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**STPs and Areas of Innovation: Managing stakeholder's  
participation**

*Workshop*

*The social impact of innovation*

Author:

Peter G. Strunk (strunk@wista.de)

WISTA-MANAGEMENT GMBH, Berlin Adlershof

[www.adlershof.de](http://www.adlershof.de)

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# Science and Technology Parks and areas of innovation: managing stakeholder's participation. How to gain public acceptance by communication and negotiation

## ***Executive Summary***

The Science and Technology Park (STP) at Berlin Adlershof has become so successful that WISTA-MANAGEMENT GMBH as the operating company could extend its activities to other sites in Berlin. We were able to gain knowledge and experience from these endeavours which we think are relevant to other technology park projects, no matter where they are set up. There are different approaches to gain acceptance drawing from our own experience:

- A technology park's success can't be created by giving orders or a bloated marketing budget.
- Sometimes it is more important to persuade the neighbours and the local public than an international group of experts.
- Convince your political sponsors not to interfere in your day-to-day business.
- Make sure you are independent of election cycles.
- Work out the economic benefits of your park.
- Form alliances with politicians and the local authorities.
- Use local partners as ambassadors.

## **Introduction: The soundtrack to setting up a technology park**

Many science and technology parks can be compared with each other. But they are also individualists with very different talents. Technology Parks can be wilful, nonconformist, and persistent - always looking for solutions to the challenges of their important and complex mission. Talented individuals appreciate this attitude. And talented individuals matter to us!

Technology Parks are also paradoxical. Many are planned and funded by the government. However, they are also runways for free-enterprise take-offs. We often see technology parks create a fresh departure for local economies after radical economic changes - a departure into a new industrial age.

Parks are usually the result of political decisions. It takes a while until their success becomes visible to everyone. The soundtrack to setting up a technology park is not full of songs of peace and harmony, but also contains songs of toil and troubles. There are not only some experts who come forward and present extensive evidence that "it couldn't possibly work" and that "it doesn't add up", and so on...

Science and Technology Parks are dependent on many stakeholders: ambitious politicians anticipating success, private investors complaining about regulations, and a highly suspicious public that doesn't want radical changes in its backyard and wants taxpayer's money spent well. This paper looks at different approaches to gain public acceptance drawing from our own experience. From that experience, one can also draw some general observations.

### **Success Factor Adlershof - or how to keep politicians at arm's length**

Science and Technology Parks (STPs) are often born out of necessity. Like when Berlin's old industry collapsed after reunification in 1990. Today Berlin Adlershof is Germany's largest Science and Technology Park with an area of 4.2 km<sup>2</sup> (600 soccer fields!), 16,000 jobs, 6,500 students in 16 research institutes, and over 1,000 companies.

When we first started building up Adlershof almost 25 years ago, this success story was in no way foreseeable. Not after 10 years, maybe after 15, and definitely after 20. Today, after 25 years, we are in the position to take an audacious look into the future and say: in 2020, about 20,000 people will work with us in 1,200 companies - if the global economic conditions let us.

In 1989, Berlin Adlershof used to be an important site for scientific research in East Germany. Then, the Berlin Wall came down the same year and in 1990 Germany was reunited. Soon it became clear that nobody was prepared for reunification. The land of the former East German science academy in Adlershof was handed over to the city of Berlin in 1991. Adlershof back then was an agglomeration of hundreds of provisional buildings on contaminated ground with limited access to electricity, water, and heat. Adlershof could have been left to its own resources. What would have happened then? Some institutes might have survived. It is likely that countless small firms would have started working in small garages. Not the kind of garages that brought about the Silicon Valley, but more like repairing used cars.

This is what would have happened, but luckily the government had taken a leap. In what today has to be considered a smart move and consistent policy, a group of high-ranking politicians, officials and scientists got together in March 1991 and suggested to establish an "integrated landscape of business and science". The future started out with a thousand people in eight institutes and a thousand more in employment corporations. This certainly didn't look like a fresh departure.

Today we know how to run a technology park successfully. We span across the whole "value added chain" from universities and scientific institutions, to start-up and technology centres, including the provision of space for manufacturing and production. At its beginning is the technology transfer of the universities where students and graduates are given the opportunity to examine their ideas on its entrepreneurial recoverability with regard to its industrial applicability. In the next step we have built classic business incubators so that young companies get off the ground. Then we erected modern technology centers - turbocharger for highly specialized entrepreneurship, so to speak. Such centers we need, because we focus on high-tech companies in the Industrial business. In our technology centers the companies will have the opportunity to grow much faster, they normally could.

Finally, we have developed land at our disposal, which can be sold to the companies so that they can continue to grow and remain members of our local network.

We have also learnt to bring together scientists, entrepreneurs and start-ups, what kind of labs and offices, and which infrastructure young companies need, how to establish start-up centres, and how to tell a story about a technology park and how to make the public aware of the stories it creates. We can take care of stuff. Or better still: we are managing different cultures. We bring together the culture of science, of creatives, and business founders. This is crucial because innovation nowadays is interdisciplinary. We are facilitators of a grassroots economic development.

We are better at what we do, not only because we are a publicly-owned company, but because we can act like a privately owned company. The city of Berlin has transferred land and other assets to us as a trustee. We plan on our own accord, take up loans, and independently finance the development of our technology park's infrastructure. We do not answer to a government agency that authorises our projects, and we are not bound by political quarrelling. We discuss our decisions with our board of directors. The board does not consist only of our owners, but also experienced entrepreneurs.

In retrospect, the "integrated landscape of business and science" in Berlin Adlershof was thoroughly planned and its design tweaked and polished. But our success was facilitated by broad political support and consistent political action. This enabled us to implement important projects. Adlershof was granted more time for growth than the profitability cycles of private developers would have ever permitted. We are also able to act independently of election periods.

Moreover, we have learned to convince politicians not to interfere in our day-to-day business - and we still stubbornly insist on it. If technology parks are to be successful, the operating company needs entrepreneurial freedom. Sure, this is easier said than done because politicians fear nothing more than losing control. They are right in doing so, because they will be held accountable for their actions.

What is true is: technology parks cost a lot of money. Between 1991 and 2005, 1.3 billion euros were invested in Adlershof, about 80 percent of which came from various public sources. On the other hand: since 2005, 800 million euros have been invested in Adlershof, 70 percent of which came from private sources. Moreover, we have worked out that Adlershof generates 200 million euros in taxes for the state government every year and that every job created in Adlershof creates one more in Berlin. These numbers are important arguments for selling a technology park.

After all, politicians are always in a hurry. Their time in office is limited; politicians want to be re-elected with a successful economy. Technology parks are therefore convenient assets because they create jobs for highly skilled people. However, it is not up to politicians to run a company, but to make sure that it can be run successfully. Politics and business have two fundamentally different tasks: politics are responsible for stability and a balance of social interests. The field of business follows the rule of efficiency and profit. The rules of business cannot be applied to the political sphere. This would destroy the social balance in a society and result in considerable unrest.

### **Berlin Tegel - or how to keep politicians and investors interested**

In 2011, the government of Berlin commissioned us to develop a research and industry park for urban technologies on the premises of Berlin Tegel Airport. Tegel was to be shut down completely, just six months after the opening of the new international airport for Berlin and the state of Brandenburg (BER). The area was deemed suitable for the development of "Berlin TXL - The Urban Tech Republic", an ambitious science park project.

We set up a new subsidiary company called Tegel Projekt GmbH to develop this new science park. It was a conscious decision to found this company according to the model of Adlershof, but with a clear mission of its own: a focus on urban technologies. Soon more than 70% of the world's population will live on just 3% of the earth's surface. The future of these cities is the main topic of Berlin TXL, which will be home to 800 to 1,000 companies, start-ups, institutes, and research institutions working in energy, mobility, recycling, water, materials, and information and communications technology (ICT). It will create up to 18,000 jobs by 2040. Adding to that will be 5,000 students. Tegel Projekt is already in contact with 90 companies that are considering moving to the site.

The question of the future of the Tegel area after the airport's closure has been widely discussed since 2008. The public was tied into this debate right from the start - or at least we offered it to be. In a multi-level, discursive workshop process, six international teams of architects, city planners, and landscape planners worked out ideas which were refined with other experts and so-called "interested members of the Berlin public" over the course of several meetings.

We did, in fact, offer the public to take part in this debate. But who, apart from experts, is really interested in the planning process of a project, the positive effects of which will unfold over the course of 15 to 20 years? To put it carefully: at such an early stage, public interest resembled nothing more than a benign shrug. The press was sympathetic and interested from the start. After all, the "Urban Tech Republic" will be a significant boost for Berlin's economy. Moreover, a residential area with 5,000 new housing units will be developed on the Eastern part of the premises. Such numbers are impressive not only to politicians. It is much more difficult to convince stakeholders of innovative projects, if they don't feel the immediate need effects of profound structural changes or when the various target groups are not yet aware of new crosscutting technologies such as urban technologies.

We were able to continue planning at first: a renewed string of workshops with the planning teams resulted in a master plan in 2012 which enacted by the state of Berlin a year later. The construction planning started at the same time. The land owners (the German Institute for Federal Real Estate and the state of Berlin), were to have the authority over construction planning of the airport's future use once it was handed over.

In June 2012, something unexpected happened: all of a sudden the opening date of the new international airport BER was off! And off were certainty and planning security! Four years have passed without a new binding opening date. All we know is that the old airport in Tegel is due to close six months after the opening - but we do not know when the opening will be. At the same time, we need to continue planning and are acting on the assumption that the new technology park can be set up in 2018.

Our project in Tegel got into in a very sticky situation. We are currently focusing on three problems with regard to working with our stakeholders:

1. We were caught into the wheels of a political process, the rules of which we had yet to learn. In 2013 as well as in 2015 we were confronted with the fact that our planned budget for the next two years was cut to each half by the state government. Of course this was actually good governance. Every responsible citizen appreciates a finance minister who holds on to taxpayer's money - especially in a city like Berlin which has piled up a mountain of debt of up to 63 billion euros. However, in this case, prudence and good governance wasn't helpful. Our mission was to get the reduction reduced to an acceptable level for both sides and for us to continue the planning process and produce the high quality results that our client - Berlin's government - demanded. For this, we looked for new allies among the members of parliament, because in the end it was for them to decide on the state's budget.
2. We started with a well thought-out and convincing plan that took all eventualities into account, but how does one maintain goodwill for a project that is delayed for almost four years? According to current considerations, it will take one or two more years before the new airport will be opened enabling us to start building a Science and Technology Park where the old airport is.

Meanwhile, the political debate about the airport's future has reached unproportioned dimensions in Berlin. It is characterised by scorn and derision. The "Urban Tech Republic" runs the risk to get lost in the shuffle. We need to ensure that our project is not forgotten or fundamentally called into question. We must also make sure the current political debate does not do damage to our image, and that potential customers won't bail out.

Good Public Relations (PR) is required to achieve all this - even though our funds are limited. Our communication is aimed at the citizens of Berlin. They must be convinced that there something beyond the discussion about a new and an old airport. They have to be made aware of the fact that there is a technology park project which will create thousands of jobs for skilled workers. That Berlin urgently needs these jobs in order to grow and prosper. However, it is known that a prophet has no honour in his own country and today's scandals are much more attractive than the blessings of a distant future.

Be that as it may, these people have to be convinced. In this particular case, we had no choice but to get in contact with all the social groups, which are in some way involved in the debate, using social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter, or directly targeting local initiatives, which are having their say in the public debate however successfully or unsuccessfully. This is easier said than done due to the scarcity of our human and financial resources.

Moreover, the public interest in our enterprise is - to put it mildly - fairly limited. Fortunately, our international communication efforts are unaffected by this. An international audience is easily convinced of the necessity to promote high-technology solutions and technology park concepts. The Tegel Projekt GmbH team has advertised the "Urban Tech Republic" successfully in numerous presentations at national and international trade shows and conferences.

3. Our projects are the result of political initiatives. If we want to make our projects work, we also have to get in touch with an indispensable partner, the local administration. Needless to say, working with the local authorities is not always pleasant. While it is our mission to facilitate innovation, the tendency of the authorities is to avoid risky endeavors and unforeseeable circumstances. The bureaucracy ultimately rests on certainties created by the bureaucracy itself. Much effort and persuasiveness is necessary to woo them, taking up almost 70 percent of the operational activities of the employees of our company.

Which brings us to another challenge: how do we keep our own staff motivated? This is hardly solved by throwing money at them, nor with fiery speeches, and certainly not with disciplinary measures. A truly motivated employee acts from conviction!

### **Berlin Dahlem - or how to win over wealthy neighbours**

Our next case study is that of the conversion of a large former military hospital into a start-up centre in the middle of a wealthy suburban residential area. First step: create a concept and set the public agenda. Second step: tread as lightly as a diplomatic negotiator and persuade the local authorities to switch their attitude from "business as usual" to "think bigger". Third step: gain critical acceptance in the neighbourhood. Across all these steps, communication was key.

The start-up centre WISTA-MANAGEMENT GMBH is developing is called FUBIC, the "Business and Incubation Center next to FU Campus". As you will have undoubtedly guessed, FUBIC is in the immediate vicinity of the Free University Campus, one of Germany's leading research universities. FUBIC will be home to offices, laboratories, conference rooms, gastronomy, workshops, and co-working spaces. The area is large enough for a total of 60 - 80 companies with 900 employees. The local district assembly is expected to pass the development plan by the end of this year. The completion of FUBIC is planned for 2020/2021.

The FUBIC and the Free University's campus are situated in the middle of an extensive mansion district in the southwest of Berlin. The locals are wealthy and they know how to defend their neighbourhood against unwelcome disturbances. We are dealing with a public which doesn't shy away from a lawsuit. Needless to say these facts affected our planning from the start.

A draft land-use plan was drawn up in January 2015. In close cooperation with the local urban planning office, WISTA-MANAGEMENT GMBH commissioned expert reports on noise protection, species protection, measurement of impervious surfaces, and an environmental impact assessment. We encouraged early citizen participation during the land-use planning process and opened the documents for review at the district office from November to December 2015. There were - thank goodness - no appeals or objections.

The urban planning concept was presented to interested local citizens in the foyer of the former military hospital. They were also offered a guided tour of the Science and Technology Park Adlershof to get an idea of the concept of start-up and technology centres. At the same time, we intensified our publicity efforts, for example, by live broadcasting public meetings on the project. We were successful in getting a number of influential locals excited about our start-up centre who then acted as "ambassadors" for our cause. Despite all these cautious measures, the attitude of "Not in my backyard", or NIMBYism, is not to be underestimated. We cannot rule out that local NIMBYs go to court as soon as the construction cranes start moving.

## **Berlin Charlottenburg - or how to bring together art and technology**

The Charlottenburger Innovations-Centrum (CHIC) opened in September 2015. The start-up and incubation centre closes a significant gap in the local economy. Many ideas created in the vicinity of Berlin's Technical University (TU) and the University of the Arts (UDK) now result in new company and start-ups. They are an important economic stimulus for the area.

The Charlottenburg district of Berlin is one of the largest, inner-city university campuses in Europe. Despite the significance of the local stakeholders, a joint campus has not yet been created and promoted. After an in-depth analysis of the project it became evident: What was missing was a start-up centre for spin-offs from the universities in order to bridge an essential gap between science and business and give the campus the real buzz. Again, we had to design a general framework and put on the political agenda. Now, as it is working, what will be the next step? It will be necessary to convince the key stakeholders in order to promote the campus, no matter how diverse they are.

## **Schöneweide - or how living and working clash in the city of the future**

Schöneweide was once the industrial heartland of the "Electropolis Berlin". The factories of the now defunct AEG, the "Allgemeine Elektrizitäts-Gesellschaft", Germany's formerly largest electric company, bear witness of the magnitude of this "electropolis". 25 years ago, things looked quite different: Schöneweide was hit particularly hard by the structural change in Germany's economy after reunification. However, Berlin developed a range of future strategies, all of which were based on the idea that Berlin's potential was to connect the dots between science, education and culture.

Today, AEG's legacy lives on as the factory buildings are waiting to be included in UNESCO's list of world heritage sites and are becoming a hotbed for development projects and new manufacturing techniques for the "smart cities" of the future. The Hochschule für Technik und Wirtschaft Berlin (HTW), Berlin's largest university for the applied sciences, moved into the former AEG factory building. Schöneweide now offers excellent prerequisites for cooperation between science and business as well as attracting companies and start-ups from the high-tech and creative sector.

A team of WISTA-MANAGEMENT GMBH has been establishing regional management agency in Berlin Schöneweide since September 2011. On behalf of the Treptow-Köpenick district administration and the Berlin Senate Department of Economics, Technology, and Research, the agency is developing the long-standing industrial area into an attractive business location. Again, it was the positive experience of Adlershof that persuaded politicians and the local authorities to entrust us with this task.

Thanks to the commitment of our regional management agency, the district of Schöneweide is increasingly positioning itself as a location for future manufacturing techniques and the digitalization of manufacturing processes (or "Industry 4.0").

The efforts to transform the area created tension which required a fast reaction. One public meeting on the development plans for a former cable-manufacturing plant of two private investors attracted an unusually lively response. Their plans had been identified as the main obstacle for the economic development of that area. The owner intends to finance the renovation of his old industrial buildings by building profitable apartments. The current tenants (500, among them many artists) fear that they have to leave the premises because their businesses are associated with noise and dust and could disturb the new residents. The largest local tenant, a logistics centre with more than 100 employees, would actually like to expand, but is afraid that the tables will turn once the area turns residential.

Local politicians are looking for a compromise. Basically, they want to support efforts that lead to more housing, but, at the same time, this should be subordinated to a general development of economic and cultural development.

Does this add up? Our regional management is skeptical. We are getting more and more inquiries about Schöneweide from technology-oriented companies, the creative industry and online trading companies. Some projects are failing because some owners refuse to offer long-term leases and follow long-term plans for housing instead. Berlin's senate office for economic affairs emphasises the need for new homes, but: if we don't want companies to move into Berlin's urban outback, we

must be able to offer space for them within the city limits. The Berlin Chamber of Industry and Commerce has declared Schöneweide a favourable location for the development of science, research and industry. Scattered houses and apartment blocks will create conflicts later which could have been prevented. Sadly, a quick solution to the conflict is not in sight. A new parliament is elected in Berlin on September 18, 2016. There is evidence that the new government will be formed on the basis of a different political coalition.

What can the regional management do until then? We could remain in a wait-and-see position and hope for a decision of the new government that is in our interest. This means falling short of expectations. We are voicing a clear position in the political discussion and are continuing to convince decision-makers in politics and business of our project - even at the risk that we get on their bad side by doing this.

### **Zukunftsorte - Berlin's places of future innovation - or: how do we want to work and live in the future?**

The activities of WISTA-MANAGEMENT GMBH now extend well beyond Adlershof: we operate a regional management company in the nearby district of Schöneweide. We've set up an incubation centre in the Berlin Charlottenburg district, and are setting up the technology and start-up centre in Berlin-Dahlem. Our subsidiary company Tegel Projekt GmbH is responsible for planning the research and industry park "Berlin TXL. The Urban Tech Republic." All these activities are part of Berlin's places of future innovation, or what we call "Zukunftsorte". The efforts to help advance these outstanding places are coordinated by Berlin's Senate Department of Economics, Technology, and Research.

Berlin has long suffered from the economic consequences of the Cold War and the reunification of Germany. After 1989, the city lost up to 80 % of its industrial capacities, unemployment temporarily rose to 20 %. The population stagnated at 3.3 million. Meanwhile, the economic situation has changed in many ways: Berlin's economy is picking up steam. It is growing more rapidly than the economy in the rest of Germany. Berlin continues to attract young, creative people like it did in the past. It is a booming metropolis with more than 6,300 start-ups, in addition to a great number of technology-oriented companies.

Like no other large city in Europe, Berlin's inner city still has huge development potential. In close collaboration between science, research and business, new business locations are being born: the places of future innovation. Berlin has a total of ten of these sites, five of which are being developed by us or one of our subsidiaries. The "Zukunftsorte" will be the foundation of Berlin's future economic growth and are feeding into contribute to Berlin's development into a "smart city" with global appeal.

Although the "Zukunftsorte" are at very different stages of development, they are already bringing together the expertise of eight universities, 58 research institutions, eleven start-up centres, and nearly 1,700 technology-oriented companies. Together they make Berlin the largest Science and Technology Park in Europe. With the support of the state of Berlin, these sites of the future will be more closely interlinked, making them more competitive on international markets.

But the "Zukunftsorte" also reveal a basic conflict between "living" and "work" in the city of the future. The population is growing by 40,000 people every year. The cost of housing is rising exorbitantly. For citizens with low incomes, it is becoming increasingly difficult to find adequate housing without leaving the inner city. These people are also voters. Politicians pander to these voters by promoting low-cost housing wherever possible. Unsurprisingly this policy results in conflicts with the economic development, especially as a clear setting of priorities is not always visible in Berlin's policies.

We, as technology park developers, are at the forefront of an important debate which will only gain importance all over the world. What will the cities of the future look like? What do we want the cities of the future to look like? The industry of the future does not have much in common with the images the word evokes: noise, dirt, hard manual labour. However, how near is too near when it comes to working and living? How long do we want to commute to work? These are just some of the questions; Berlin needs to find answers to. We are among those who publicly plead in favour of giving job creation the highest priority.



## Conclusion

Germany's largest technology park has developed in Berlin Adlershof and undoubtedly become a success story - so successful, WISTA-MANAGEMENT GMBH as the operating company has extended its activities to other places in Berlin. We were able to gain knowledge and experience from these endeavours which we think are relevant to other technology park projects.

A technology park's success can't be created by giving orders or a bloated marketing budget. The cold language of the technocrats will scare people off just as effectively as the shallow chanting of marketing professionals. Sometimes it is more important to persuade the neighbours and the local public than an international group of experts.

Technology parks can be as meticulously planned as humanly possible, they can open up all their plans, and practice transparency - nobody will be really interested at first. However, as soon as the first construction cranes are being set up, the enlightened citizen will wake up and be thoroughly disgruntled by what is happening. This is facilitated by the courts, the press, and the media as well as the whole range of social media outlets which create an anonymous environment where rules of politeness and decency no longer apply.

These people will not always yield to reason. Convince your political sponsors not to interfere in your day-to-day business. Make sure you are independent of election cycles. Act like a private company in a free-market economy. Work out the economic benefits of your park. Form alliances with politicians and the local authorities. Use local partners as ambassadors. Confront your adversaries with entrepreneurs determined to create jobs. The discussion usually goes down a different path than your adversary had thought.

In the end, technology parks are successful not as political projects, but as established brands with clearly visible and unique properties.