



IN-BUSINESS GROWTH

Innovative Sustainable
Business Growth
at Global Level

HANDBOOK OF BEST PRACTICES

Innovation Support Programs for SMEs



Co-funded by
the Horizon 2020
Framework Programme
of the European Union



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SUMMARY

SUMMARY	3
INTRODUCTION	4
I- Presentation of the themes	6
Adaptation to the real needs of SMEs	6
Demand-led approaches (e.g. KET applications to SMEs).....	7
Easy access to the existing supports	8
Promotion and Dissemination	9
Technology transfer	10
Commercialization of innovation	11
Follow-up of the progress of the SMEs	12
Establishment of means of constant improvement.....	13
Access to resources through network development	14
II- Presentation of the Good Practices per country	15
Support Centres for Entrepreneurship Development.....	17
Business Development Model.....	18
Ardan® Program	19
Growth for Kainuu project	20
Project of Financial Education Edufinet	21
Green Ray and Link by UMA-Atech	22
Alimenta2Talent Program	23
Regional Agency for Entrepreneurship and Innovation High technology business incubator	24
National Science to Business platform.....	25
Large Research Infrastructure Services for SMEs	26
Eco-Point Service.....	27
Regional Business Idea - CI Caixa	28
Focus Groups & Innovation Communities of Practice	29
Science to business	30
Innovation Vouchers	31
III- Contact and Support	32



INTRODUCTION

The current handbook is the result of several innovation actors which have cooperated during 2016 within the European Project In-Business Growth, to review practices related to Innovation Support Programs for SMEs and benchmark the best practices selected, in order to explore an innovation support challenge focusing on the redesign of the existing services, the creation of new instruments to deliver more efficient tools and to create synergies between European, National, Regional and Local support, and, the solutions for common problems linked to implementation, monitoring, impact assessment with the aim to deliver better innovation support to SMEs.

The analysis focused on the exchange of experience around nine essential innovation management themes defined as follows:

- Theme 1** **Adaptation to the real needs of SMEs**
- Theme 2** **Demand-led approaches (e.g. KET applications to SMEs)**
- Theme 3** **Easy access to the existing supports**
- Theme 4** **Promotion and Dissemination**
- Theme 5** **Technology transfer**
- Theme 6** **Commercialization of Innovation**
- Theme 7** **Follow-up the progress of the SMEs**
- Theme 8** **Establishment of means of continuous improvement**
- Theme 9** **Access to resources through network development**

This handbook of good practices is part of the project In-Business Growth that has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme under the grant agreement No 692521.



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I- Presentation of the themes

**Theme
1**

Adaptation to the real needs of SMEs

Granted the knowledge intensive and ever more demanding evolving market, what are the tools for identifying SMEs real needs and for succeeding that SMEs acknowledge such needs as well, and what are the best ways innovation agencies can respond to these issues?

The heart of any interaction of an innovation agency with a business (most frequently a SME) must be based on the SME needs, i.e. on a detailed understanding of SMEs and their situation. The term “SME needs”, therefore, refers to the specific problems/issues they face in seeking to develop their business and focus on SMEs real innovation needs.

Most of the SMEs innovation needs is about Knowledge Transfer. However, the knowledge demands resulting from the SMEs expectations often diverges from external assessment, and, innovation agencies must bridge the gap of initiating & convincing businesses of their “real” needs. Such needs are often for academic knowledge inputs. To implement the Knowledge Transfer, innovation agencies must mediate to bridge the space between the Academia and SMEs. Research indicates that there is often a misalignment between the Academia expectations and the SMEs expectations of innovation intermediaries. However, research confirms the importance of SMEs’ acquiring external knowledge and therefore engaging in inter-organisational knowledge transfer activities, and indeed, there is a possible gap between SMEs self-acknowledged needs and “real” needs that innovation agencies should address too. It implies that, adaptation to the real needs of the SMEs is, evidently, a demand – led approach; however, the content of the demand can come from both the self-acknowledged needs of SMEs as well as from externally defined “references “and standards.

Four steps to understand and respond to SMEs’ ‘real innovation needs’ must be taking into account to recognize opportunities to transfer and to act upon them to initiate the transfer, to exchange information and resources, to identify and resolve unexpected problems and to use new knowledge already tested.

Based on the analysis undertaken, the type of good practice’s contribution within this theme consists on:

- ✓ Comprehensive entrepreneurship programs and institutions (start-ups)
- ✓ Growth – oriented business development programs
- ✓ Demand bounded (assessment and adjustment to needs in terms of specific demand requirements)
- ✓ Alignment with National level initiatives



I- Presentation of the themes

**Theme
2**

Demand-led approaches (e.g. KET applications to SMEs)

Which aspects of the demand – led approach should innovation agencies focus on addressing through the services they provide, and what are the associated good practices?

More than 10 years ago, the EU decided on a demand-led growth model as a way to strongly promote Innovation. “Demand-side (=end-use consumption) Innovation policies support and increase the uptake of innovations in society and can involve legislation increasing consumer confidence in innovative products, safety regulations, standards, or public procurement. These demand-side tools complement supply-side policy tools such as public funding schemes. Creating effective links between demand-side and supply-side tools can improve the efficiency of the innovative system.” The demand-led approach on which we propose to focus good practice theme 2, is part of the demand-led growth priority & respective policies.

The demand led-approach is central in Horizon2020 since it comprises one of its three pillars, the one on Societal Challenges. For the purpose of the In-Business Growth project, in Good Practice theme 2, we suggest focusing on two broad categories: demand-led industries: Societal challenges as included into the Horizon 2020 programme, and demand-side policies: Key Enabling Technologies (KET) as precondition for RIS3 implementation.

We search examples demonstrating how concrete demand-led approaches have been addressed for SMEs and the role of the innovation agencies in the process, and / or how innovation agencies have been able to support response of SMEs to demand-side policies. Obviously, a good practice can be overlapping, e.g. one KET application might contribute to addressing a societal challenge issue, etc.

Based on the analysis undertaken, the type of good practice’s contribution within this theme consists on:

- ✓ Concrete market demand as base for development actions
- ✓ Global industry-based demand



I- Presentation of the themes

**Theme
3**

Easy access to the existing supports

What types of innovation agencies should we prioritise and what types of existing supports should we take into account for the good practice description?

We focus on accessing existing supports aiming at facilitating innovation to SMEs and in which innovation agencies have a role to play, considering two types of support (often interlinked), i.e. access to funding / financing resources and to expert knowledge resources. Eight fields to focus the good practices have been identified. Five of them deal with IBG good practice themes and three were compiled by reviewing recent literature and EC policy developments.

Therefore, we propose that the good practice description addresses one or more of the eight fields in terms of one or both of the support areas. The proposed approach is summarised in the list below:

- 1) Promoting the demand-led approach (GP theme 2)
- 2) Technology Transfer (GP theme 5)
- 3) Commercialization of Innovation (GP theme 6)
- 4) Promoting networked growth (GP theme 9)
- 5) Improvement of the innovation agency per se, e.g. to adopt continuous improvement strategies, tools, and practices (GP theme 8)
- 6) Helping SMEs to find international business, technology, and research partners in the EU and other non-EU countries, for their innovation
- 7) Helping SMEs to benefit from EC Innovation support schemes, e.g. SME Instrument, COSME....
- 8) Capitalization on the results of EU projects, e.g. incentives to firms to invest/buy H2020 project outputs or start-ups as exploitation.

Based on the analysis undertaken, the type of good practice's contribution within this theme consists on:

- ✓ Accessibility to knowledge supports
- ✓ Accessibility to funding and financial supports



I- Presentation of the themes

**Theme
4**

Promotion and Dissemination

What type of information should innovation agencies prioritise to promote / disseminate, what tools to utilise, for what purpose, and what are the best approaches?

SMEs need to have access to adequate information to enhance productivity and to facilitate market access. The establishment of an active SME sector - and the effective utilisation of quality business information - has been identified as crucial in attaining long-term and sustainable economic growth for developed and developing countries. Alike, the importance of systematic and systematised dissemination of information to SMEs was the conclusion of an EC report since 2001. UNESCO considers information to be part of the learning process, and therefore dissemination of information is conceived as an initial but nevertheless essential part of a larger, coherent whole.

In the context of the In-Business Growth project, we focus on innovation agencies' services and functions disseminating information to SMEs as a first step towards technology transfer and innovation promotion. Effectively and timely promoting and disseminating information to SMEs is multisided. To be able to focus the discussion, under GP Theme 4, only a few of such parameters have been addressed, such as follows:

- SMEs underinvest in strategic information
- SMEs access to information is often hindered
- SMEs access to essential information is often a challenge
- SMEs capacity to absorb & benefit from advanced information

Therefore, we were seeking for examples of organisational adjustment of innovation agencies, e.g. their operational flowcharts and the services they provide to SMEs to reflect addressing any, a few or all of the listed challenges; seeking also for specific examples of services (including projects) that address distinctly any of the listed challenges; finally, we were seeking examples whereby innovation agencies reinforced their competences in order to support dissemination of information to SMEs.

Based on the analysis undertaken, the type of good practice's contribution within this theme consists on:

- ✓ Comprehensive training and capacity building regarding funding and financial issues
- ✓ Comprehensive training in environmental and energy subjects as a part of overall industry improvement



I- Presentation of the themes

**Theme
5**

Technology transfer

To which aspects / stages of the technology transfer process do innovation agencies' services have the most impact?

Technology transfer is a strategic area in the EU and globally. It is currently commonly accepted that a science-based, regional development strategy is an important precondition for European growth, and Technology Transfer is part of it, as integral part of a regional innovation system. What is Technology Transfer? We adopt a simple and rather old definition Bar-Zakay, which, we feel, is still valid: "When scientific or technological information generated and/or used in one context is re-evaluated and/or implemented in a different context, the process is called technology transfer". These different contexts can be geographical (Technology Transfer between & among regions and countries) and/or transformational, i.e. the process of transforming the results of research and development into marketable products and services. This transformation can take place through a number of means, in particular the collaboration between research organisations and Industry, the licensing of intellectual property rights, and the creation of start-up businesses or university spin-out companies (Krugman 1979).

For the purpose of the good practice description under theme 5, we adopt a mainstream approach as to the stages of Technology Transfer, proposing Technology Transfer as a six-stage process: (1) technology innovation, (2) technology confirmation, (3) targeting technology consumers, (4) technology marketing, (5) technology application, and (6) technology evaluation. Furthermore, we suggest that for innovation agencies, the most relevant stages are 3, 4 and 5, i.e. targeting technology consumers, technology marketing, and technology application, without excluding the 6th step technology evaluation, when relevant.

Therefore, in the good practice description, we search for examples of good practices that demonstrate specific technology transfer cases in terms of targeting technology consumers, technology marketing, and technology applications and the role of the innovation agency in the process.

Based on the analysis undertaken, the type of good practice's contribution within this theme consists on:

- ✓ Processes for Technology Transfer to businesses
- ✓ Processes for reinforcing Technology Transfer in the region through industrial strengths reinforcement



I- Presentation of the themes

**Theme
6**

Commercialization of innovation

What are the best types of services that an innovation agency can provide to business which have an innovation potential for the market?

Commercialisation of innovation is the process of introducing a new product or production method into commerce, making it available on the market. This thematic unit focuses on SMEs that have commercialisation of innovation needs & potential. In particular, we distinguish the innovation agency services into two types:

- (1) 'Filling in' SMEs' gaps to innovation commercialisation, and
- (2) Recognising the SME innovator typology and tailoring services accordingly.

Therefore, we are seeking good practices demonstrating how innovation agencies address the first type, the innovation commercialisation challenges. For example, there could be good practices on activating the Innovation Strategy of SMEs, i.e. identifying the most promising areas where the SME can achieve superior profit growth rates either with new products/services or with existing products/service in new markets, or with new or improved processes or business models. Another example could be effective approaches to the Innovation Life-Cycle Management, where there are many steps where leading innovators avoid inefficiencies and ensure short time-to-profit, while the average company might only focus on the time-to-market and forget about proper life-cycle management after the launch of the innovation. We are also seeking good practices demonstrating the second type approach, i.e. how innovation agencies tailor their services according to the type of innovator profile, so that they finally provide comprehensive service models.

Based on the undertaken analysis, focusing on the present analysis, the type of good practice's contribution within this theme consists on:

- ✓ National tools (e.g. platforms) supporting commercialization
- ✓ Business Program of acceleration
- ✓ Regional Idea Contest
- ✓ Open Innovation Communities



I- Presentation of the themes

**Theme
7**

Follow-up of the progress of the SMEs

What are the good practices of evaluation and follow up approaches assessing and analysing SMEs' progress in innovation performance, including outputs, results, learning, integration of new processes, and long term impact?

Very often, SME support projects, including innovation support, do not include follow up activities. The action plan reaches the level of results and not of impacts. Frequently, due to time pressure, innovation agencies do not adopt follow-up activities. Usually there is an evaluation of results based on the output and result indicators mentioned in the relevant projects and / or the strategic documents of innovation agencies. However, there are no provisions for follow-up actions, through which competitive advantage for both, the innovation agency and the region, would be built in the long run. Thus, under GP theme 7, we seek to identify and discuss good practices and tools innovation agencies may use in order to reinforce the innovation results, improve them coherently in the long run, and build on positive outputs.

For the IBG project, we seek good practices demonstrating the application of such comprehensive approaches, fully or partially along with their results.

Based on the undertaken analysis, the type of good practice's contribution within this theme consists on:

- ✓ Demand led (e.g. environmental or energy performance) monitoring performance tools
- ✓ Open Innovation Communities and Focus Groups
- ✓ Development Support Centres



I- Presentation of the themes

**Theme
8**

Establishment of means of constant improvement

What do we mean by 'means of continuous improvement'? What are the current mainstream state of the art approaches?

By the term “establishment of means of continuous improvement” we mean improvement of the innovation agencies’ effectiveness in promoting innovations to SMEs. We consider two options: means of continuous improvement as far as the innovation agency’s services are concerned, and means of continuous improvement of the innovation performance of SMEs as a result of the innovation agency support.

Based on the analysis undertaken, the type of good practice’s contribution within this theme consists on:

- ✓ Institutionally based tools to improve businesses’ performance
- ✓ Open Innovation Communities and Focus Groups



I- Presentation of the themes

**Theme
9**

Access to resources through network development

What is our priority as innovation agencies regarding network-development based benefits?

The focus area is on value creation for innovation agencies through services from a network perspective. The main GP focus is on how the networks should function so as the objectives related to knowledge and competences can be reached. The competences, relationships, knowledge transfer and leadership in the networks are examined from the viewpoint of the provision of services, the incremental development of the current services and the creation of new service innovations.

Therefore, the good practice discussion under this Good practice theme focuses on different types of systematic partnerships which facilitate effective knowledge creation, knowledge transfer, utilisation of knowledge, as well as joint development.

Based on the undertaken analysis, the type of good practice's contribution consists on:

- ✓ Set up of permanent knowledge transfer networks, to supplement large infrastructure research missing resources in regions; in the process, also establishment of tailored approaches and other tools to maximize benefits from these networks.



II- Presentation of the Good Practices per country

PROGRAM YUZZ

coordinated by *Santander International Entrepreneurship Centre (CISE) - Spain*

Theme
1

Santander YUZZ is a collaborative entrepreneurship program that helps young entrepreneurs aged 18 to 31 in the development of their technology oriented business ideas. Over six months, experienced entrepreneurs and business leaders provide training and expertise to help develop innovative projects in high performance YUZZ Centres. Support, mentoring and guidance conclude with awards for high-potential initiatives, including a trip to Silicon Valley and awards to accelerate the development of award winning projects.

The program started in 2009 with two YUZZ-Centres in Barcelona and Madrid and has since grown exponentially thanks to the collaboration of more than 200 public and private entities, with currently more than 50 Centres throughout Spain. The program was recently awarded “Best European Practice Supporting Youth Self-employment” by the European Network for Local Inclusion and Social Action (E.L.I.S.A.N.) and the Regional Union of Municipalities of Attica (P.E.D.A.).

FUNDING: Supported by Santander Bank through its Santander Universities Division. YUZZ Centres co-fund the program and EY Foundation provides a financial award for the best women entrepreneur to the program.

TARGET GROUP: Young entrepreneurs aged 18 to 31 with a technology based business idea.

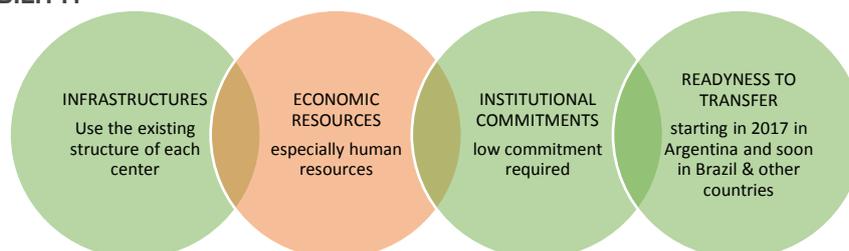
RESULTS:

- ✓ Over 50 YUZZ-Centres throughout Spain and 1 in Argentina (2017)
- ✓ 500 companies created
- ✓ 1,000 young entrepreneurs taking part annually (From Edition 2015)
- ✓ € 250,000 in prizes
- ✓ 200 Partner organizations
- ✓ 400 Business mentors
- ✓ 200 Training Experts
- ✓ 38,000 users in the online community
- ✓ € 1 million in media coverage (Edition 2016)

IMPACT: The program has contributed to the creation of 500 companies since its beginning, resulting in employment generation and economic development in the involved regions. On the academic side, this program is a living lab which enables to propose better business trainings and improve the academic offer, appropriate with the real business world necessities.

KEY FACTORS OF SUCCESS: Providing not only high-quality training, counselling, mentoring and encouragement to young entrepreneurs but also access to the largest network of like-minded entrepreneurs, private & public key stakeholders of the business and entrepreneurial training sector in Spain.

TRANSFERABILITY:





II- Presentation of the Good Practices per country

PROMALAGA

City Council of Málaga - Spain

Theme
1

Theme
3

Theme
7

Theme
8

Initially an instrument of intern consulting within the City Council of Málaga to create and modernise public companies of the local government, Promalaga started soon focusing on the strategic positioning of the city in the framework of a general movement to boost the economic development of the city and the Region of Andalucia. Promalaga aims at strengthening companies and to create support programs for entrepreneurs for the local development. Nowadays, Promalaga is encompassed as well in a new innovation model of smart city.

FUNDING: Own resources from the City Council

TARGET GROUP: do not emphasis on specific sectors or industries, nonetheless, the sectors of activity with greater representation are professional services, trade and hotel industry.

RESULTS:

- ✓ Municipal Network of Incubators with 10 district creative-cultural co-working technology centres
- ✓ 197 spaces for companies and an employment potential of 632
- ✓ 4 new incubation centres to be opened soon
- ✓ Survival rate of the companies around 75%

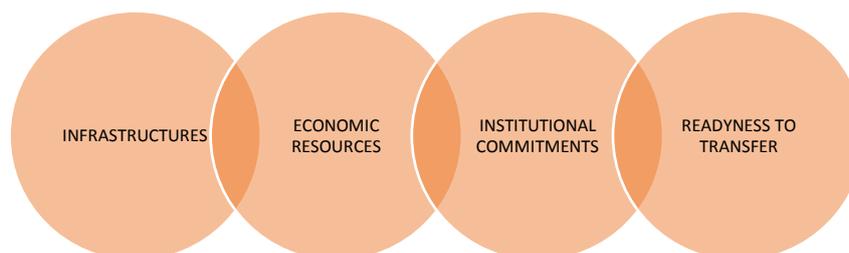
IMPACT:

Promalaga, is a well-known and efficient entity when it comes to speak about successful entrepreneurship support, with the network of Incubators covering all the territory of the city, offering a close and direct assistance and the company creation unit called Malaga Emprende, which offers different supporting tools for the creation of new enterprises since more than 15 years.

KEY FACTORS OF SUCCESS:

Over the years, Promalaga has been able to readjust its strategy to respond tactically to the necessity encountered at all time and facilitate personalized support for the creation of new companies.

TRANSFERABILITY:





II- Presentation of the Good Practices per country

Support Centres for Entrepreneurship Development *Andalucia Emprende - Spain*



Andalucía Emprende, Andalusian Public Foundation, is an entity from the Region of Andalusia, affiliated with the Regional Ministry of Economy, which main mission is to foster entrepreneurial culture and business activity in the region through the provision of support services for entrepreneurs and businessmen that help them to launch and develop their business ideas. To this end, it relies on 215 Centres for Entrepreneurship Development (CADEs) and a team of 947 persons. Since 1999, this initiative focuses on the revitalization of the regional economy, encouraging and supporting the creation and the consolidation of enterprises and employment with specialized services provided by a qualified team of specialists from a wide network of centres in the region.

FUNDING: Andalusian Regional Fund

TARGET GROUP: Entrepreneurs who want to launch a business initiative in Andalusia and existing companies which need support for their expansion, modernization and consolidation in the market.

RESULTS:

- ✓ 215 CADEs covering 100% of the Andalusian Region
- ✓ 15,408 companies created in Andalusia through the CADEs in 2015
- ✓ 1,171 business development plan designed in 2015
- ✓ 2,312 projects monitored in 2015

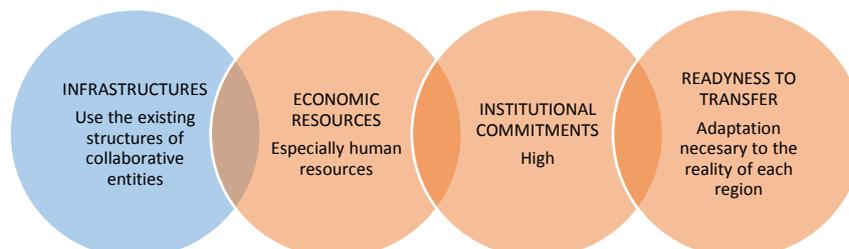
IMPACT:

This good practice has contributed to the revitalization of the regional economy, and consequently, to the employment and economic development. Furthermore, CADEs promote the culture of entrepreneurship in young people, motivating and training future entrepreneurs, giving them specific knowledge on business matters and, in a practical way, promoting the development of skills for entrepreneurship, such as creativity, responsibility, decision making and team work.

KEY FACTORS OF SUCCESS:

One of the main aspect of this initiative consists on the coverage of all the regional territory offering individual support.

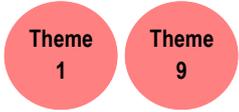
TRANSFERABILITY:





II- Presentation of the Good Practices per country

Business Development Model *Technology Park of Andalucía - Spain*



On one hand, this model facilitates the creation and consolidation of new companies, with the help of various institutions that encourage entrepreneurial activity, whilst on the other hand, different set-up options are provided to those companies whose are already established and whose want to have a presence at the Málaga technological complex. Indeed, this initiative lies on a company creation cycle which has been established, beginning with pre-incubators (implementation of the innovative ideas), followed by incubators (impulsion of new companies) and business centres (growth of the companies), and ending with the setting up of companies in their own infrastructures.

FUNDING: Private and Public Investments (22% public and 78% private)

TARGET GROUP: Entrepreneurs, new companies and existing firms.

RESULTS:

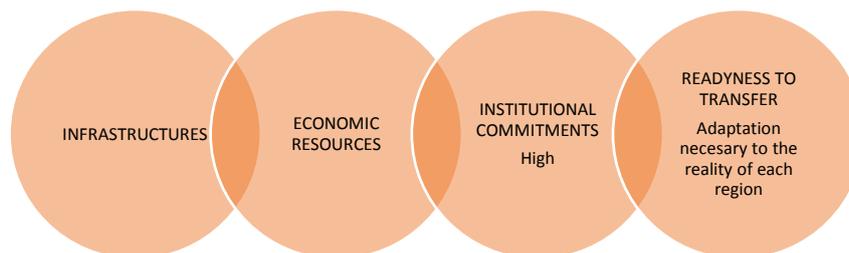
- ✓ More than 630 companies
- ✓ 16,774 employees
- ✓ Turnover of the companies located in the park: 1,625 million of euros (in 2015)
- ✓ 6 Incubation Support Centres and 13 Business Centres

IMPACT:

The economic impact made by the PTA on a provincial and regional level reveals that the park has an extremely strong presence in the Andalusian Science and Technology Network, proving it to be one of Andalusia's greatest assets in terms of technology transfer to the region, as well as a springboard for value creation in its surroundings. (PTA's contribution to Málaga province's GDP sits around 7,35%, while at Andalucía-wide level it sits at around 1, 46%).

KEY FACTORS OF SUCCESS: Probably one of the most important aspects is the union created between the Technology Park of Andalucía, as business environment for entrepreneurs, companies and multinational, with the University of Málaga, as entity with important sectorial research groups and spinoff creation. The joint design of global entrepreneurship processes by these two entities are promoting common and unanimous international entrepreneur projection.

TRANSFERABILITY:





II- Presentation of the Good Practices per country

Ardan® Program **Ardan France - France**

Theme
1

Theme
4

This Regional initiative were born in Lorraine (France) in 1988, to allow the integration of new skills and competences in SMEs through the recruitment of professional responsible of piloting new activities within a company. Indeed, Ardan® aims to disseminate entrepreneurial culture into enterprises, especially to consolidate large positions of leadership necessary for pile-driving entrepreneurial activity and allow, on one hand, the business manager to be assisted, on the other hand, the employees to be entrepreneurs within the company to promote its development and contribute to job creation through professional training.

FUNDING: Public financing (vocational training) and company financing.

TARGET GROUP: Small enterprises (very small, SMEs, small and medium industries, craft companies) and associations (< 50 employees), financially and economically healthy.

RESULTS:

- ✓ Operative in 11 regions of France;
- ✓ More than 10,000 companies supported and developed;
- ✓ Almost 90 % of direct employment and indirect employments too.

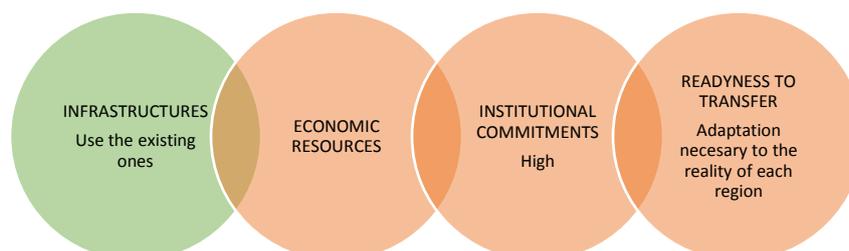
IMPACT:

The Ardan scheme has been spread in several regions of France, and is now available to businesses in Lorraine (newly Grand Est), Nord-Pas de Calais (newly Hauts-de-France), Midi-Pyrénées (newly Occitanie), Haute-Normandie (newly Normandie) and Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur (unchanged), with almost 500 projects accompanied each year in these five regions – 33% of the projects piloted by young person under 30 year olds. Real testimonies can be seen in <http://www.ardan.fr/temoignages>.

KEY FACTORS OF SUCCESS:

- ✓ a training and development program based on a project with real and lasting economic potential
- ✓ a methodological and tested pedagogical support
- ✓ a global organization structured and formalized, quick and dynamic
- ✓ a harmonious and controlled articulation of the operations and practices in network

TRANSFERABILITY:





III- Presentation of the Good Practices per country

Growth for Kainuu project

(Regional Development Agency Kainuun Etu Oy - Finland)

Theme
1

Theme
2

The project is addressed to companies with a proven development potential, and focuses on growth and internationalisation, business transfers & generation shift, and, education and training of the companies.

FUNDING: Local Structural Funds, state and municipal funding, and, private cofounding

TARGET GROUP: Micro and medium sized businesses (SMEs) of the primary (mining and construction), secondary (manufacturing), and tertiary sector (services).

RESULTS:

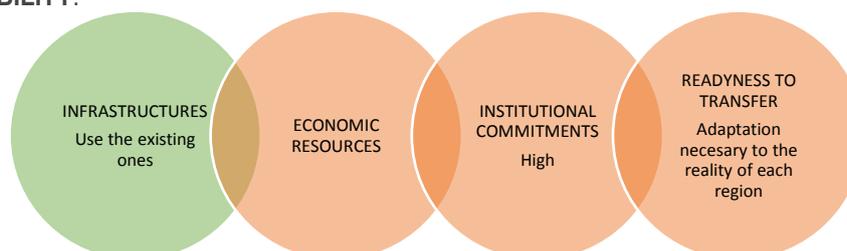
- ✓ 400 Businesses registered to the Customer Relationship Management
- ✓ 200 Businesses are now being processed
- ✓ Especially for business transfers, 170 businesses have been contacted, 140 have expressed interest, 70 are in the transfer process; 30 companies have changed owner.
- ✓ There is continuous demand for the business support services.

IMPACT: Overall, the good practice implies an impact on the growth, renewal and innovation of participating businesses turnover, capacities and innovations, and in addition, the project provides a transferable good practice, which is ideal for establishing the potential of interregional cluster cooperation; it also reinforces the growth and innovation management functions of innovation agencies. Generation shift / business transfers activities impact the value of the transfer-business, improving its competitiveness and attractiveness to identify buyers. In the larger context, the generation shift sub-project strengthens the business transfers expertise and activities in the region. A systematic approach is adopted, contacting potential transferors, assessing the value of the business, supporting the business to improve its performance through tailored development actions, and, once the business is transferred, supporting the buyer for the development of the transferred business.

KEY FACTORS OF SUCCESS:

- ✓ **Personalised support:** Both transferors and transferees receive and have access to very personalised support and tailored solutions.
- ✓ **Trust – based:** like any business activity, the preparation of a business to be transferred requires trust and confidentiality. Establishing and maintaining trust-based relations between the businesses and the innovation agency is an absolute priority.
- ✓ **Systematic approach:** the generation shift support services include both human & science based guidance, with available diagnostic, knowledge and financial resources to support the process.

TRANSFERABILITY:





III- Presentation of the Good Practices per country

Project of Financial Education Edufinet *Banking Foundation Unicaja - Spain*

Theme
1

Theme
4

Theme
8

The Edufinet project was born with the vocation of serving as a tool for current or future users of financial services, providing a clear and precise guide of the most relevant aspects of the financial system and the various products and services offered therein in terms of savings, investment and financing. The objective is to bring to the public objectives the opportunity to acquire knowledge enabling them to adopt decisions in the financial sector from the use of objective criteria, in a conscious and informed way.

FUNDING: Banking Foundation Unicaja

TARGET GROUP: Current or future users of financial services (students, entrepreneurs, businessmen and citizens).

RESULTS:

- ✓ Internet Platform of Financial Education for Businessmen, Entrepreneurs and Youth
- ✓ 300 annual in-person training sessions
- ✓ Financial Guides designed for kids, citizens, businessmen

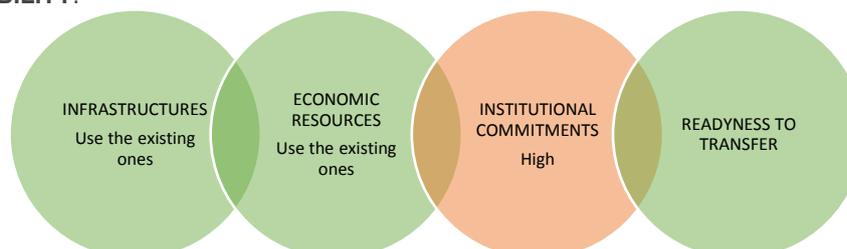
IMPACT:

More than 75,000 people participated directly in conferences or meetings, of which more than 55,000 correspond to the collective of young people. The impact on the active citizens, entrepreneurs, businessmen and young people are clearly demonstrated, with the implementation of training sessions since the very early stage in colleges and high schools to promote the gain of financial knowledge and culture, and the realization of customized courses within each of the collectives (academic, business and society).

KEY FACTORS OF SUCCESS:

- ✓ Teamwork (managing and developing people)
- ✓ Institutional support
- ✓ Financial Education support by the bank
- ✓ Availability of physical resources
- ✓ Strategic focus
- ✓ Communication (media and social networks)

TRANSFERABILITY:





III- Presentation of the Good Practices per country

Green Ray and Link by UMA-Atech UMA – PTA - Spain

Theme
1

Theme
4

Theme
7

In 2014, the Andalusia Technology Park (PTA) created the building Green Ray on the Campus of the University of Malaga (UMA) with the aim of developing a common strategy between the PTA and UMA in the field of entrepreneurial knowledge and support. Indeed, the Link by UMA-Atech located in this building, is the largest space for business, university and innovation coexistence in Andalusia. Entrepreneurs can set up their companies and progress from scratch there, and consolidated businesses can find new ways of growing.

FUNDING: Own resources from PTA and UMA

TARGET GROUP: Students, entrepreneurs and companies

RESULTS:

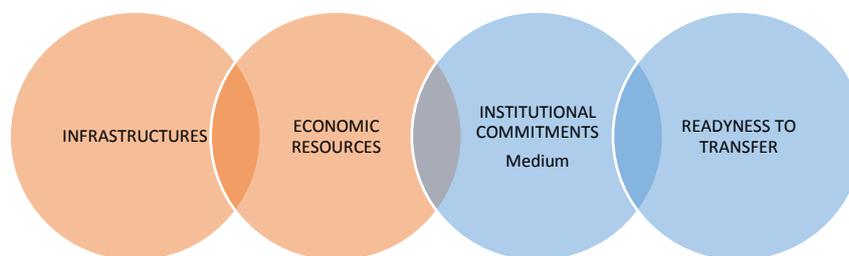
- ✓ 12 Spin-Offs and technology/knowledge based companies hosted annually
- ✓ Training and dissemination activities (15-20 weekly)
- ✓ Frequent organizations of Ideas factory contexts, challenges and hackathons

IMPACT:

A change of mentality is starting to point out, especially in the business network, and in the academic eco system which promote the inclusion of knowledge directly into the company from the initial steps.

KEY FACTORS OF SUCCESS: the main factor relies on the human side, especially the belief in oneself, work team and common learning.

TRANSFERABILITY:





III- Presentation of the Good Practices per country

Alimenta2Talent Program *Fondazione Parco Tecnologico Padano - Italy*



Alimenta2Talent is an innovative business platform for Circular Economy, to develop new high added value projects in Food and Agriculture, Life Sciences and the Bio-based industry. The skills developed in this field enable the challenge of the circular economy, including metropolitan cities, advanced industrial systems and intensive agriculture facing the challenge of sustainability for a zero-impact society. This initiative answers to the need of bridging the gap between technology need and technology providers to fastening the process of technology scouting and implementation, by narrowing and optimizing the technology need of the market with the offer. This approach, considered as “Corporate Acceleration”, creates a stable and effective link between the market’s problems with the universe of ideas and solutions.

FUNDING: Public and private funds (50:50)

TARGET GROUP: Innovative entrepreneurs, serial start ups and international innovators

RESULTS:

- ✓ Implementation of an annual Technology and Business Acceleration program
- ✓ Creation of 5 start-ups/year

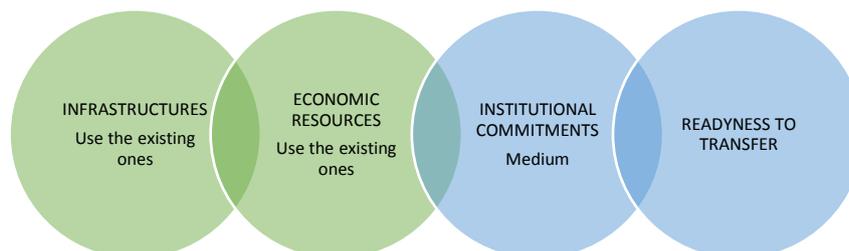
IMPACT:

Alimenta2Talent aims, together with the Municipality of Milan, at investing in the most promising technologies and people in the specific field addressed. Therefore, it has an impact on the business environment, by creating a new generation of start-ups that is able to answer technological and societal challenges in compliance with the policy guidelines set by the government bodies and public/private stakeholders involved.

KEY FACTORS OF SUCCESS:

A first aspect is the establishment of an early-stage link with the world of industry and end-users, that will be the potential recipient of the technologies and the ideas developed. Another interesting aspect is the tailor-made assistance that is provided to the single entrepreneur during the acceleration program, both financial (direct financial contribution) and technical (assistance of specific advisors and mentors according to the specific needs of the single start-up).

TRANSFERABILITY:





III- Presentation of the Good Practices per country

Regional Agency for Entrepreneurship and Innovation High technology business incubator - Bulgaria

Theme
5

The Regional Agency for Entrepreneurship and Innovations – Varna (RAPIV) is a non-governmental utilitarian non-profit organization, carrying out its activities in public benefit, for stimulating regional economy through the development of entrepreneurship and innovation. The Agency operates in three main areas: The High Technology Business Incubator, the Innovation and Technology Transfer Centre and the High Technology Park.

FUNDING: European Structural Funds, EU programs

TARGET GROUP: Newly emerged SMEs

RESULTS:

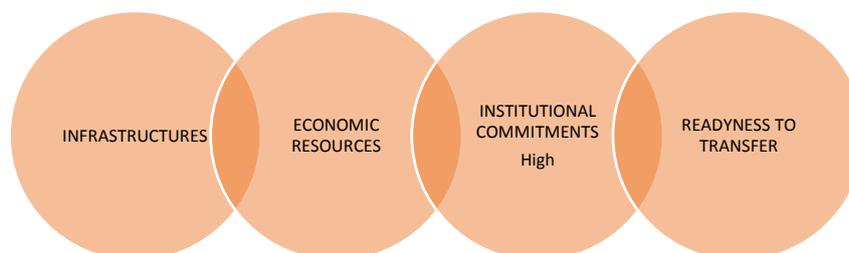
- ✓ Creation of a high-tech eco-system in the region

IMPACT:

This initiative has an impact on the business and the society, due to several elements, firstly growth and innovation: the organization supports the local market by helping the emergence of SMEs and the innovativeness of their products; secondly, the innovation agency: the practice provides high-tech business environment in which the participants not only receive assessment, but also can exchange ideas for products, and, their implication and use in the society.

KEY FACTORS OF SUCCESS: Awareness of the basic needs and specificities of the region, possibility to afford fruitful working environment, serves as a transfer of good practices between different size business, involved in the same market.

TRANSFERABILITY:





III- Presentation of the Good Practices per country

National Science to Business Platform *Bulgaria*

Theme
6

The main objective of this platform is to create a favourable environment for active interaction between science and business, and assist in creating effective and sustainable partnerships between the main components of the 'knowledge triangle' - scientists, research and implementation of research results in practice.

FUNDING: ERDF Funds

TARGET GROUP: Young academic workers and entrepreneurs

RESULTS:

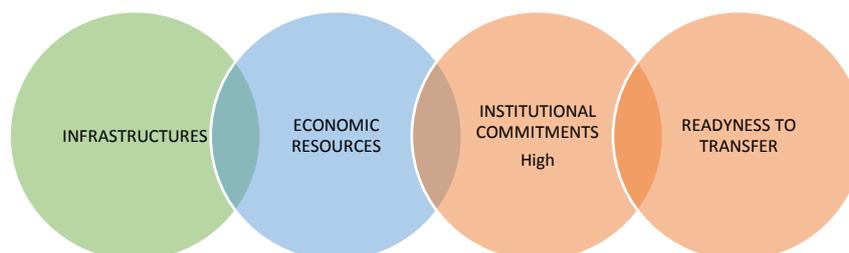
- ✓ Creation of a favourable environment for active interaction between science and business

IMPACT:

The impact on business and academic side focuses on the supply of an open resource to Innovation and scientific development, meanwhile on the society side, potential consumers receive sustainable, ecological and innovative products.

KEY FACTORS OF SUCCESS: The practice is useful especially in those cases, where there is a lack of bilateral relations between universities and businesses. The willingness for cooperation between the public and private actors is essential and the understanding of the mutual benefits behind the cooperation between scientists and business owners.

TRANSFERABILITY:





III- Presentation of the Good Practices per country

Large Research Infrastructure Services for SMEs *Regional Development Agency Kainuun Etu Oy - Finland*

Theme
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Material research is relevant to any manufacturing business. It is part of the key enabling technologies. However, the field often appears too complex / unknown / inaccessible to small entrepreneurs. Through the implementation of several European projects, the systematization and consolidation of the SMEs access to research infrastructures was performed to provide access to open data and its usefulness to the academic, business, and SME intermediary communities.

FUNDING: EU Structural Funds (Interreg Baltic Sea Region IV and V) and the Finnish Innovation Voucher scheme by TEKES (national funds)

TARGET GROUP: Regional innovation intermediaries, industrial research centres, SMEs of all industries & universities (material research departments).

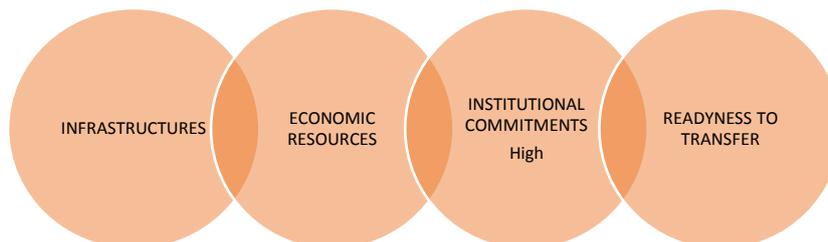
RESULTS:

- ✓ 66 products from 66 companies received synchrotron material measurements, leading to better, safer & more sustainable products (20 provisions of research services to businesses foreseen for 2017-2019).
- ✓ At least 3 Industrial Research Centres (IReC) established (2 in Finland, 1 in Poland – November 2016)
- ✓ At least 2 innovation agencies (IA) with updated functions (November 2016) to support access to research services and subsequently also applications of key enabling technologies.
- ✓ Reinforcement of the macro regional approach concerning access to research infrastructures and qualified intermediaries.
- ✓ Testing open data access across the EU in relation to research – to- business measurements and meta data usefulness to the academic, business, and SME intermediary communities.
- ✓ Enhanced cooperation with economic & development actors within the regions, countries and across the Baltic.

IMPACT: This initiative proposes a better understanding on how to cooperate with economic and development actors. Insights into and investing in a new field of activities, bringing together scientific excellence with societal needs (which are not always up to the level of scientific excellence in the first place). Establishment of long term networks and joint development through various programmes.

KEY FACTORS OF SUCCESS: (1) To validate the concept and the approach; (2) Well defined concepts of IReCs and of updated functions of the IAs; (3) Clear agreements between IReCs and Analytical Research Infrastructures (ARI); 4) Proactively connect the research services to development actions (important role of IAs in the regions); 4) long term national co funding to maintain the use of ARI services; 5) promote open data for re-use (research, pedagogic, and operational purposes).

TRANSFERABILITY:





III- Presentation of the Good Practices per country

Eco-Point Service

North Hungarian Regional Innovation Agency - Italy, Slovenia, Austria, Hungary, Czech Republic

Theme
1

This system promotes the use of environmentally friendly technologies for business growth, showing the economic advantages of greener production & consumption patterns. Indeed, this initiative aims at supporting environmentally friendly technologies in the industrial production of the Central Europe regions by offering SMEs operational methods, good practices, an IT tool to self-assess their performance.

FUNDING: Central Europe Program 2007-2013 and Horizon 2020 Program

TARGET GROUP: SMEs mostly operating in the traditional industrial sectors (i.e. construction & building, food, manufacturing, automotive)

RESULTS:

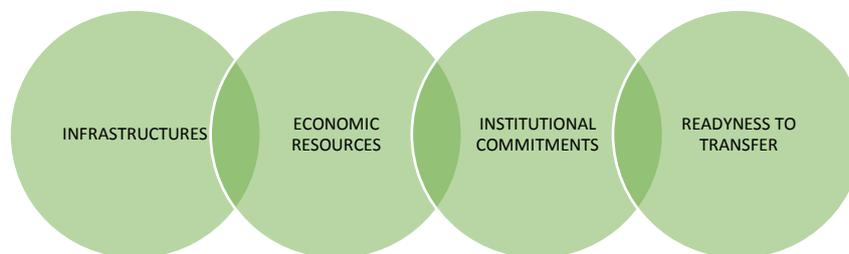
- ✓ Practical IT tool, freely available to any companies in Europe and worldwide
www.ceemproject.eu/3emt-tool/
- ✓ European Eco Point Network
- ✓ 536 companies involved

IMPACT:

The initiative can help SMEs to improve their environmental performance and energy efficiency. The developed 3EMTool is a new, simple, web-based tool for companies created to step up their green habits. SMEs self-assess their eco-energy performance and get a free benchmark.

KEY FACTORS OF SUCCESS: Accessibility without costs, ease and simplicity of the IT tool, and by applying this system, businesses can better plan and monitor their eco-energy performance, also compare themselves to other businesses to provide higher quality products

TRANSFERABILITY:





III- Presentation of the Good Practices per country

Regional Business Idea - CI Caixa *University of Algarve - Portugal*

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Theme
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This initiative consists on a contest of ideas and workshops "Create your business" aiming to promote knowledge based entrepreneurship as a way of introducing Innovation and competitiveness in the regional market, and to stimulate the creation of new qualified jobs. It has a regional dimension, being performed in all the 116 municipalities, aims to promote knowledge based entrepreneurship as a way of introducing innovation and competitiveness in the regional market, promoting the creation on new qualified jobs in the Algarve.

FUNDING: Regional Funds / University Own funds / Caixa Geral de Depositos Bank (grant for the winner)

TARGET GROUP: Students, entrepreneurs, businessmen & coverall citizens

RESULTS:

- ✓ 81 new companies created
- ✓ 74% survival rate
- ✓ 66% of business volume are international sales
- ✓ Enhancement of the Regional Innovation Eco-system

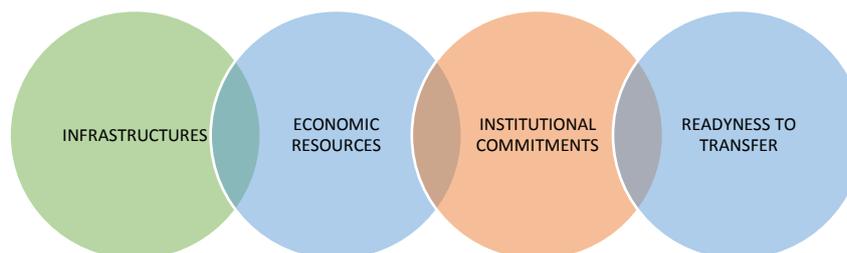
IMPACT:

The impact on the active citizens, entrepreneurs, businessmen and young people are clearly demonstrated, given the broad development of knowledge based entrepreneurship sessions in all the region (colleges, schools, regional entities) and the development of new and innovative businesses directed to international markets. Also, the overall dissemination of entrepreneurship and good practices all over the region, has consolidated the Regional Innovation System and all its actors, resulting in a more efficient cooperation among all stakeholders in further initiatives, sharing resources and outputs.

KEY FACTORS OF SUCCESS:

Massive dissemination of the Business Ideas Contest inside and the outside the University; the distinctive aspect of this Business Ideas Contest is its inherent methodology of providing training and tailored mentoring to each entrepreneur throughout the process and beyond.

TRANSFERABILITY:





III- Presentation of the Good Practices per country

Focus Groups & Innovation Communities of Practice *University of Algarve -Portugal*

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Theme
3

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Theme
6

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Six communities of Innovation in Tourism, Sea Economy, Energy and Environment, ICT and Creative Industries, Agro-food, Health & Well-being have been implemented in order to promote a higher cooperation triple helix agents at a Regional level (University, Companies, Public Bodies), as a way of strengthening the Regional Innovation System and identifying mid and long term constraints and opportunities for fostering Knowledge transfer and Innovation.

FUNDING: Regional Funds

TARGET GROUP: Researchers, businessmen, entrepreneurs, policymakers & technology transfer offices

RESULTS:

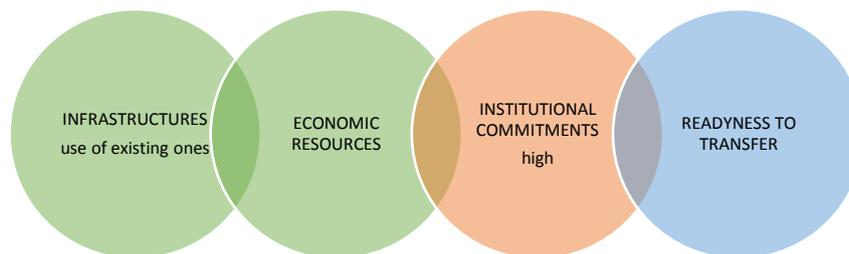
- ✓ Increase of R&D and cooperation Projects
- ✓ Increased number of patents and license agreements
- ✓ Regional increase of competitiveness & capacity for knowledge absorption

IMPACT:

The services provided have been quite successful, given the growing number of new projects coming out of these sessions, resulting in new applications for Regional, National and International fund programs.

KEY FACTORS OF SUCCESS: Representability of all the components of the Triple Helix Model; Participatory methods to involve persons in regular workshops.

TRANSFERABILITY:





III- Presentation of the Good Practices per country

Science to Business

*University of Algarve
Portugal*

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This initiative consists on a continuous mapping of innovation opportunities based on RIS3 Strategy, according to the needs of the identified companies and the solutions that can bring research centres or research groups from the University to the problem detected.

FUNDING: Own funds, framed on European Projects whenever possible (MED Program, Atlantic Area, POCTEP)

TARGET GROUP: University researchers, professors and new & existing companies in the region

RESULTS:

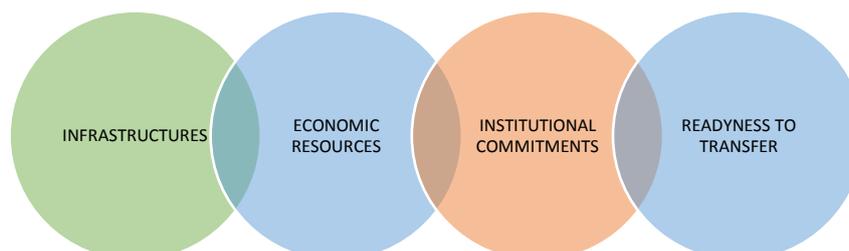
- ✓ 81 Strong Regional Networks among Science and Industry
- ✓ More than 127 U-E joint ventures
- ✓ Around 30 Million € investment for the region
- ✓ 71 Patents submitted (29 granted)

IMPACT:

The impact on the active business and academic community is clear and very significant, reflecting a strong economic impact in the region. This joint ventures among industry and university, resulting in applied R&D and licencing agreements for knowledge transfer, outcome in the development of new high value products and new high value services (as well as in the creation of new start-ups and spinoffs) directed to international markets. Also, the overall dissemination of good practices all over the region, allows for the consolidation of a Regional Innovation System and all its actors, resulting in a more efficient cooperation among all stakeholders in further initiatives, sharing resources and outputs, and more regional competitiveness.

KEY FACTORS OF SUCCESS: Being the process conducted by the rectory, there is a greater adherence within the academy and a greater participation by the research centres, which is fundamental for the correct updating of the technological offer of the University and thus, to make possible a more adequate and timely response to the companies.to complete.

TRANSFERABILITY:





II- Presentation of the Good Practices per country

Innovation Vouchers

Pannon Business Network -Hungria

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This initiative consists on a transnational voucher system for SMEs which facilitates the introduction of innovations (new products, processes or services) in their business operations with the support of universities and institutes of R&D at transnational level, thus providing financial support for transnational science-to-business cooperation.

FUNDING: ERDF – 100% funding

TARGET GROUP: SMEs (All industries and sectors)

RESULTS:

- ✓ 34 effective transnational cooperation between SMEs and R&D institutions

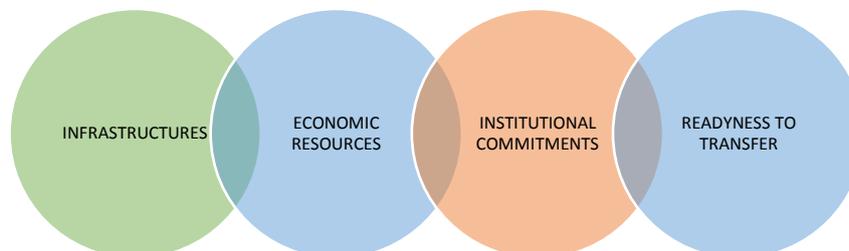
IMPACT:

This transnational voucher system supported the process of business and cluster internationalisation, needed for the creation and consolidation of innovation partnerships outside the region.

KEY FACTORS OF SUCCESS:

- Simplicity of the administration and implementation process
- Wide promotion and advertising of the initiative
- Strong commitment of universities and institutes of R&D
- Brokerage activities

TRANSFERABILITY:





**IN-BUSINESS
GROWTH**

Innovative Sustainable
Business Growth
at Global Level

III- Contact and Support

For more information on the initiatives, and on the real possibilities of transferring, please contact the closest national contact point:



PARQUE TECNOLÓGICO DE ANDALUCÍA, S.A.

Marie Curie, 35
29590 Campanillas, Málaga, SPAIN

Sonia Palomo

00349 51 231 300
spalomo@pta.es
www.pta.es



CRIA - Divisão de Empreendedorismo e Transferência de Tecnologia Universidade do Algarve,

Campus de Gambelas, Pavilhão B1
8005-139 Faro , PORTUGAL

Hugo Barros

00351 289 800 098
hfbarros@ualg.pt
www.cria.pt



KAINUUN ETU OY

Intelli-rakennus, Seminaarinkatu 2
FIN-87100 Kajaani, FINLAND (Head Office)

Ninetta Chaniotou

00358 44 551 45 59
ninetta.chaniotou@kainuunetu.fi
www.kainuunetu.fi



Bulgarian Development Agency

BULGARIAN DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

14A Nikolay Liliev str. floor 1, office № 1,
BG-1421 Lozenetz, Sofia, BULGARIA

Denitza Toptchiyska

00359 88 917 35 00
denitza@bg-da.eu
www.bg-da.eu



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