

# 24-72 hours race to innovation

A method to prove it is possible to produce  
innovations

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Europeiska jordbruksfonden för  
landsbygdsutveckling: Europa  
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**THE SWEDISH  
RURAL NETWORK**

# Starting in Leader+

- Professor Kaj Mickos had a two days training course for the LAG managers.
- "An innovation is a surprising novelty that has reached the market (i.e. come to use) Before it has reached the market it is only an invention."
- "We cannot have passive innovation systems just waiting for a happy coincidence. We have to produce innovation the same way we produce, for instance food."
- Kaj Mickos participated as a lecturer in two Leader+ Contact Point conferences in Italy and in Austria



# Collect good problems, not brilliant solutions

- **”You should not first invent a medicine and then try to find a sickness to cure it with. Do not collect good solutions, search for the good problems”**
- In our 72 hours race with a food theme, local food business companies had sent in their ”good problems”



# Proving it is possible to produce innovations

- The 72-hours concept was developed by prof. Mickos to prove that it is possible to actually produce innovations in a short time.
- There are now also concepts of 24 hours and 48 hours.
- [www.innovationplant.se](http://www.innovationplant.se)
- 24 hours race for entrepreneurship support



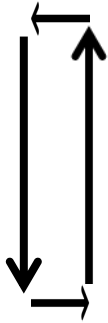
# Small mixed innovation groups ”compete”

- 3-4 individuals in each group, different age, gender, skills
- One process coach in each group
- A back office with about 15 experts
- 50 more experts available on line
- ”It was allowed to sleep”
- A public exhibition in the end



# The process

1. Collect good problems, a brain storming
2. Make a priority list
3. Back office to check immaterial rights
4. Check technical details with engineers or other experts
5. New priority list
6. Process
7. Ask designers for help visualazing
8. Prepare the exhibition



# Democratic innovation

- "You have to allow many and different people and skills to participate in the innovation process. It is almost like ICT where you as a customer contribute to the software testing and development."
- "Innovation is a team sport, not a game of one single genius"
- "The best innovation team I have had was a voice coach, a plumber and a 13 year old girl"
- "The worst team was consisting entirely of development engineers."



# The market day, a public exhibition




- A "bee hive service" for beekeepers and forest owners
- A simple tool for bakeries to pack bread
- The Truffle tracker
- Right Spirit to determine what's left in the bar's bottles
- "Gutencils" chef tools with a local design





# More results

- Sugar made of carrots
- Sweet Gotland, sweets made of local products
- Öllegard, a dry local cider with a special storytelling
- Baby food from local products
- Smoking bag giving taste to the barbeque
- Grafical lids to advertise on lunch boxes 
- Flexi bake a mold for muffins enabling to glaze all the muffins in one step



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# Best entrepreneurship support

24-hours race to design the best entrepreneurship support

- Gathering authorities and private business advisors in a region
- Meeting lunch to lunch
- Small groups competing with each other to find the best support system for small rural entrepreneurs
- *(No back office but a skilled process leader and several facilitators)*



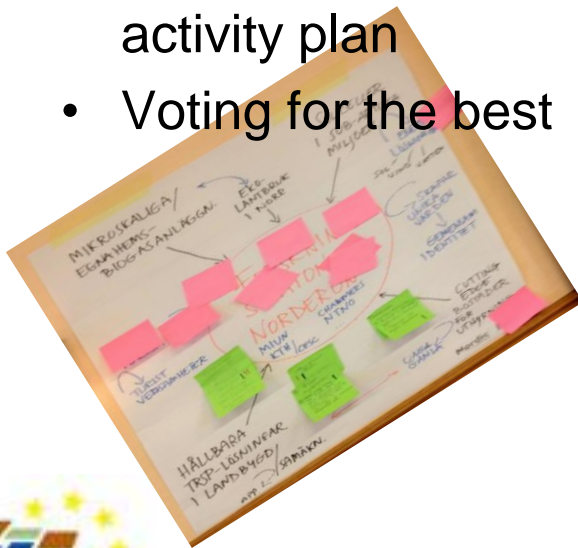
# Regional energy races

- Meeting lunch to lunch with energy advisors, entrepreneurs, community groups, municipalities in a region
- People with mandate to act
- How can your local community be self sufficient on energy?
- Identifying
  - renewable energy solutions
  - energy savings
  - best practice



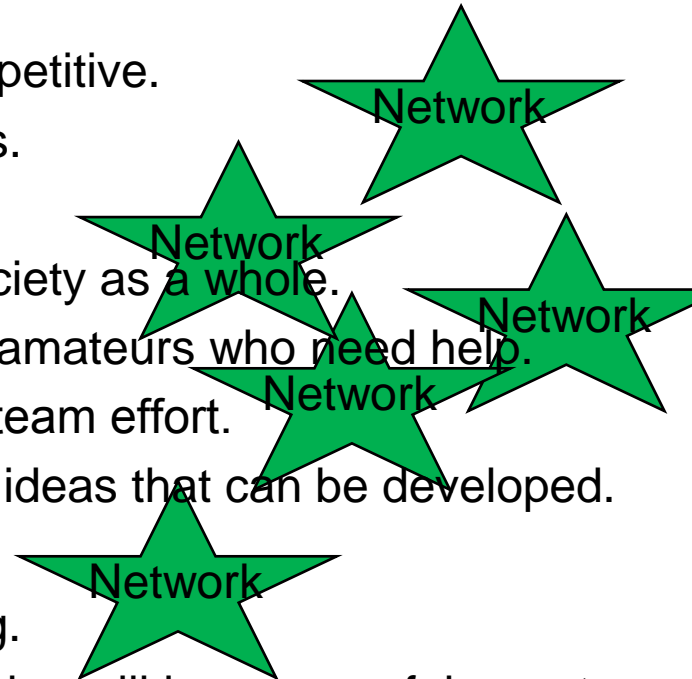
# Energy races cont.

- Using the process method RICA
  - Research, analysis of today's situation
  - Ideas, brainstorming ideas
  - Concept, selecting best ideas
  - Action, committing to an activity plan
  - Voting for the best



# The innovation coaches credo, we believe:

- that companies need constant renewal to stay competitive.
- that it's possible to influence the innovation process.
- that the goal is to get new products on the market.
- that our customers are businesses as well as in society as a whole.
- that most of the people contributing to renewal are amateurs who need help.
- that innovation isn't an individual task but a typical team effort.
- that there's not only a few but an infinite number of ideas that can be developed.
- in professionalism in the innovation process.
- in the importance of early guidance and counselling.
- that it is hard, in an early stage, to determine if an idea will be successful or not.
- that the success of a project mainly depends on the project leader.
- that it is impossible to complete a project without money.



# Conclusions

- It is not necessary to have the limit of 72 hours
- Many different stakeholders is a plus for innovation
- The rural networks can play an important role
- The NRNs´ innovation brookers and the OP:s can form a permanent virtual backoffice
- Do not wait for the genius, or pick only the low hanging fruits. Create an environment to produce innovations.
- Do not only provide information connecting databases – create action.
- Use the NRN:s and the ENRD

