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# “SME’s innotool”

## an EU-Project within the 5<sup>th</sup> frameworkprograme Innovation&SME

### Full Project titel

SME’s innovation toolbox for creating an innovation-friendly, cooperative atmosphere and fostering the use of new creativity-methods for product- and/or process development

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### Abstract

It is becoming more and more important, especially for small and middle-sized companies, to have a functioning innovation management and a consciously applied technology transfer in order to ensure their future success through the development of new product ideas or the improvement of existing products. Both of these are particularly dependent on the non-technical areas of the business: management, personnel training and the consideration of social and legal frameworks. Important points of departure for promoting a climate of innovation and active technology transfer are thus to be found in these areas.

**The aim of this project** is to create a toolbox for innovation management for small and medium-sized companies from the production, processing industries and services with the following contents:

- Methods and tools to create an **innovation-friendly atmosphere** (involvement of the company leadership, establishment of project and creativity teams)
- Communication of the targets of **sustainable development** (effects on the legal and social framework and on future customer expectations)
- **Methods and tools for comprehensive problem analysis**
- Methods and tools of product and process integrated environmental protection
- **Methods and tools for structured generation and collection of ideas**
- **Methods and tools to evaluate ideas** (incorporating the requirements of sustainable development)
- **Use of institutions for technology transfer** and the possibility of cooperation with other businesses, as well as with university and non-university research institutions
- Development of a project management scheme „from the idea to its realisation“

**The approach** to SMEs will be through **the combined presentation** of the methods of structured problem analysis and/or idea generation (tools from the TRIZ methodology are mainly used) and of product and process integrated environmental protection, which permit the presentation of the criteria for sustainable development.

Combining these methods makes good sense thanks to many similarities in approach—careful use of resources, utilisation of available knowledge, simplification of products and processes—and can promote awareness in both fields.

Thus the approach of this project should:

- **strengthen the innovation potential** of SME’s via the treatment of the topics innovation-friendly climate in the company, structured problem analysis and idea generation,
- **convey the ideas and goals of sustainable development** – one of the main economic and social goals of the European Union, and
- **promote** the readiness of SMEs to **cooperate with other industries and external institutions**, and thus contribute a **manifold benefit from the standpoint of the funds’ providers**.