


# Innovate your business with solutions Made in Slovakia!

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SARIO

SARIO  
SLOVAK INVESTMENT AND  
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**SARIO Innovation Services – a new matching platform of the Slovak Investment and Trade Development Agency (SARIO) interconnecting the needs of its mayor clients – large investors established in Slovakia - with capacities and competences of the most advanced and innovative Slovak technology companies.**

The combined pressure of global competition and local labor availability is pushing many international companies established in Slovakia into more complex, capital-intense investments. Apart from that, the automotive industry is also changing, especially due to the rising demand for electric vehicles. In order to adapt, both carmakers and suppliers will have to transform a part of their business. Even though it may be challenging, it will also undoubtedly induce additional investments.

This creates a significant potential for process innovation and implementation of Industry 4.0 related solutions. SARIO aims to use this market potential in two ways. On one hand it acts as a business development channel for Slovak solution providers, on the other it helps its major clients identify the most potent local partners for process innovation.

The aim of our activity is to innovate technological processes of global corporates through solutions Made in Slovakia. On one side, by sharing its network and possibilities, SARIO develops business for Slovak companies that would otherwise not be able to effectively address these major players. On the other, SARIO is offering major corporates a complex service that starts with the identification of process related problems and ends with a tailor-made matching event where shortlisted companies (chosen by the client) can present their solutions.

One of the key challenges in providing this service is competence. It is common that due to corporate rules,

international companies are not allowed to purchase local solutions. Moreover, not all Slovak process innovators are suitable for the demanding standards of major corporations. SARIO is trying to bridge exactly this gap, by concentrating on the following three main criteria:

- The first step is to identify the right clients. From experience, these are either well established Slovak subsidiaries that have already gained a special status within their corporate structures, or new investors that want to adjust processes before their SOP.
- The second key aspect is to understand the capabilities and capacities of the Slovak solution providers. Here we also see two relevant groups. One being more traditional players, who grew thanks to the evolving Slovak automotive industry and managed to stay competitive by constantly innovating. The other being new companies that immediately started focusing on niche segments relevant for Industry 4.0.
- Thirdly, it is important to set the right matching format, that corresponds with the client's preference, requested level of detail, the number and quality of the shortlisted companies.

Within its new service, SARIO leverages its growing C-level network gained during its history of attracting investments to Slovakia, trade development for Slovak SMEs and experience with organizing matchmaking events. The services stem directly from SARIO's experience, expertise, and network, and do not double or seek to replace other public services in the area of innovations.

SARIO Innovation Services, are an in-house initiative, an addition to our services for two main target groups, major corporations and Slovak small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

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**Our vision is to help transform Slovakia into a technological & innovative hub and become the partner of choice for companies considering to invest in Central Europe.**

RÓBERT ŠIMONČIČ,  
CEO, SARIO

Our main focus areas are the following:

- Industry (primary focus): automation, predictive maintenance, quality control, digital factory solutions
- Product development: design, prototyping, testing, tooling
- Service sector: software automation, outsourcing, cybersecurity, Big Data & Artificial Intelligence, Internet of Things

The first concept of this new service dates back to the summer of 2017, our pilot workshop was held in September 2017. Since then SARIO has organized or co-organized 14

other events, creating over 116 opportunities for Slovak companies to present their solutions in front of a total of 21 major clients. This led to 40 follow-up meetings between these parties, which on 20 occasions ended up with requests for quotation (RFQ) exchanges. And, most importantly, these resulted in a total of eight pilot projects.

We can thus say that Slovak companies are able to innovate the production processes of global players. If it worked for example for PSA Peugeot Citroën in Trnava or Jaguar Land Rover in Nitra, we assume that these companies could also succeed abroad. SARIO has also learned that apart from business opportunities, Slovak innovative companies also seek venture capital and M&A related financing options. For this reason, SARIO wants to scale its activities also outside the borders of Slovakia and aims to identify a broader scope of opportunities for Slovak companies active in various prospective sectors of our economy.

From its establishment, SARIO has been an institution that interconnects the needs of international companies with Slovak suppliers. The best tangible example of this is the Slovak Matchmaking Fair, which for 13 years has been our largest business-to-business (B2B) international event.

This year it will take place on October 24, 2019 in Bratislava and our Innovation services will be an integral part of the event. The Fair offers a chance to meet in one day and in one place several prospective business partners from Slovakia and abroad. It is worth mentioning that this year we have partnered with the Japan External Trade Organization – JETRO, which will be heading the delegation of Japanese companies interested in doing business with Slovak companies.