# **UNIVERSITY BASED INNOVATION SYSTEMS IN VAASA**

HANKEN, School of Economics Department of Marketing 2019







#### **FORWORDS**

This report is a result of the SESP (Smart Energy Systems Research Platform) project, funded by Regional council of Ostrobothnia, municipalities, University of Vaasa and HANKEN School of Economics.

The overall aim of the two-year SESP project (2017-2018) is to build a new energy system research platform. The platform consists of physical laboratory environment for electricity distribution monitoring, protection, control and simulation, a Big Data collection and management system and business concepts that are based on the developed platform.

The SESP project consists of 9 work packages. Work package 8 is about *New Service Concepts and Business Models and* contributes to the smart energy systems research platform, and Vaasa's Smart Grid solutions by developing a *system* for *new service development and a framework for understanding, analyzing and developing new business models.* 

WP 8 has listed five deliverables of which this report met up to the third one, to present a system for how to merge knowledge of various types (linked to innovation hubs) for new service concepts development (D8.3)

This report would not have to come to existence if central people, teachers, mentors and students interested in student driven service innovation and business development representing HBL (Hanken Business Lab) Novia University of Applied Science, VES (Vaasa Entrepreneurship Society) and West Coast Startup, so kindly agreed to be interviewed. Thank you.

My colleagues at the department of Marketing has been in full use, I thank you for your input.

Peter Björk SESP, Work package 8 leader

#### INTRODUCTION

Service innovation is about "thinking new", be it radical or incremental, a process of many phases; empathize, define, ideate, prototype, test and launch. From a business perspective service innovation is about developing valuable solutions, which are desirable, feasible and viable.

The Finnish research agency TEKES defines service innovation as follows:

"Service innovation is a new or significantly improved service concept that is taken into practice. It can be for example a new customer interaction channel, a distribution system or a technological concept or a combination of them. A service innovation always includes replicable elements that can be identified and systematically reproduced in other cases or environments. The replicable element can be the service outcome or the service process as such or a part of them. A service innovation benefits both the service producer and customers and it improves its developer's competitive edge. A service innovation is a service product or service process that is based on some technology or systematic method. In services however, the innovation does not necessarily relate to the novelty of the technology itself, but the innovation often lies in the non-technological areas. Service innovations can for instance be new solutions in the customer interface, new distribution methods, novel application of technology in the service process, new forms of operation with the supply chain or new ways to organize and manage services."

Service innovation can be in-house and / or practiced in network co-operations with other actors; companies, universities and organisations (in a Triple helix or Quadruple helix, when the society at large also is involved). This report focusses on the university sector (University helix), particularly Hanken School of Economics, University of Vaasa, HU, Novia University of applied science, VAMK Vaasa University of applied science, and Vaasa Entrepreneurship Society (VES), which is a student organization. As a sub-task of work package 8 "New Service Concepts and Business Models" of the SESP project, the aim of this paper is to present a road map for how to interlink university specific innovation systems and develop co-operation structures. Innovation is in this study considered as an inherent part of entrepreneurship.

This report consists of two parts, first existing university specific innovation systems / systems in support of entrepreneurial minded students are described, and then in the summary part a road map for innovation co-operation is presented.

The guiding principles in this report, as well as the arguments for focusing on students for innovations, are two. The city of Vaasa can be defined as a "student city" by its large number of students (all in all more than 15.000). These students represent six universities, and a vast array of programs and tracks. Bringing students with different backgrounds, knowledge and skills together has proved being a good melting pot for new ideas companies and organizations need for innovations. Another aspect is to recognize students, as entrepreneurs, with ideas for new businesses. In this early phase of the innovation process, students may need help to develop their business plan, and more experienced advisors and funding organizations are to be linked in. For Vaasa and the region of Ostrobothnia it essential to elaborate on a model how to link university specific innovation systems together and to align with expert organizations.

#### UNIVERSITY BASED INNOVATION SYSTEMS

For this study four universities and two universities of applied science were contacted. Åbo Akademi University and University of Helsinki, Faculty of Law, Vaasa unit of legal studies do not at the moment have a developed student support system for those interested in developing their own businesses. Hanken School of Economics have a recently introduced Hanken Business Lab. University of Vaasa cooperate with Vaasa University of Applied Science. Their students can get consultation from West Coast startup or from the student driven organization VES – Vaasa Entrepreneurial Society. Novia University of Applied Science has a long-lasting practice in supporting their students interested in starting their own company.

#### HANKEN School of Economics, Vaasa

In support of students, Hanken has a new founded Hanken Business Lab.

#### Hanken business lab (HBL)

Mission: to promote entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial thinking among students and offer support in developing and refining their business ideas, linking potential entrepreneurs to network of contacts and organizations.

- 1) Supporting entrepreneurship through Hanken New Ventures startup programme and a Scale-up programme to help existing firms grow
- 2) "Stugan" as concrete meeting place for providing counseling, coaching, holding meetings and networking, and as a place to organize events where co-operation partners such as Technobothia and Experience Lab can share their experiences and provide inspiration to students
- **3)** Immersing entrepreneurial thinking into teaching at Hanken, e.g. through organizing guest lecturers and thereby bringing in the entrepreneurial also into subjects such as languages.

Founded / Started:	2017							
Contact person:	Nina Ingves							
Contact persons	- Time mgree							
Activity clock								
Month	Activity year around	Activity specific	Target group					
August	Stugan is open two days	HBL's activities are still	students					
September	a week for students to	new and emerging and						
October	come and discuss their	gaining critical mass,						
November	initial business ideas.	so no reoccurring						
December	HBL connects the	events have yet taken						
January	student to actors	place, although						
February	(alumni and other,	participation in Slush						
March	business contacts and	(Nov/Dec) and						
April	supporting	demonstrations of						
May	organizations) who can	technology						
June	help develop the ideas	developments at						
July	into more concrete forms.	Stugan will be such.						

# West Coast Startup - a common incubator of Vaasa University of Applied Sciences and the University of Vaasa for potential new growth companies

West Coast Startup							
Mission: West Coast startup's goal is to help students and staff to start a new business.							
West Coast Startup offers coaching in clarifying, developing, testing and implementing ideas. In							
				rses, workshops, events and			
networking opportunities. Services are free of charge for the students and staff of VAMK and							
the University of Vaasa. (http://www.muova.fi/en/yhteistyo/wcs/)							
The activities of V	VCS i	revolves around	d 4 activities:				
Start-Up Cafe A meeting plan business		ce for those who are interested about starting their own					
Monthly Open	Monthly open		house events, with varying topics.				
House event							
Workshop		Workshops or	n various topics. Topics are chosen based on emerging				
	trends and input		ut from customers.				
Sparring program		I		eurs and teams. Basics for S			
(spring)		· ·		program. Accelerator progr	am		
			t promising early-stage sta	rtups	ı		
Founded /	201	13					
Started:				250 40 402 0027			
Contact person:	Jarı	Ratilainen	jari.ratilainen@muova.fi	+358 40 182 9027			
A attributed a sle							
Activity clock Month	Λ	i. itiaa	Consist activities	T			
Wonth		ivities year und	Special activities				
August	• 1	Monthly Open	Details t.b.a.				
September	F	louse					
October	• \	Vorkshops					
November	and						
December		nackathons					
January		Start-Up Café					
February		Personal					
March	S	parring					
April							
May							
June							
July							
0							
Cooperation partners / partners in network							
Vaasa University							
Vaasa University of Applied Science							
VASEK / Startia							
Student organizations							
National incubators							
National associations							
International incubators							
International associations							
Companies and enterprises							

# **NOVIA University of Applied Science**

# **NOVIA University of Applied Science**

Mission: Be a useful coach for students interested in starting-up their own business

Students at NOVIA University of Applied Science can benefit from the support given by the Senior Lecturer Stefan Granqvist who regularly, every Wednesday all year around has an open-door policy.

Granqvist initiated the idea of coaching students interested in a starting their own business in 1993. He has during the many years of practice developed a structured way to guide the students from a vague business idea to a sustainable business plan and a potential launch. In the process, experts of different types are contacted on a need-based policy to join in for meetings with the young entrepreneur with the purpose of bringing in a second opinion and the latest information from the field. Furthermore, the business idea and plan are tested with very direct questions. A bank manager, for example, might be asked about his or her readiness to give a loan to the entrepreneur. (https://www.novia.fi/om-oss/nyheter/foretagsradgivning-for-studerande-i-vasa)

Founded / Started:	1994							
Contact person:	Stefan Granqvist	Stefan.Granqvist@novia.fi						
Activity clock								
Month	Activity year around	Target group	Comments					
August								
September								
October								
November	Every Wednesday		A well-developed system					
December	09.00 – 13.00 there	Engineering students at NOVIA	for how to support the students					
January	is time for							
February	supervision by							
March	Stefan Granqvists							
April	at his office							
May								
June								
July								
Cooperation partners								
VASEK	Different types of	Different types of						
	companies	experts depending on						
		needs						

#### Vaasa Entrepreneurship Society (VES)

University of Vaasa

#### Vaasa Entrepreneurship Society We help people to realize their potential and create a spark, not just in business but Mission: life in general Everyone has the potential to be an entrepreneur. VES is there to serve, support and enable people to chase their dreams. VES was founded in early 2015 to boost the entrepreneurial scene in Vaasa region. Our purpose is to serve the entrepreneurial minded with powerful insights, skills & connections that inspire, motivate and help them create new businesses. With other entrepreneurship societies in Finland, we are a part of the movement towards a more innovative, entrepreneur-friendly and economically healthy Finland. As our tagline goes: "VES we can!" Students from all universities and universities of applied sciences are welcome to participate in the activities of VES. (https://www.ves.fi) The activities of VES revolves around seven activities: **VES Talks** Inspiring speaker events VES + You (New) Entrepreneurial skills taught to students in collaboration with their closest student association. Themes vary. Concrete lessons from the world of entrepreneurship taught by **VES Academy** experts of their fields **VES Consulting** Affordable consulting for small businesses combined with valuable real-life experience for students **VES Stories** To gather a few local entrepreneurs or entrepreneurs who have studied in Vaasa to talk about their story To bring together interesting start-ups, active partner companies, Harvest inspiring speakers and of course the students from all the university units in Vaasa. To collect the most promising start-ups of the energy industry under **Energy Spin** the same roof with international investors and executives **Case Competition** Together with our partners, we organize case competitions to give students intriguing challenges Founded / Started: 2015 Oskari Kaskinen 040 755 4232 Contact person: pi@ves.fi **Activity clock** Month **Activities year around** Special activities August September Harvest (21st) NBF stream October VES talks November VES Academy December **VES Consulting** January **VES Stories** February Case Competition March **Energy Spin** VES + You April VES Get together May June July Cooperation partners / partners in network

VASEK

VAMK/PUV

# A ROAD-MAP TO CO-OPERATION ON SERVICE INNOVATIONS AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT IN VAASA

University based innovation systems must be structured to *inspire* actors with different knowledge and resources to come together and *innovate* and facilitate *implementation* of the new inventions. Based on our understanding of how universities with operation in Vaasa support students in their entrepreneurial endeavour we present a platform for a developed University based innovation system and a road-map for future co-operation.

Based on the interviews with the university representatives it was agreed that a university based innovation system for students would lean on two pillars; 1) a coordinating body consisting of one representative from each university and selected expert organisations, which would create a platform for information sharing and a forum for discussing new, 2) co-created joint activities with a focus on cross-disciplinary knowledge sharing in tandem with university specific (in-house) activities (Figure 1).

Figure 1. University based innovation system

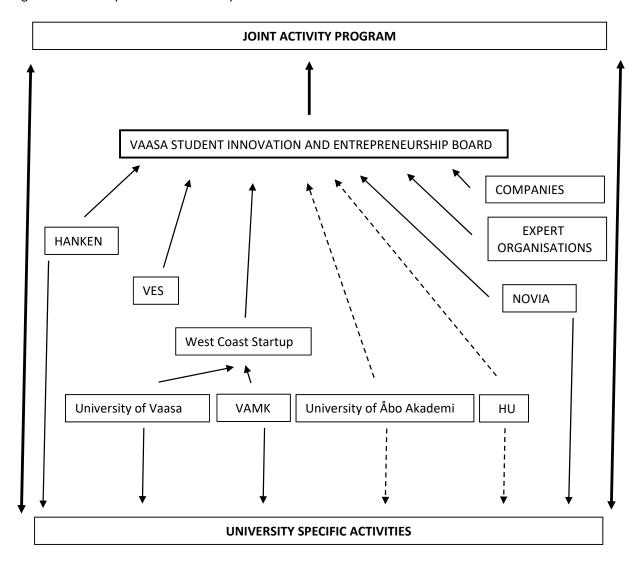


Figure 1 highlights a dual system, at the base line, on the bottom university specific innovation/entrepreneurial support systems are in operation, and on the top jointly coordinated efforts are to be practiced. Well running structures at the university level are not to be substituted, but co-learning and sharing of best practices is to be advanced. In university specific practices devotion and personal responsibility is critical for success. In jointly coordinated offerings even more so when pooling of resources are to be practiced and information sharing is critical. Therefor we suggest that a new coordination board, Vaasa student innovation and entrepreneurship board, is to be founded, and an annual program decided on. The structure and content of the annual program is to be decided on by the board during spring to be practiced from autumn onwards for one year at the time but updated when necessary.

In developing a university-based innovation platform in support of students other local, regional and national actors of importance are to be recognized. Within education and research and a local perspective VEBIC and YA! Vocational college of Ostrobothnia are to be noticed.

Vaasa Energy Business Innovation Centre - VEBIC — hosted by University of Vaasa is a research and innovation platform with a focus on efficient energy production, energy business and sustainable societal development. The scope of research covers new energy technology and the impacts of its adoption on business and the wider society. Projects focus, for instance, on renewable fuels, flexible energy production, the electrical systems of engine-driven power plants, on reducing the waste energy and emissions of the energy production, and on the societal and economic issues of the energy sector.

"VEBIC provides a leading-edge international research infrastructure that serves both academic and industrial needs. Internal combustion engine and fuel laboratories are complemented by a multi-disciplinary research platform focused on the wider business and societal impacts of new energy technologies" (http://www.vei.fi)

YA! Vocational college of Ostrobothnia was formed 1 of January 2009 as a result of a merger between three schools; Svenska yrkesinstitutet, Korsnäs Kurscenter and Vocana. Today YA! Has about 250 employees and 2200 students. YA! offers education in more than 10 different areas mainly in Swedish. They offer students insights to entrepreneurship too.

"Within the majority of our fields of education courses in entrepreneurship are part of the studies. During your education you can experience the everyday life of an entrepreneur at YA's own service points; the hairdressing salon Point Cut, the restaurant Fyrklövern and the auto-repair-shop. Our construction workers and electricians also take on construction projects as part of their studies. Our aim is to prepare students to work as employees or to be independent entrepreneurs." (http://www.yrkesakademin.fi/index.php/ya-info/in-english/item/entrepreneurship-2)

Furthermore, the competences and resources of VASEK, MERINOVA, YES Ostrobothnia are to be benefitted from.

VASEK, Vaasa Region Development Company VASEK promote regional business, help SMEs to grow and market the region. (https://www.vasek.fi/startsida/)

MERINOVA, help the energy cluster in Vaasa to grow and prosper. We make this happen with our strong project expertise and development services that go deep into the corporate processes. (https://www.merinova.fi/en/)

YES, is a network of experts who support and train teachers in entrepreneurship education and serves as a developer of regional entrepreneurship education and school-business cooperation.

Our goal is that every young person in Finland receives entrepreneurship education regardless of educational level and municipality, and that every teacher has the capability to implement entrepreneurship education in their own work. (http://www.yesverkosto.fi/yes/?lang=en)

In Figure 1, companies are also listed as one resource group, emphasizing the importance of applying a business problem development approach in all undertakings. The city of Vaasa has been appointed as the Energy capital of the Nordic countries, and the energy cluster consist today of more than 100 companies (<a href="http://energyvaasa.vaasanseutu.fi/">http://energyvaasa.vaasanseutu.fi/</a>). Consequently, there must be an interest among some of these companies to be involved.

When it comes to governance and the work processes of the Vaasa student innovation and entrepreneurship board, this report does not give guidance, it is up to those being involved to decide on the agenda. Funding is also an issue. Involved companies could be one source of funding, another is the Vaasa Consortium of Higher Education. A third option is more of an ad hoc solution, different budgets for different projects.

#### References to good reading

Connecting Universities to Regional Growth: A Practical Guide

http://ec.europa.eu/regional\_policy/sources/docgener/presenta/universities2011/universities2011\_en.pdf

Innovation in the Classroom, design Thinking for 21st Century Learning

https://web.stanford.edu/group/redlab/cgi-bin/materials/Kwek-Innovation%20In%20The%20Classroom.pdf

1 Student seminar APPENDIX

#### Students' view on co-creation workshops

Hanken arranged the seminar "Future work in smart-tech environment" for students. The purpose was to gather students from different universities and introducing them how students can be involved in innovation creation and business development in the Vaasa region. The seminar took place on 13<sup>th</sup> of February 2019 and 60 students from University of Vaasa, Hanken and Vaasa University of Applied Sciences (VAMK) participated the event.

Wärtsilä is planning Smart Technology Hub in Vaasa and inviting universities beside other businesses for collaboration and co-creation of innovation. The seminar started with Wärtsilä's keynote about Smart Partner Campus that will be built in Vaskiluoto in 2020. In addition to news about new Technology Hub, Wärtsilä's recruiter was presenting students what kind of competencies are expected from the future employees in the field of smart-tech.

After the opening speeches, it was a workshop time. The aim of the workshop was collecting a student view on co-creation of ideas and open innovation. The students discussed about their interests in the mixed groups consisting of students from different universities. The workshops were facilitated by the moderators (Hanken personnel) in each table. The discussions were documented, and a small survey was conducted. Next, some student insights are presented.

Students seem to be interested in hackathons and co-creation workshops. For several students the topic seems to be a determinative factor whether they get interested participating a hackathon. There were a great range of topics of interest mentioned by the students under the categories: *Environmental issues, Climate Change, Renewable Energy, Everyday Life, Society, City* and *Technology Development*. Some students doubted whether "business students" can participate a hackathon with a technology related topic. Students were concerned whether their knowledge is useful in the cocreation process. It became obvious that the topic matters, but for some students learning the working method of hackathon could be also the reason to participate. Interestingly, some students considered that tech-students might be stricter with the topic of the hackathon when deciding whether to attend or not: "Maybe for marketing and business students the topic does not matter as much as for tech students".

Students have a positive attitude towards hackathon type of events. Students looked forward to meeting students from other universities. In general, the students like the idea of working in a mixed group consisting of diversity of knowledge from different fields. When students were asked what would inspire them to participate in hackathon, new business contacts were an important driver for many. In relation to practical arrangements, the students wish that participation would benefit a student with an employment opportunity. It was suggested by the students that a prize for the winning team (in hackathon) could be a summer job or job interview in a company involved in the hackathon.

The students were asked about the practical arrangements of the hackathon, questions such as when and how. Nearly all respondents of the survey suggested that the length of the hackathon should be one-to-two days. When enquiring what with be the suitable time to arrange the hackathon, a great variety of responses were received. Some would like to have the hackathon event during the university semesters (spring or autumn) and for others the summer was a preferable time. For some students

the best alternative to work in hackathon was during the week days and for others, the weekend was the suggested option. A couple of students mentioned that any other time except summer is suitable because then students are in Vaasa. This is actually a very good point because many students have their summer jobs somewhere else than in Vaasa.

Co-creation workshop or hackathon can be a way of taking forward student's own entrepreneurial ideas. It appeared that most of the students would be happy working in mixed teams built by the organizers. Nevertheless, there were students whose preference would be building their own teams and developing perhaps their own business ideas forward.

Having fun and networking with other students would be an important part of the Hackathon. There were many suggestions that the "night work" or "overnight stay" plays an important role in the hackathon process. Students explained that "…"Night work" is important to processing things and create new ideas…" Some students suggested "free beers and pizza" being a significant element of a hackathon. Overall, the students emphasized that the co-creation event must be a fun thing, something that differs from ordinary studies.

The students have a positive attitude towards hackathon type of an event where ideas are shared in collaboration with other students and company participants. At least the students who participated our seminar "Future work — in smart-tech environment" experience co-creation as an exciting opportunity for a student. According to our survey, the hackathons organized in university settings are experienced as being part of the studies, and therefore students are expecting study credits for their participation.

For the SESP-project, the universities in Vaasa, and development organizations, this seminar created valuable knowledge, what is the student opinion about open innovation and co-creation. The seminar we arranged now was a quite unique event because it can be challenging to gather students from different universities and universities of applied sciences "under the same roof." With the experience of the seminar, it could be stated that one of the most important factors when organizing a co-creation event is that every participant feels that their ideas are valuable in the process. Secondly, the students seem to be willing to workshop and network across university borders.

What will happen next? This student seminar was a kickoff-event for a co-creation workshop *Innovation Loop* that will be arranged on 2<sup>nd</sup> of April 2019 at Hanken Vaasa, in cooperation with Regional Council of Ostrobothnia, Hanken, University of Vaasa, Åbo Akademi, City of Vaasa and Region Västerbotten. *Innovation Loop* is a co-creation process/workshop where students are taken, in short time, from a predefined problem to co-generated ideas and into innovative solutions. The theme of the workshop will be Smart and Renewable Energy solutions and the companies in this field will provide challenges and problems to be solved.

Joint projects such as SESP improve the cooperation between universities. The project partners are not only implementing the work packages (WP) but simultaneously sharing knowledge and learning about research and development activities done in other universities. *Innovation Loop*, gathering together three universities and two development organizations, is again an activity towards more collaborative way of generating innovation in the region.

# Future work in smart-tech environment

Afternoon seminar for students 13th February 2019 | @ Hanken Biblioteksgatan 16, Vasa

# COME

AND LISTEN TO WHAT WÄRTSILÄ IS PLANNING TO HAPPEN IN "WASKILUOTO". WHAT SKILLS AND COMPETENCIES ARE THEY LOOKING FOR & COOPERATION OPTIONS. BE PART OF THE BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT OF THE REGION.



13:00-Welcome, SESP-project 13:05-13:45 Wärtsilä's Smart Partner Campus, Kenneth Widell 13:45-14:05 Future recruitment of Wärtsilä, Minna Niemi 14:05-14:15 Break with refreshments 14:15-14:50 Mini-workshops about future work in smart-tech environment 14:50-15:15 Wrap up and close of the seminar Please note that program is subject to change.

Welcome students from Hanken, University of Vaasa, HU, Åbo Akademi, Novia & VAMK and other interested. The seminar is free of charge. Please register to annika.pollari@hanken.fi by 6.2.2019.

Sponsors:











# Co-creation Workshops for Smart and Renewable Energy Solutions!

Welcome to take part in a co-creation process called the Innovation Loop. The mission is to take you, in a short time, from a predefined problem to co-generated ideas and into innovative solutions.

# Are you interested in IoT, open data, AI, co-creation, service design, renewable energy or circular economy?

You will get company specific challenges to work with in multidisciplinary teams consisting of five to six students. You can also bring your own energy-related challenge or idea to work with. In this case you will put together your own team before the workshop starts.

### About the Innovation Loop process

The process consists of three workshops. The workshops gather people with different knowledge and backgrounds in an open, social innovation process. This means that the ideas developed are owned by everyone.

#### Keynote speaker: Arash Gilan Author, CEO and co-founder of Viva Media

Co-author of the highly acknowledged book *GET DIGITAL – or die trying* Arash Gilan talks about digitalisation, new technologies, trends and marketing. Arash also talks about the value of the non-digital. You will get hands-on advice and thoughts on what it takes to win the digital championship!



Arash has been elected one of the foremost young CEOs and co-founders in Sweden. Arash also acts as one of Google's six Google Agency Coaches in Europe.

# **REGISTER NOW:**

https://www.lyyti.in/smartenergyworkshop





# 2nd of April 2019

#### INFORMATION

#### What

Idea-generation workshop focusing on smart energy solutions

#### When

PART 1 2nd of April, 9.00 am to 16.00 pm. Registration and breakfast start at 8.30 am.

# Where

Hanken School of Economics Assembly hall, first floor Kiriastokatu 16, Vaasa

#### How

Creative workshop and inspirational talks. The participants will together assess needs and identify ideas to handle these needs.

The event is free of charge and open for everyone to attend. Breakfast, lunch, coffee and snacks are included.

Registration is required. Final day of registration: 25th of March. Please note that the registration may close earlier if the maximum number of participants (40) is reached.



# The Innovation Loop Process in Vaasa



All three sessions will have inspirational keynote speeches, a creative workshop with tools bringing your ideas forward and a dedicated jury giving feedback on your progress.



# PART 1

#### WHAT

Idea-generation workshop focusing on smart energy solutions **WHEN** 

2nd of April, 9.00 am to 16.00 pm. Registration and breakfast start at 8.30 am. Hanken School of Economics Assembly hall, first floor, Kirjastokatu 16, Vaasa

# PART 2

### WHAT

Society-solutions focused workshop: Generated ideas in part 1 are transformed into marketable innovative products, services or processes benefiting the society in the energy sector.

# WHEN

7th of May

University of Vaasa, Tervahovi building, C203 Kurtén Wolffintie 34, Vaasa Keynote speaker: to be announced.

# PART 3

#### WHAT

Solutions-based implementation workshop: The participants blueprint solutions, assess their economic sustainability and engage stakeholders to finance their implementation.

#### WHEN

8th of October

Place and keynote speaker: to be announced.

#### CONTACT

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innovationsloop.eu – a part of Region Västerbotten











