

Approved by the Growth Forum on 29 August 2008

# **Innovation Strategy 2008-2010**

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# **“Today’s social challenges are tomorrow’s business areas**

Global challenges such as climate change, food crises and the use of fossil fuels are crying out for innovation. The same applies to the development of public services, the lack of qualified labour and the interaction between public and private businesses.

***The Growth Forum sees the current social challenges as the key to future growth and welfare.***

With its innovation strategy, the Growth Forum will therefore pursue the concept that benefit and value for both business and society can be created through social challenges, and that these challenges can be used in the prioritisation of business-promotion activities.

The work associated with the overwhelming commitment to the areas of energy, the environment, health and food is based on the current positions of strength in the Central Denmark Region, and it is an example of activities already initiated which aim at developing the business areas of tomorrow through the creation of new solutions today.

The Growth Forum’s business policy goal is to create the best possible conditions for continued growth and innovation. Strategic efforts will concentrate on supporting business’s ability to, and possibility of working systematically and strategically with, innovation, and on promoting an open and global approach to innovation.

The Growth Forum’s concrete actions will be presented in an action plan, the main emphasis of which will be on improving the framework for innovation.

**“Through implementation of the innovation strategy, the Growth Forum will increase its regional leadership and its efforts to create the best possible framework for innovation”**

The innovation strategy will be implemented through several levels of action areas:

- The Growth Forum will facilitate solutions to challenges and innovation requirements through a provisional innovation force in the initial project phases, where ideas for experimental, interdisciplinary and cross-functional actions will be generated.
- The Growth Forum will support an innovative approach to the promotion of business and will work on development of the most meaningful and effective ways of organising its efforts.
- The Growth Forum will contribute to the gathering, analysis and communication of knowledge, thus ensuring quality and dissemination of innovation.

The Growth Forum’s innovation strategy will also contribute to the pursuance and promotion of the work in progress by ensuring that

- public funds for the promotion of business are spent on addressing the social challenges
- public funds for the promotion of business are spent in the most appropriate way on the development of new business areas
- the regional work influences and interacts with local, municipal, government and international initiatives
- government and international funds are spent on promoting the regional strategies.

## **Principles of strategic innovation in the Central Denmark Region**

The Growth Forum will serve as a catalyst for the creation of a new innovation culture via high-priority areas of action. The following seven principles will serve as guidelines for the work with innovation in the period 2008-2010.

1. Sustainability
2. Next Practice
3. Venture spirit
4. Breadth
5. Relations
6. Cross-border and interdisciplinary initiatives
7. Documentation

The principles are described on the following pages.

1. **Sustainability**
2. Next Practice
3. Venture spirit
4. Breadth
5. Relations
6. Cross-border and interdisciplinary initiatives
7. Documentation

# 1 Sustainability

**The work with innovation will support the vision of the Central Denmark Region that growth should be achieved on a sustainable basis in order to create the best possible conditions for people and the environment, and will thus make the challenges in the social area the pivotal point of the innovation efforts.**

**The 'sustainability' theme will be utilised to set a high level of ambition and will provide a focus for the prioritisation of funds.**

***The Growth Forum will therefore ...***

... pursue the principle of sustainability and ensure that today's actions will not limit the economic, environmental or social possibilities of future generations.

1. Sustainability
2. **Next Practice**
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## 2 Next Practice

**The work with innovation will be experimental and concerned with methodological development, both in relation to individual projects and to the business promotion system, and will be based on the current *best practice*.**

**The innovation efforts will focus on developing a *next practice* based on the recognition that what is *best practice today* will not necessarily be best practice in relation to future challenges.**

***The Growth Forum will therefore ...***

... contribute to the optimisation of innovation processes in business. This will be done by allocating funds to support experiments with innovation methods, e.g. in the areas of open innovation, user-driven innovation, crowd-sourcing, creativity as a method and public-private innovation.

The lessons learned from the experiments will be documented and communicated to businesses in the region via the business promotion system.

1. Sustainability
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- 3. Venture spirit**
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## 3 Venture spirit

**The work with innovation will create the conditions for a venture spirit, and thus increase the likelihood of making a number of radical innovations.**

**The innovation efforts will create space for clear deviations from what is known, but it will also recognise that radical innovation cannot stand alone and cannot be predicted.**

***The Growth Forum will therefore ...***

... support a venture spirit. This can be done by granting access to various forms of financing sources and developing new methods of financing of innovation activities, e.g. partnerships and guarantee schemes, and by developing initiatives in the area of leadership.

The initiatives will be based on the experiences gathered in the area, and where possible, partnership with the government will be sought.

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- 4. Breadth**
5. Relations
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## 4 Breadth

**The work with innovation will be cross-functional because we know that innovation may occur at all levels in a business or society and in any activity.**

**The innovation efforts will acknowledge that innovation also springs from other sources than research and highly-educated employees.**

***The Growth Forum will therefore ...***

... promote the utilisation of employees' and users' creative competences in the innovation process.

The Growth Forum will also focus on the entire spectrum of business, including the service sector.

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- 5. Relations**
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## 5 Relations

**The work with innovation will focus on businesses of all sizes, and not least on the relations between them.**

**Different types of businesses will be brought together, based on a conviction that differences promote innovation in both the conception and the implementation phases. This includes the interaction between private and public players.**

***The Growth Forum will therefore ...***

... create a framework for strategic networks and partnerships between different types of businesses, e.g. by concluding agreements with innovative pioneering businesses which will make themselves available as potential development partners for businesses which are less ready for innovation.

There will be partnerships which create value for both parties, e.g. by combining the development of ideas with experiences from implementation and commercialisation.

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## 6

# Cross-border and interdisciplinary initiatives

**The work with innovation will involve and commit relevant players at the local, regional, national and international levels, including trade, authorities, educational institutions and research environments.**

**Geographical, technical and organisational borders will be obliterated, and the innovation efforts will therefore prepare businesses for the adoption of an open approach to innovation. This requires better use and development of the formal innovation system.**

***The Growth Forum will therefore ...***

... match the innovation tasks with the most appropriate organisational forms, and make an effort to include businesses in the region in cross-border and interdisciplinary networks of a technical, sectorial, geographical and public-private nature.

Regional partnerships, consortiums, clusters and organisational forms which are not yet known may be considered in order to give innovation a boost in relation to the challenges facing society.

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## 7 Documentation

**Systematic documentation of and gathering of experience from the innovation efforts will be prioritised in order to qualify the assessment of already initiated and new actions.**

**The existing benchmarking methods for measuring the effect of innovation are not sufficient. It is therefore necessary to develop new methods of analysis and new ways of using the analyses as an active resource in business development.**

***The Growth Forum will therefore ...***

... develop improved methods of documenting innovation challenges and the results of the initiatives taken to strengthen the innovation efforts in business in the region.

Together with the relevant parties, methods and tools will be developed for the purpose of generating data which can be used to optimise the innovation efforts, both internally in businesses and in the business promotion system.