
REPORT FOR STENA FOUNDATION

DESCRIPTION OF THE STAY IN OSLO

We stayed in Oslo for four months and had a great time, although it was also hard work. Engineering Contractor Inc. (ECI)* was our main research area, and we got the opportunity to sit at their headquarter in Oslo. The ability to be in Oslo full-time helped us get an in-depth understanding of ECI and their ways of working with internal idea generation. The support from the Stena Foundation was invaluable in this respect. We conducted both semi-structured and unstructured interviews with key persons in ECI, in addition to investigating the innovative environment in the company through a survey. To complement our findings, multiple case studies were conducted on two large corporations situated in Gothenburg. Overall, we are truly satisfied with our stay in Oslo and are thankful to the Stena Foundation for giving us this opportunity.

RESULTS

Our mixed-method case study of ECI aimed at examining internal idea generation practices and by doing this help the company improve their own ways of generating new ideas internally. Theoretical results indicated that tools, methods and techniques that enable teams and groups to contribute to the generation of ideas have to be in place, as well as a supportive innovative environment. Empirical findings demonstrated that ECI is in the early phase of developing their internal search activities for new ideas. ECI has some tools, methods and techniques that can be used for idea generation, but in most cases they are not exclusively established with this aim. Clear strategic goals, high employee involvement and beneficial organisational structures support innovative activities such as idea generation within the company. In order to improve their ways of generating new ideas internally we concluded that ECI should:

- Implement formal structures and processes in their search activities.
- Focus more on direction in the search activities once the structures and processes are up and running.
- Put aside more time for idea generation while at the same time involve all the employees in the search activities to make innovation a part of the organisational culture.

Connected to this is an overall need for creating a reward system that inspires employees to participate in idea generation. The final recommendation declared that ECI has to focus on establishing routines specifically aimed at generating new ideas. This requires testing and improvement of their tools, methods and techniques in order to discover the specific practices that fit them and their particular situation the best.

* Engineering Contractor Inc. is a fictive name

FINANCIALS

The table below shows an overview of how the Stena scholarship was used. As you can see, the overall cost of our research project was around 76 600 SEK.

Activity	NOK/ month/ person	X 2
Study equipment, books etc.	500	1000
Accommodation Oslo	6000	12000
Public Transportation Oslo	630	1260
Travel Expenses Oslo-Gothenburg	600	1200
Travel Expenses Multiple Case Studies	400	800
SurveyMokey.com©	200	400

TOTAL	NOK/month/person	NOK/Research Project
	8 330	66 640
TOTAL in SEK (Exchange rate = 1.15)	9 580	76 636