 2014

As an example of how education organisations can work together with businesses, the second project meeting was held in two venues on 20 and 21 May. The first day took place at Norton Radstock College and the second at Bath Spa University, both in rural locations. Rural businesses were also represented at a workshop held during the meeting.

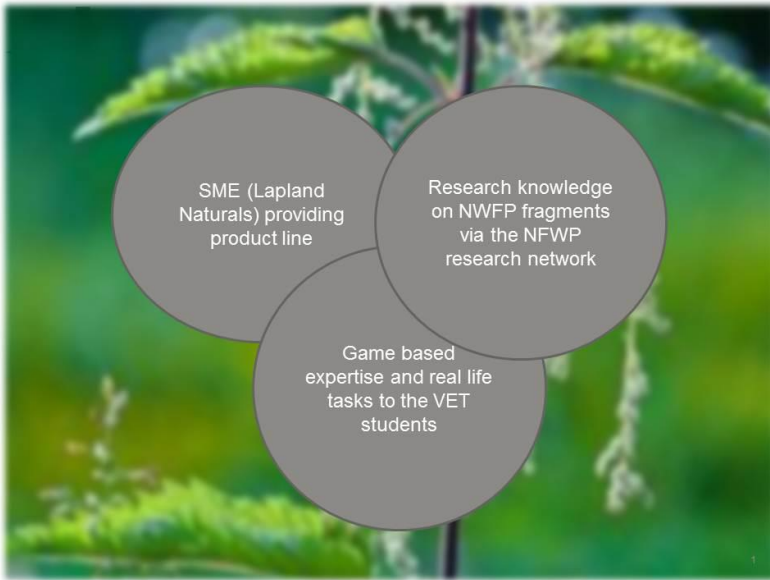
Topics for discussion included:

- How universities and colleges could help small businesses in a practical way
- Differences between the academic and business world and how potential barriers could be overcome
- Current research projects which could be of interest and benefit to rural businesses
- Current and future skill and research needs in the rural sector
- Opportunities for work placements and apprenticeships to fill

skill gaps

Chris Head, Executive Director of the West of England Rural Network and Chair of the Local Enterprise Rural Sector Group, who participated in the workshop commented: 'I was delighted to be part of a process that encourages innovative thinking and ways to develop the rural economy'.





From the traditional to the new age of Marketing in Non-Wood Forest Products

Non-wood forest products (NWFP) like forest berries, mushrooms and herbs have a lot of traditional uses in many countries, including Finland. Their image is usually also connected to the traditional use of nature. Typically the products made from these raw materials are not processed much, which also reduces the added value of the products. Also they are not seen as “very cool” by younger consumers.

University of Helsinki Ruralia Institute cooperated with a company Lapland Naturals (www.lapcream.com) to develop more modern ways to market NWFP based on traditional knowledge. The idea was to transform traditional marketing based strongly on rural settings and a beautiful natural environment, to game based marketing and replace the nature pictures with animated figures with health characteristics. A new product line for Lapland Naturals will be used as a pilot for this kind of approach and the aim is to disseminate the new approach and lessons learnt from it to the whole NWFP sector by using a national association called the Finnish Nature-based Entrepreneurship Association (www.luontoyrittaja.net).

In order to enable this new approach, different knowledge bases need to be combined. In addition to the game based modelling experience, the health claims used in the products must be verified. For this the knowledge will be extracted from the existing clinical research using the research network of NWFP, in which Ruralia is a partner. For technical assistance, co-operation with the VET school will be sought after and real life tasks provided for the students.

Who knows, maybe the traditional can be modern in the future!



09th of September 2014
San Sebastián
Basque Country
Spain

International Conference

“Successful co-
operation
between
educators and
entrepreneurs”

This conference aims to activate, encourage and disseminate the good practice co-operation models between Higher Education, Vocational Training and SMEs and collect new ideas to create a more effective link between education and working life, build up the expertise of VET staff and enhance the competitiveness of VET organisations as part of regional innovations systems. In the

conference programme there will expert presentations and participants from over 17 different countries highlighting how cooperation between Higher Education, Vocational Training and SMEs can benefit the Economic and Education sectors. Therefore, the conference provides an excellent opportunity for participants to share their experiences and learn from each other!

