newsletter

P4C Project: Overall Objective

The POOLING4CLUSTERS (Best shared services for regional cluster initiative needs) project aims to develop a platform of "best practices" focusing on the links between Development Agencies (DAs) and Cluster Initiatives (CIs).

The overall objective of the project is to upgrade the innovation capacity of existing enterprises in the partner regions, through the improvement of the effectiveness of cluster support policies.

Particularly through the identification and analysis of good practices in the partner regions, this project will produce assisting guidelines & recommendations to regional authorities in reaching a preeminent method to improve their support framework to cluster and competitiveness poles, by taking into account the added-value of existing development agencies in terms of services.

Good Practice Definition

According to INTERREG IVC definition, a ***good practice*** is *"an initiative or a service provided by Cluster Initiatives and/or Development Agencies (Open collective services, Closed collective services, Partnership services and Individual services) undertaken in the innovation and Knowledge Economy fields.* A good practice has:

- *already proved successful several times,*
- *the potential to be transferred to a partners' geographic area,*
- *created added values to the cluster initiatives/ Development Agencies and to the members, specifically SME's.*

*A good practice is proved successful when it has reached expected target and measurable results in achieving a specific objective***".**

Selection Methodology of Practices

During the first phase of services identification a total of 96 practices were recorded, which were then evaluated, by all partners, on the following attributes:
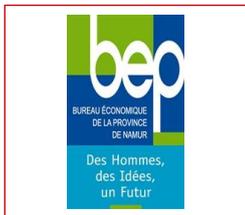
- Added value to CIs (Financial impact - Diversification - Optimization of means)
- Added value to DAs (Impact on the attractiveness of the region - Impact on the regional innovation and internationalisation support system coherence - Impact on the enlargement of target enterprise groups)
- Added value to Enterprises (Strengthening of enterprises competitiveness - Extension of activity fields - Development of synergies and innovative partnerships)
- Repeatability of service (Repeated or New)
- Efficiency (Did the service meet its objectives?)

The evaluation process brought about 15 good practices, out of which each partner picked minimum two in order to test in their region. The testing process will take the form of field testing as follows:

- **Concrete Implementation**: actual representation of the selected practice to the RoP
- **Workshops**: testing under workshop conditions, questionnaires and interviews with target groups

Presentation of the 15 selected services for testing

- **Website PACA Innovation**: *PACA Innovation is a governmental and regional initiative. The website PACA innovation is one of the tools developed and used to support entrepreneurs in their innovative projects.*

- **Competence Centres for Projects - attract new firms and talent for region**: *Competence centres offer support to companies in finding a project leader with experiences and management knowledge. Companies can become members only by invitation of a cluster member.*

- **Help Desk**: *Help desk provides cluster's members with information about the sector, the markets, the partnerships, the projects and other general information. Key aim of the Help Desk is to attract new members for the clusters.*

- **Scientific Group Intermediation**: *Scientific groups help enterprises/ research centres on issues related to technological research, scientific research, partnerships and funding. The aim is for enterprises to take active part in new projects.*

- **Trainings and mentorship**: *A training program designed to fill the gaps in knowledge, skills and competences of employees in Slovenian wood manufacturing sector or non-woods companies.*

- **Structures support for management and coordination**: *Provision of financial support to CIs in order to implement certain clustering activities.*

- **Co-location**: *Development and Management of a common infrastructure which acts as a facilitating hub for all members of the cluster ecosystem and a reference point, offering a number of services.*

- **Permanent Offices**: *Achieve permanent representation in a target-country for the cluster, in order to facilitate and strengthen business development and international cooperation.*

- **European Networking**: *DA staff offers support to networks and companies that wish to participate in European projects, as a first contact point and by providing a first overview on European programmes and Calls for Proposals.*

- **Collective booth at trade fair/ shows**: *CI organises collective participation of cluster members in trade fairs and shows around the globe, with the aim to strengthen the exports' orientation of enterprises.*

- **Mentorship and other services**: *Registering and publicizing good practices, case studies, events and workshops where research-driven clusters will be discussed and established. There is a mentorship available to any member of a cluster.*

- **Project oriented Funding**: *DAs offer support to CI in terms of staff costs funding, in cases where they manage collaborative projects between network members. This funding is a way to support clustering and the innovation activities of the cluster members.*

- **"Contrat de croissance"**: *The signing of an agreement between a CI and its members, with the aim to support the member by providing tailor-made services for a pre-defined period of time and framework.*

- **Information Desk for funding and financing**: *Provision of support to CI members in search of information concerning funding opportunities, especially for Research & Innovation projects, on a regional, national or international level.*

- **Business Intelligence**: *The CI manager consults network members on technology and business opportunities using his knowledge about new developments from research and industry, and helps to identify business and technology partners.*

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BEP will test two services: "Internship offers & training" and "Collective actions" such as collective booths. The first service will be tested in collaboration with high schools, universities, cluster initiatives and enterprises, in order to develop a common platform for internship offers and new trainings in agreement with the needs of the enterprises. The second service, "Collectives actions", will be inserted in our sectorial program of collective actions abroad.

Le BEP testera deux services: "L'offre de stages et formations » et les « Actions collectives » telles que, par exemple, les stands collectifs. Le premier service sera testé en collaboration avec les hautes écoles, universités et entreprises, pour développer une plate-forme commune d'offre de stages et de nouvelles formations en accord avec les besoins des entreprises. Le second service, « Actions collectives », sera inséré dans notre programme sectoriel d'actions collectives à l'étranger.

The Fondation Sophia Antipolis has chosen to test 3 good practices: Education & Training, Collective Booth and European Networking. 2 practices will be implemented in a concrete way: Organisation of a foreign mission for French Sme's and Development of a training program. A workshop will be organised in order to test the 3rd good practice.

La Fondation Sophia Antipolis a choisi de tester 3 bonnes pratiques : Formation, Mission à l'étranger et le réseautage européen. Deux actions seront mises en place de façon concrète avec le développement d'une formation et l'organisation d'une mission de PME à l'étranger. La troisième bonne pratique « Réseautage européen » sera testée sous forme d'un atelier de travail.

Corallia will test two services: "Permanent Offices" and "Contrat de Croisance". Using methods such as workshops and questionnaires, Corallia will record the effects of those services into the Greek upcoming highly innovative tech market flourishing within the clusters managed by Corallia.

Το Corallia, κατά το στάδιο του "field testing", θα εξετάσει δύο υπηρεσίες: "Permanent Offices" και "Contrat de Croisance". Χρησιμοποιώντας μεθόδους, όπως workshops και ερωτηματολόγια, θα καταγράψει τα αποτελέσματα από τη μεταφορά των υπηρεσιών στις ελληνικές καινοτόμες εταιρείες.

BSC, business development centre, ltd., Kranj will send the catalogue of 15 best practices to the interested clusters and let them choose the practice/s that they believe it is possible to implement. Selection of practices will be reviewed by BSC, ltd., Kranj and agreed on the possibility of transferring all or a part of a practice in operational practice.

BSC, poslovno razvojni center, d. o. o., Kranj bo posredoval nabor 15. najboljših praks zaitneresiranim grozdom. Grozdi bodo prakse pregledali in pripravili predlg izbora praks, za katere menijo, da jih je možno uveljaviti v praksi. Predložen izbor praks bodo zainteresirani grozdi skupaj z BSC ponovno pregledali in se dogovorili o možnosti prenosa celotne prakse ali dela prakse v izvedbeno prakso.

Stuttgart Region Economic Development Corporation intends to set up a new website offering an overview on all existing cluster initiatives within regional creative industries. It also plans to start a new service to promote technology intermediation between science and mechanical engineering industry.

Die Wirtschaftsfoerderung Region Stuttgart GmbH (WRS) plant, ein Webportal für die Clusterinitiativen der regionalen Kreativwirtschaft einzurichten, sowie für den regionalen Maschinenbau einen neuen Service zur Intensivierung des Technologietransfers aus der Wissenschaft in die Wirtschaft anzubieten.

MITA will be running a training programme for cluster facilitators and other stakeholders in order to promote competitive clusters management. MITA also intends to set up an online facility where technologists and enterprises can share their knowledge and aspirations with other stakeholders particularly investors. These efforts would help develop programme participants into clusters.

MITA ser tkun qed torganiżża programm ta' taħriġ għall-'cluster facilitators' u partijiet interessati oħra sabiex tiġi promossa tmexxija ta' 'clusters' b'mod kompetittiv. MITA bi ħsiebha wkoll twaqqaf faċilità online fejn teknoloġisti w intrapriżi jistgħu jaqsmu l-għarfien tagħhom u l-aspirazzjonijiet ma' partijiet interessati oħra, partikolarment investituri. Dawn l-attivitajiet se jgħinu lil dawk il-parteċipanti tal-programm sabiex jiżviluppaw fi-'clusters'.
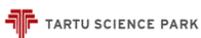
In Estonia the focus will be on strengthening cooperation between universities/research centres and companies. Good practice from Belgium – "Scientific group intermediation" – will be adapted to local needs and conditions. In addition, Slovenian good practice "Trainings – providing managerial and technical training – and mentorship" will be the base to make a survey on cluster managers' and members' training needs, also offering them solutions on this field.

Eestis keskendutakse teadusasutuste ja ettevõtete vahelise koostöö tugevdamisele. Tegemist on Belgiast pärit hea praktikaga „Teadusgruppide vahendamine", mis kohandatakse Eesti oludele ja vajadustele. Täiendava praktikana uuritakse klastrijuhtide ja –liikmete koolitusvajadusi ning pakutakse lahendusi tuginedes Sloveenia heale praktikale „Tehnilised ja juhtimiskoolitused ning mentorlus".