Press Release: Sheffield University Management School and Sheffield Chamber of Commerce

Environmental and Energy Improvements – European funded collaborative project is thinking big for SMEs

Key international stakeholders in a University of Sheffield managed team met in January 2014 and kick-started a ground-breaking new project which aims to help Small to Medium sized Enterprises (SMEs) deliver both environmental and cost improvements.

The European consortium’s initial talks laid foundations for the implementation of a project. EU LLP PrESS (SCeNAT). SCeNAT (Supply Chain Environmental Analysis Tool) has been developed by Professor Lenny Koh, project Principal Investigator and Leader of the Centre for Energy, Environment and Sustainability (CEES) at Sheffield University Management School.

This project will further develop Professor Koh’s SCeNAT tool, which already helps SMEs understand their environmental impact, so that it can deliver carbon emission reductions and real cost reductions.

The consortium comprises four academic members, the University of Sheffield, the University of Lodz (Poland), the University of Naples “Federico II” (Italy) and the South East European Research Centre (SEERC – Greece), working in partnership with four private sector trade organisations from their respective regions. The University of Sheffield’s partner is Sheffield Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI). The collaborative project’s objective is to help SMEs improve their environmental footprint and drive commercial benefits in this internationally competitive world.

Professor Lenny Koh, who is also Associate Dean for Alumni at Sheffield University Management School, said: “We believe that CEES has developed an excellent and simple tool [SCeNAT] which any SME can use to understand its carbon footprint. However, we recognise that most businesses will require help in not only implementing the tool, but also carrying out the beneficial projects that it will identify.

“The European funding gives us a great opportunity to work with three partner universities across Europe to assess SCeNAT’s wider applicability, and to commercialise the tool, making it a real benefit to businesses.”

Richard Wright, Executive Director of Sheffield Chamber of Commerce, added: “SMEs represent the backbone of our economy. We need them to grow and be sustainable economically and environmentally if we are going to deliver a successful future.

"However, it is probably more difficult for SMEs to evaluate the options and implement improvements because they have finite resources, and environmental skills are not always a core capability. For instance, rising energy costs are putting significant strains on many businesses – but the time and skills required to optimise the unit cost do not usually reside within the organisation. SCeNAT and its forthcoming development are designed to tackle that issue.”

For more information on the project go to www.sheffield.ac.uk/scenat-press

PICTURE CAPTION (for attached image): Professor Lenny Koh, Principal Investigator, from Sheffield University Management School

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