

Innoroad – a Road Transport and Vehicle Sector Innovation

Jyväskylä-based Innoroad expertise network encompasses road transport and vehicle related R&D projects together with educational offerings by the local educational establishments. Innoroad has set its sights on becoming the most significant road traffic and vehicle expertise network in the Northern Europe by 2015. Innoroad Park in turn is a unique road transport and vehicle center springing from the expertise network that draws on Jyväskylä's convenient logistical position and offers the field operators innovative services and products while promoting cooperation.

Jyväskylä has long traditions as a road transport and vehicle field instructor. According to Mr. Olli Patrikainen from Jyväskylä Regional Development Company Jykes Ltd. the Jyväskylä Engineering College has offered training for transportation engineers beginning from the 60's with senior teacher Simo Hokkanen acting as a motor. Mr. Jani Viitasaari, likewise from Jykes or Jyväskylä Regional Development Company Ltd., in turn emphasizes the university-level research conducted in the area with two related professorships. Naturally, reflecting on the geography of Finland, both Mr. Patrikainen and Mr. Viitasaari agree that the central location of Jyväskylä is a key factor – it has always been an important junction. From an international perspective expertise is nevertheless the basis for differentiation.

Innoroad – an Innovation in Itself

Innoroad is an international road transport and vehicle expertise network, the goal of which is to develop automation and expertise in the sector. Main emphasis lies on business development, entrepreneurship, traffic safety and the ecological operation models for the transportation industry. The network is an open forum for operators in the road transport sector, and at the moment its motors in the Jyväskylä area are Jyväskylä University of Applied

Sciences, Jyväskylä Educational

Consortium, Jykes and the University of Jyväskylä together with a number of road transport companies, communities and educational establishments at various levels in the whole of Finland.

Mr. Viitasaari points out that Innoroad, an interdisciplinary expertise network permeating a number of top developing clusters, is an innovation in itself, but also combining the expertise network with a business park is an innovation. In other words, there are two complementary concepts: on one hand there is the Innoroad expertise network with the task of developing expertise, and on the other, a concrete business park, the marketing of which is spearheaded by expertise: Innoroad offers the companies contemplating on relocating at the Innoroad Park a ready expertise service network together with a host of business models. "In this way the operations start to multiply," Mr. Viitasaari points out.

Innoroad Park, A World Class Business Park

Innoroad Park is a vast area within the newly formed Jyväskylä (the City of Jyväskylä, the Rural Municipality of Jyväskylä and the Municipality of Korpilahti merged on January 1, 2009) and partly connected to the adjoining Municipality of Laukaa. Broadly speaking it is not a virginal area, starting from scratch, since a lot of entrepreneurs in the sector are already present. The Municipalities in ques-

Innoroad Park Today

Innoroad Park Today

- * Enterprises: 60
- * Employees: close to 700
- * Buildings: 55 000 m²
- * Land area: 60 hectares

Innoroad Park tomorrow:
Ready in 15–20 years, employing around 4 000 people

Innoroad Test Center

is part of the Innoroad development agenda with the goal of creating the Europe's first research and testing center that serves especially the training needs of heavy transportation. Innoroad Test Center is a joint venture between Jykes, the Municipality of Laukaa, Jyväskylä University of Applied Sciences, Regional Council of Central Finland and companies in the sector. Innoroad Test Center offers the commercial traffic operators a possibility to offer modern services to back up the industry's R&D, education and research efforts.

The land area of around 300 hectares will be a unique testing environment, even internationally speaking, for busses, trucks, articulated vehicles, all-purpose vehicles, earthmoving vehicles, and emergency vehicles alike. Different tracks are set up for the purpose of training the control of special vehicles under extreme circumstances. The training services are offered by the local educational establishments and companies.

The strong international research expertise is based on research conducted at the international Agora Innoroad laboratory of the Jyväskylä University and within the Logistics training program at the Jyväskylä University of Applied Sciences and its network.

The modern Innoroad Test Center with its versatile services covering a restaurant, accommodation and congress facilities and exhibition space both indoors and outdoors offers the perfect backdrop for organizing unforgettable events, for example when launching new vehicles.

tion have nevertheless recently joined their forces to kick-start the planning and development of the area, especially for the needs of the road traffic and vehicle sector. The initial building plan is now ready, and in the next 1–3 years the building plans both in Jyväskylä and Laukaa will offer many-fold possibilities.

Innoroad Park was born as a result of an expertise network: Innoroad Park is namely not just any business park or industrial site, but it builds upon the strong competences in the area, namely the Logistics engineering training at the Jyväskylä University of Applied Sciences and the Jyväskylä University professorships in road transport, that is, one on Optimization and the other on Traffic Safety, concentrating on professional traffic issues. In addition there is Jyväskylä Institute of Adult Education that is the nation's leading instructor in vehicle transportation. Mr. Patrikainen stresses that Innoroad Park offers the companies settling in Jyväskylä, or already there, the strong expertise backing of these educational establishments and their networks in developing their business. The schools

collaborate with the companies on a continuous basis.

Kaukokiito or Transport Company Taipale, Transpoint and Scanauto have either already located in Innoroad Park or have announced plans to relocate in the area.

The Region's Oldest Transport Company, Taipale, Settled at Innoroad Park

Transport Company Taipale Ltd., forming a part of the nation-wide Kaukokiito chain, was founded in 1946 making it the oldest in the region. It is in addition the only one operating partload traffic (where the loads are composed of partial loads) apart from hauling the regular mass loads. "We operate regular line services to several Finnish cities. The oldest of the routes is Äänekoski–Jyväskylä–Helsinki, which my father started in the turn of 1950's. Our terminal serves the Kaukokiito customers in the whole of Finland, and our nation-wide connections pass through Kaukokiito. Say you want to send a package to Ivalo in the Northern Finland, for example, it will pass through the Kaukokiito net-

work," says Mrs. Kaija Taipale, CEO of the company and member of the Board of directors at Kaukokiito.

Mrs. Taipale agrees that Innoroad Park is perfectly located, in the right spot on the right side of town. There is a short route to Äänekoski and Suolahti that are the company's traditional operating areas. In addition quite near there are services related to the company business, that is, tire shops, car parts shops and repair shops together with a canteen. Mrs. Taipale recognizes that "the area will be strongly developing within the next ten years, and the synergies are evident: when we need tires or car parts, we don't need to look for them, which is a strong benefit. Also heavy fleet washing facilities will soon be available. In addition Scanauto is in the process of relocating in the park, which is an important asset for us as the majority of the company fleet is branded Scania." Mrs. Taipale also recognizes the advantages of both the Jyväskylä University of Applied Sciences offering an excellent training program for Logistics engineers and Jyväskylä Educational Consortium that trains drivers.

www.jykes.fi
www.innoroad.fi