

STEP: Improved Definition and Profiling for Sustainable TEchnologyParks

Project duration: 24 months (May 2011- April 2013)

Project partners: Innovation and Founders Centre Magdeburg – Lead partner (IGZ Magdeburg GmbH), Saxony-Anhalt Germany

Coventry University, West Midlands, UK

Wroclaw Regional Development Agency (WARR), Poland

The key aim of STEP is to gain an improved understanding of the contribution of virtual/physical technology parks in supporting the sustainability of key sectors in local economies, with a particular focus on the automotive industry. STEP seeks to improve the effectiveness of regional policies and instruments and give participating regions an exclusive opportunity to: benefit from existing partner experiences and expertise in innovation and technology transfer; exchange established methodologies and tools; and test the implementation of good and best practices into their own structures (taking them into account for when planning strategic development).

Additionally, the focus on the automotive supply chain provides a logical foundation with an emphasis on R&D, SME's and start-up firms; those likely to need the support provided by technology parks. Moreover, a major innovative aspect of the sub-project is the examination of the contribution made by virtual technology parks alongside their traditional physical form.

Key outputs from the sub-project include the production of a good practice transferability handbook, building upon feedback from seminars, creativity workshops and study visits/two-way knowledge exchanges. A focus of the handbook will be a set of 'action recommendations' to promote sector sustainability through the technology park concept.