

## The future of paint – Learnings from a case study on innovation, partnership, tools and change

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This paper will present some results and learning to date from a 3-year DTI (UK Government Technology Strategy Board) funded project in which three organizations – a global paint manufacturer (ICI Paints), a big construction company (Carillion) and a leading sustainability charity (The Forum for the Future)– has joined forces to develop sustainable paint systems. The work programme has been divided into nine projects tackling the whole life cycle of paint, from paint formulation to application, recycling of painted surfaces and supplier engagement. The aim of each project has been to help develop future products and services – tackling key sustainability pinch points for paint – within a three to seven year timeframe. The paper tells the story of the people, the process, the tools and the products. It also shares key learning regarding sustainable innovation success factors that are easily transferable to other areas and sectors of innovation.

*The people* – Both ICI Paints and Carillion have a long history of innovation, and are beginning to apply sustainability principles to this. In order to share and stimulate learning and challenge each other at different stages in the value chain (ICI make and supply paint, Carillion applies and uses it) the project uses an innovative 3-way partnership model which uses the UK based sustainability charity, Forum for the Future, as a third partner acting in the role of facilitator, advisor and critical friend, to aid informed decision-making and to challenge the two other organisations to go further.

*The process* – The process has proved a valuable learning journey as more and more people have gotten involved. What started out mainly as an R&D-driven project now engages people across the organisation and is becoming deeply embedded into the business. Forums' role in this has been to help engage the different parts and to be a sounding board for dialogue.

*The tools* – Two tools have been developed throughout the process, which will be presented within this paper. First an SLCA (Streamlined Life Cycle Analysis) tool based on the Natural Step framework. This tool was used early on to gain a strategic understanding of where the issues are and is now used to engage suppliers. The second tool is called the Impact Analyser and it is a numerical tool developed to aid decision-making on a detailed level in the development of new paint systems.

*The products* – The project has resulted in the development, testing and launch of several products like the new Ecosure paint range, packaging innovations and brush cleaning units. Another set of outcomes from the project has been a set of processes that have been put into place to ensure that the transformative journey continues.

At the time of the conference, the three-year project will be drawing to an end. Many of the nine projects have officially ended, so this paper will present its current status and proposed developments to its completion and it will close by describing how the initiatives plan to go on and how the learning will be used to help bring about more innovations and could be transferred to others areas in the future.