TRIS

Interreg Europe

European Union
European Regional
Development Fund

4th TRIS
Peer Review
Report
(Budapest,
Hungary)

Birmingham
City Council

Introduction

1.0 What is a peer review visit?

Peer review visits are intended to be a practical and effective tool to foster learning between organisations. In the context of the TRIS project, the objective of a peer review visit is to enable organisations to improve their working knowledge of industrial symbiosis by learning from each other. The visits are intended to benefit all participants through an open exchange of ideas, knowledge, and sound practices. The host organisation should expect to gain as much from the experience as the visitors, if not more.

1.1 Steps to organise a peer review visit

- Make contact between the host and visiting organisation
- Identify potential areas for support or sharing
- The two organisations should identify which areas they want to learn about from each other. Possible areas include: leadership/management; strategic planning; project examples (good practices); funding/ governance arrangements
- Identify responsibilities in planning and carrying out a review visit

1.2 Organising the visit

During this step, it is very important that both organisations know what they are responsible for. The following is a starting point

1.2.i Host organisation

- Establish availability and identify tentative dates for the site visit. If possible, the visit should happen at a time when the visitors can observe your activities taking place.
- Determine who will participate in the review visit. Designate which staff will be responsible for receiving the visitors and taking them around.
- Make necessary logistical arrangements, e.g. set up meetings, arrange local transport, meals, etc.
- Inform key staff of the upcoming visit.
- Prepare and share an agenda for the visit. Don't forget to estimate and include travel times and distances between locations. Also consider including a wrap-up or closing activity.
- Prepare any other programme materials and share key documents and background information about your organisation with the visitors at least 2 weeks prior to their coming.
- Try to identify good ideas from your organisation that you think might be helpful to the visitors.
- Address the potential necessity of a translator – this will be dependent on the host organisation (language barriers may be more significant in some host organisations than others). The host organisation will assess the need for translation.
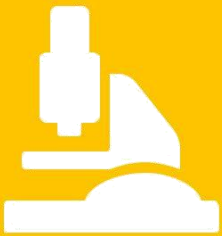
1.2.ii Visiting organisation(s)

- Determine who will participate in the review visit. People should agree to participate in the team only if they have a genuine desire to both offer and receive new ideas and to report back to others.
- Agree locally the number of visitors and how many people can come from the same company
- Review and give feedback on the proposed agenda.
- Notify the hosting organisation (with enough advance notice) of the names, arrival dates/times and other relevant information about arriving participants.
- Review the materials sent by the hosting organisation.
- Prepare to present/discuss your own organisation and programmes, as well as your successes and challenges.
- When you return home, share relevant information, approaches, skills, recommendations and ideas with those who did not participate.

1.2.iii All organisations

- Based on the needs of both organisations, identify focus areas for activities/discussion during the visit.
- Develop clear expectations about the visit, including:
  o Issues to be discussed
  o Type of activities to be carried out
    – meetings, focus group discussions, observation, site visits, etc.

  o Who will participate? Agree the organisations that should be involved: do we want people from the same sector? Should we weight some sectors more than others? Should it comprise a mix of stakeholders?
  o The programme duration/length
  o Financial responsibilities – which organisation will pay for what?
  o Who will be responsible for follow-up and reporting?
- Maintain an open, supportive, friendly environment for discussions about programmes and organisational strengths and challenges, as well as past successes and lessons learnt.
- Provide complete, accurate and meaningful information and feedback to each other during the visit.
- Do not act in any way that can negatively affect the reputation of the other organisation during the visit.
- Monitor participants' reactions and comments during the visit. Notify each other of any issues or problems that arise. Communicate and cooperate fully and openly with each other in relation to the solution.
- Provide participants with a formal opportunity to comment on the programme immediately following participation.

1.3 Follow-up

When the visitors return home, it is time to reflect further on what each organisation has learned from the exchange experience. It is important to make an effort to share the information with your colleagues after the visit. Discuss what ideas have come out of the review visit and how you might go forward to adapt or enhance your organisation's programmes or systems.

1.4 What makes a peer review visit successful?

- Clear expectations for both the host and visiting organisations developed prior to the visit.
- A well-planned and well-implemented programme, including enough time to discuss what you have seen at the end of the day.
- A friendly and open atmosphere during the visit.
- People from both organisations actively taking part in the activities and discussions
- Not just sharing information, but a focus on trying to learn and identifying lessons and ideas to use and adapt after the review visit
- Effective follow-up and reporting.

1.5 Prepare a report to donors on the peer review visit

Reporting is an important way to communicate with key stakeholders about the purpose and outcomes of your peer review visit. The following key questions should be answered in the report to share what both organisations have learned during the visit.

Include any additional information, insights or ideas of interest to you in the report. Length of these reports should not exceed five pages.

Peer Review Visit to

Budapest, Hungary

Background information

1. Describe the overall purpose and intent of the peer review visit

The plan was to analyse and provide feedback on the policies related to the adoption of IS by SMEs in the visited region: special waste and landfill regulations, incentives and funding, regulations at value chain or cluster levels. The visit wished to provide inspiration the visiting delegation for its Action Plan and offer a look at the shortcomings of existing policies to the host organisation.

2. What are the names of those who participated in the review visit and what are their roles within the organisations?

United Kingdom:
Adrian Murphy - Technical Director at Industrial Symbiosis Ltd.
Pablo Giovani Palafox - PhD student at University of Birmingham

Italy:
Giuseppe Carmine La Torre - Regione Emilia-Romagna
Manuela Ratta - Regione Emilia-Romagna
Ugo Mencherini - Mechanics and Materials Platform Expert at ASTER
Sara Picone - Energy and Environment Platform Expert at ASTER

Reflection on the visit

1. **What was the most positive or rewarding aspect of the Peer review visit?**

    In particular the second day presentation on national strategy for sustainable development and circular economy allowed to get a broader view on industrial symbiosis in a sustainable development perspective and to understand some peculiarities of the Hungarian strategies related to IS, with a very strong role of the Central government. Additionally it was interesting to notice how competences on waste management and circular economy are fragmented between different Ministries compared to the situation in Emilia-Romagna and Italy. This led us to consider that, in general, a systemic view needs to be promoted in the first place amongst institutional actors, in order to foster IS, overcoming sectoral fragmentation of competences and divergent interpretations of policy goals.
    We also appreciated the interactive approach that was chosen for the whole Peer Review.

2. **What new information, approaches, skills, recommendations or ideas were identified by the visiting organizations as something they would like to consider for their own organisation when they returned home?**

    The Peer Review visit was a good occasion to brainstorm on our Action Plan with interregional partners. Firstly, we could reflect on the interlinks between the ERDF programme and the strategies to promote IS, as this policy instrument is the target of Hungary and UK's action plan within TRIS. Even if in Emilia-Romagna we have a different policy instrument to tackle with the TRIS programme (i.e. the Regional Waste Management Plan), the visit was useful to exchange ideas on ways to finance IS actions with ERDF. It was also useful to hear about the Training Programmes for entrepreneurs by the speaker who introduced the National Sustainable Development plan. This gave us the inspiration to start thinking about a similar measure for Emilia-Romagna.

3. **What new information, approaches, skills, recommendations or ideas were shared with the hosting organisation by the visiting organisation as something they would like to consider for their own organisation?**

4. **What challenges or constraints did you encounter in planning or carrying out the review visit?**

    No particular challenges or constraints, the visit was well organized and structured.

Follow up

What did both organisations identify as the most important follow-up actions following the review visit?

The most important follow up action is to exchange draft Action Plans to be able to incorporate the feedback from project partners.