

# Driving connections and growth for businesses using Open Innovation

## SEEDA Enterprise Hub Network

### Background

The SEEDA Enterprise Hub Network (EHN) directors had been working with the H-I Network and leading global corporates such as GSK, Philips and McLaren, to investigate how collaboration between SMEs and larger organisations could work more effectively. The EHN was asked to focus on facilitating mid-sized organisations working with small organisations and corporates.

The EHN focuses on entrepreneurial individuals and companies, helping them to bring ideas to market quickly and profitably. Its services are free to members of the Hub Network. It draws on a wide range of specialists to help entrepreneurs and businesses realise their potential, typically helping businesses at early or developing stages of growth to go further, faster.

### Objectives

The objective of the programme was to determine the role that the EHN should play in using the principles of Open Innovation to create connections from mid-sized enterprises to other enterprises with a view to generating growth opportunities.

The EHN wished to get unbiased input from typical mid-sized companies to understand their awareness of Open Innovation, attitude to it, business priorities and views on the role that the EHN should play in assisting them with Open Innovation.

The deliverables were a report on the findings, recommendations for EHN, and participation in EHN's internal and external workshops to discuss the actions that EHN should utilise to develop better connections of mutual value for SEEDA SMEs.

### Approach

- H-I interviewed a target set of companies on a one-to-one basis
- The interviews were analysed to generate recommendations for EHN
- The recommendations were discussed initially with Nigel Biggs of EHN, and then with the EHN management team
- H-I drew up a short list of recommendations
- The recommendations were verified in an EHN workshop with the participating companies. H-I presented the recommendations and enlisted McLaren Applied Technologies to present the case for Open Innovation and experiences in putting it into practice



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## Results

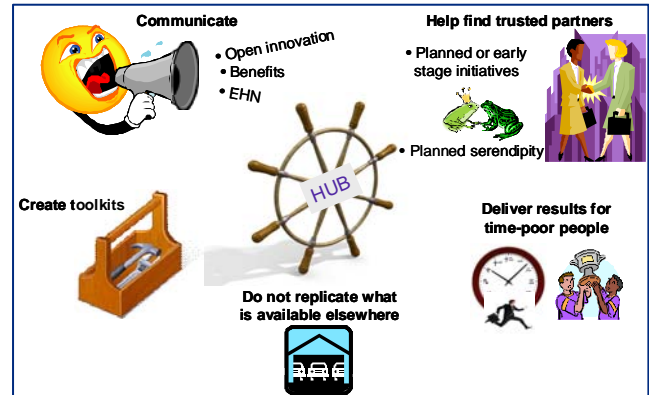
The interviews generated 15 recommendations for EHN, each supported with backing material. These were reduced to six key recommendations which now form the basis on which EHN will develop its Open Innovation-based services to mid-sized companies in the SEEDA region.

*"Having an independent person conducting the interviews generated highly valuable feedback. The results provided more insight than we had expected and a set of recommendations that will be fundamental to the development of our services."*

Nigel Biggs, Champion, Surrey Enterprise Hub

*"I was delighted with the relationships that the programme developed with the participating companies and their willingness to help shape our services. The workshop was particularly useful as it demonstrated to the participants how EHN could broker valuable connections."*

Mike Lunch, Director, Surrey Enterprise Hub



*'Open Innovation in Action - How to be strategic in the search for new sources of value'* by Andrew Gaule, Director of H-I Network

Open innovation is fast-becoming the preferred model for new product and service development at leading organisations. This book explains what open innovation is, and why it is relevant to your organisation.

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