

SPECTRA

STIMULATING PERFORMANCE IN CREATIVE
TERRITORIES AND REGIONAL ACTORS



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D2.2 Best Practice Examples and Evaluation

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Deliverable Summary

Deliverable:

D2.2 Best Practice Examples and Evaluation

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Project Summary

SPECTRA project (Stimulating Performance of Ecosystems in Creative Territories and Regional Actors) embodies the collaborative vision of 8 partners (including 3 associate partners) representing 4 regional ecosystems – an emerging innovator region in Bulgaria (North-Central-BG), moderate innovator region in Ireland (Northern and Western), together with lead innovator regions in Denmark (Hovedstaden) and Germany (Berlin).

SPECTRA will put in place key ingredients required to equip the emerging innovator and moderate innovator regions with a more responsive, resilient ecosystem, capable of growing and developing coordinated responses to many challenges creative industries are facing to achieve the National and European goals. It will harness and multiply the power of individual ecosystem initiatives to create a collaboration driven innovation network - resulting in enhanced, more inter-connected, diverse, gender-responsive, competitive, and sustainable ecosystems.

Additionally, SPECTRA will include activities directed at the creative innovation eco-system stakeholders that will encourage development of joint strategies and amplify collaboration. They will benefit extensively from the advanced business support models developed to fast-track start-ups, produce scale-ups, avail of best practice, new systems, structures, and tools, as well as data-driven & carbon-reducing challenge-based innovation methods, case studies, role models, cross-sectoral and intra-territorial learning - creating an excess of 300 new linkages.

In addition to addressing the relevant project call and work programme contexts, the National, Regional and EU Policy framework and its associated strategies and objectives, the overall concept for SPECTRA has been conceived around formulating coordination and support measures based on the preliminary needs analysis of the 3 key primary audiences: ecosystems as a whole (as catalysts for businesses to thrive and drivers of innovation), SMEs, start-ups and scale-ups (entrepreneurs/solution providers and key beneficiaries), and other ecosystem stakeholders (public organisations, HEIs, researchers, clusters, incubators, accelerators, etc.).

All 3 audiences are perceived beneficiaries of the SPECTRA outcomes, with the proposed project removing obstacles to achieving expected impacts (further elaborated on below, including other target audiences).

SPECTRA is funded through EISMEA.I – Innovation Ecosystems, SMP/Entrepreneurship and Consumers strand, EU and place-based Innovation Ecosystems Call HORIZON-EIE-2022-CONNECT-01-01: Towards more inclusive networks and initiatives in European innovation ecosystems, under Horizon Europe Lump Sum GRANT AGREEMENT No. 101097000.

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1 Deliverable Description

One of the primary objectives of the SPECTRA project is to enable, through its activities, systemic transfer of knowledge, experience, and expertise from lead innovators to moderate and emerging innovator regions, on a cross-border, cross-disciplinary basis, addressing the following challenges:

- Lack of active drivers bringing stakeholders together - despite numerous agents and supports available to support collaboration and networking, full breadth of the ecosystem is not being fully exploited either at the local level or beyond and opportunities exist to increase the relevance of, and connections to, other innovation partners.
- Divergence in ecosystem maturity, policy environment and inter-connectivity.
- Asymmetry of knowledge, experience, and expertise among the ecosystems.

The SPECTRA interventions under Work Package 2 (WP2) 'Capacity Building of Moderate and Emerging Innovator Territories' target the emerging and modest ecosystems directly, with the aim to engage more with emerging innovation directions and trends, and advanced methods, tools, systems, and structures, enable them to become more resilient to disruption, such as caused by the COVID19 pandemic, to develop capability to turn them into opportunities and develop new solutions to the challenges they face in their environment, as well as to:

- ensure socio-environmental issues are addressed at a very early stage in activities and are an essential cornerstone of strategy for growth.
- become more proactive and skilled in driving innovation, becoming the instigator of new technological solutions ('bottom-up' approach).
- engage more in multi-stakeholder discovery process and co-creation.
- become more connected to other ecosystems and other stakeholders in the ecosystem, to expand sharing of knowledge and expertise.

These activities provide for strategies to overcome barriers in addressing these challenges and opportunities, including:

- Lack of knowledge on how to effectively engage with emerging innovation directions and trends – which trends and technologies are most relevant, in what way and for what purpose – having weak association/appreciation of how they need to integrate with the complex requirements of the ecosystem and the entrepreneurs.
- Weak mechanisms and processes via which businesses can engage in collaboration and innovation with external partners and other ecosystems.
- Fragmented eco-system, especially on the cross-border/transnational basis, when considering key players, weak open innovation frameworks engaging the quadruple helix
- Perception that some existing solutions are 'solutions looking for a problem' rather than solving a genuine need/challenge & common challenges exist without appropriate solutions being available.
- low level of connectivity and 'intra-operability' between ecosystems.

SPECTRA also recognises that intentional ecosystem-strengthening initiatives still represent an exploratory space with regard to evidence base on what does and what doesn't work. Providing more space for ecosystem actors to lead the design, implementation and evaluation of these interventions will help to clarify some of the critical success factors. Hypotheses and assumptions will be tested in this SPECTRA approach, before good practices can be confidently defined, and further collaborate to understand where and how different actors are contributing to systems strengthening.

This deliverable linked to task T2.2' Inclusive, Diverse Ecosystems: Best Practice' specifically addresses intra-territorial exchange of experience and good practices to enhance the European dimension of the target ecosystems. It looks at best practice examples from across Europe and pin-points specific learning from the lead innovator regions in Germany and Denmark, supporting a common strategy with appropriate solutions to respond to thematic challenges and to support innovative creative economy businesses with involvement of ecosystems as catalysts for innovation.

The deliverable, in addition to research of best practice, reflects on the 2 SPECTRA virtual panel discussions held during August 2023, which focused on the following 2 topics:

1. Stimulating internal innovation and use of experimentation
2. Ecosystem as an open innovation platform, utilizing inclusivity, and diversity as a key enabler.

The outcomes and conclusions of these activities have been summarised in this deliverable, to enable dissemination, and knowledge enhancement of stakeholders as well as replication.

2 Inclusive, Diverse Ecosystems – Best Practices

2.1 Inclusive and Diverse Ecosystems – A Definition

It is useful to define the meaning of best practice within the framework of inclusive and diverse ecosystems, as characterized within the bounds of the SPECTRA project.

The inclusivity and diversity may take on many dimensions in strategies to strengthen the entrepreneurial and innovation ecosystems, such as championing social inclusion, 'a process that ensures citizens have the opportunities and resources necessary to participate fully in economic, social and cultural life and to enjoy a standard of living and well-being that is considered normal in the society in which they live'¹, or gender, such as defined by policy objectives and actions to make significant progress by 2025 towards a gender-equal Europe where individuals of all gender, in all their diversity, are free to pursue their chosen path in life, have equal opportunities to thrive, and can equally participate in and lead our European society² and including consideration of various levels of physical, mental, sensory and intellectual ability, providing equal access to schools or workplaces, infrastructures, products, services and information³.

Additionally, within the context of ecosystem development, it is useful to examine inclusivity and diversity through the lens of stakeholders/ecosystem actors and ensuring that ecosystems are also enriched through broad and rich participation of as many different types as possible, in recognition of the fact that *'Despite serious efforts deployed at national, regional and European level[3], the EU sees too many innovation actors to still miss from the innovation ecosystems (including investors, foundations, public and private buyers, social innovators, civil society organisations non-governmental organisations, as well as women-innovators), and significant internal disparities exist in terms of innovation performance at territorial level.'*⁴

SPECTRA project, taking into account the ambition *'to increase the participation of more diverse innovation stakeholders currently missing or underrepresented within and among territories'*, addresses the specific needs of the following two stakeholder groups, overcoming current knowledge and learning obstacles, gaps and asymmetries:

- Investors/Financiers: SPECTRA will sensitize new cohorts of financiers about the opportunities that the start-ups in creative industries can offer, engaging with them directly via roundtables, e-pitches, forums, and workshops, integrating them within a community with access to start-ups and other ecosystem stakeholders and engaging them in direct activities with start-ups, in a complementary approach (WP4 and WP5, WP6). An investor network forms part of the project partnership structure, with input into the project direction.
- Women Innovators: SPECTRA will enable the stakeholders to apply gender-sensitive supports and to collect and evaluate gender data necessary to build innovation

¹ <https://www.eurofound.europa.eu/topic/social-inclusion> accessed 21st August 2023

² https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/gender-equality/gender-equality-strategy_en accessed 16th August 2023

³ <https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1137> accessed 14th August 2023

⁴ <https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/opportunities/topic-details/horizon-eie-2022-connect-01-01> accessed 15th August 2023

ecosystem that are more inclusive of women entrepreneurs, as well as more responsive to their needs. Activities facing towards involvement of entrepreneurs will in particular ensure participation of women entrepreneurs encouraging local trusted networks and contacts to refer women entrepreneurs to avail of SPECTRA coordination and support measures.

Considering the above context, the examples of best practice identified in the following section aim to identify relevant learning within the framework of the SPECTRA project, its interventions, objectives, and the territories associated with the project.

Best practice, as considered within this deliverable, includes 'any procedure (e.g., action, intervention, programme, strategy) that has been shown by research and/or experience to produce optimal results and that is established or proposed as a standard suitable for widespread adoption.'

2.2 A Selection of Best Practices

2.2.1 EMPOWER Programme, Ireland – Theme: Female Innovators

The EMPOWER programme was an initiative run by the Atlantic Technological University (ATU)⁵ Innovation Hubs that aimed to promote and fast-track female entrepreneurship. It was open to applicants from the predominantly rural counties in the West of Ireland of Galway, Mayo, Roscommon, Sligo, Leitrim, and Donegal and has been a strong source of economic growth for the region.

EMPOWER has been on the scene since 2017, when it was founded due to the strong demand from newly founded companies led by women in the west. Since then, the programme has been very popular. 450 applications were received for the final round of the programme, showing that there is a huge demand for more inclusive interventions.



Figure 1: Programme Participants, Programme Manager, Speakers at the Closing Event

EMPOWER delivered two distinct programmes:

- START was designed for those with an idea who are seeking to validate their business concept.

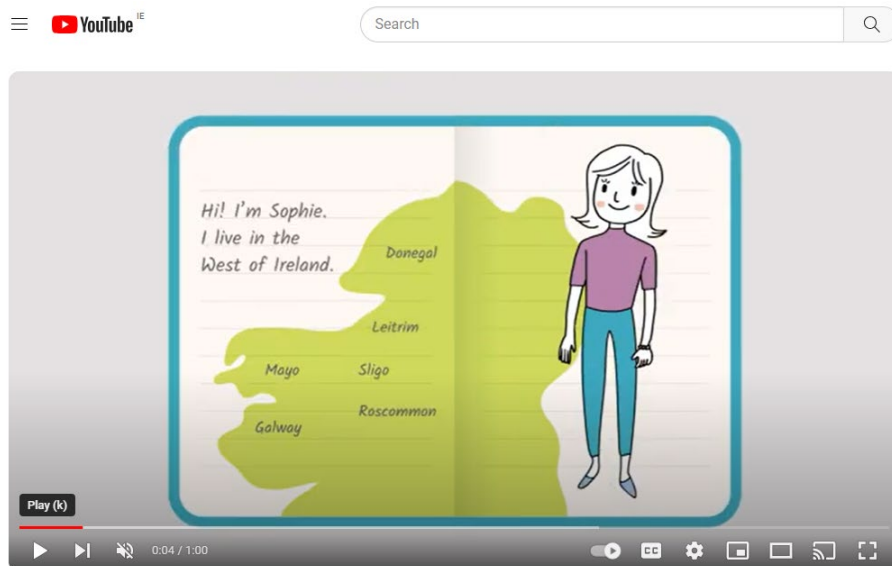
⁵ <https://atuihubs.ie/empower-2/>

Who is it for?	When?	Objective	Examples of Topics:
<p>A group of 20 early-stage female-led businesses (with an early stage idea or in business less than 18 months).</p>	<p>12 week programme, delivered weekly online, with individual mentoring and networking opportunities.</p>	<p>To gain confidence, think creatively, go through the start-up process and develop pitch / business model. Networking will be encouraged and a start-up community will be created.</p>	<p>Problem, Solution, Opportunity, Customer Relationships, Revenue Streams. Areas such as Confidence, Leadership, Communication etc will also be developed during the Programme.</p>

- GROWTH was designed for established entrepreneurs wishing to scale and grow their business.

Who is it for?	When?	Objective	Examples of Topics:
<p>A group of 12-14 female-led businesses who are in business 18 months + and are looking to scale and grow.</p>	<p>Delivered over 10 days, one day a month, on Saturdays including individual mentoring and networking opportunities.</p>	<p>To build a strong network of like-minded female CEOs in the West and North West of Ireland who are looking to scale and learn from experienced business people.</p>	<p>Sales (online selling, branding, distribution), Risk Management, Investment, Innovation, Strategy, Team Building etc. Topics will be based on need assessments of the group.</p>

The EMPOWER Programme aimed to tackle these scaling issues by providing the necessary tools and skills to grow businesses, opportunities to network and learn from peers in a supportive environment. Both Programmes offered specific mentoring and networking opportunities.



EMPOWER Start - Ambitious Business Women Wanted

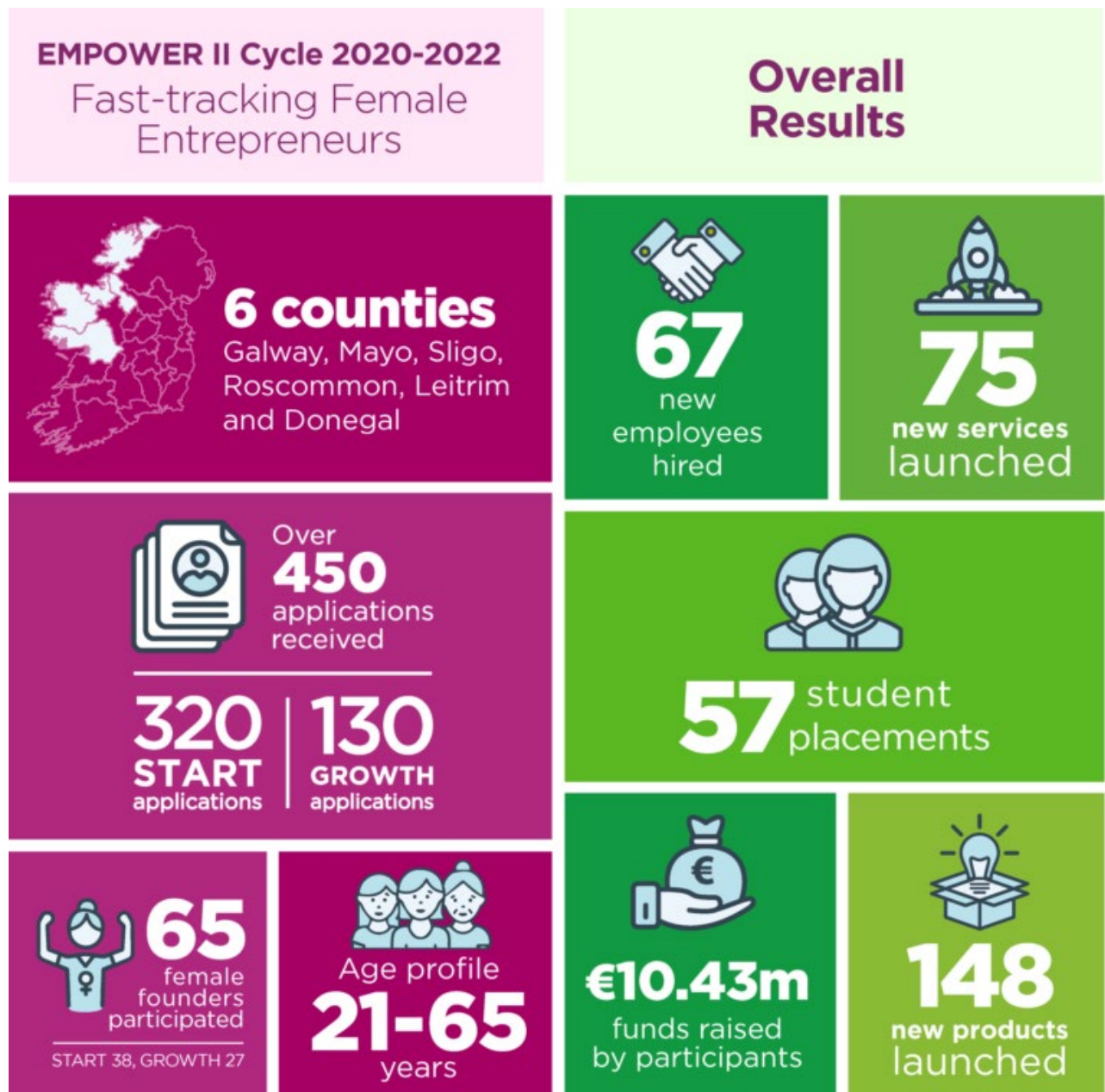
Testimonials:

The EMPOWER programme helped me clarify my vision for growth and mapped the road towards achieving it. I am now getting ready to launch a new online PR service from my website. It's a big

innovation and it offers a great new way for small businesses to secure affordable, quality PR services. The support of the EMPOWER mentors, participants and webinars played an essential role in helping get me to this stage. EMPOWER gives you the focus, the tools, and the confidence to grow. I highly recommend it. *Trish Hegarty, Director, Inis Communications*

I found the EMPOWER START programme exactly that, empowering. The sense of support and the genuine will for participants to succeed in their businesses from all involved, the trainers, mentors, and directors, was incredible. I feel prepared to take the next steps in my business, knowing that I have the skills and information needed to address any future challenges. *Lisa Gallagher, Founder & CEO, Be Yew - Elemental Energy and Sound Healing*

The surveys of 90 participants in the EMPOWER Programme, showed that 162 full time jobs have been created and 65 part-time jobs. 70% of participants increased their products or services with 48% entering new markets. An interesting result of championing female entrepreneurs is the increase in innovation with 33% availing of innovation collaboration with technology providers at universities and research institutes.



The programme was run over 2 cycles. Funding for the EMPOWER I & II programmes was granted by the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth and the European Social Fund Agency. Over 450 female founders applied for 65 places on the EMPOWER II cycle.

Atlantic Technology University iHub is leading the West Regional Enterprise Plan action under Strategic Objective 1: Advance the development of the regional Entrepreneurship and Innovation Ecosystem, Action 6: Continue to champion gender equality, inclusivity, and diversity in Innovation & Entrepreneurship.



2.2.2 Creative Business Investors, Denmark – Theme: Investor Inclusivity

Creative Business Network recognized that the culture and creative industries represented a significant opportunity to attract the investment community. It is the fastest growing sector, and in just a few years, 90% of the global workforce is expected to be employed in creative

positions. With more than healthy looking Return on Investments (ROIs), the cultural and creative industries are arguably the most interesting place to look for investment opportunities right now.

According to Bernd Fesel of the EIT KIC For Cultural and Creative Sectors and industries 'Investments in all sectors of the creative industries were around €24 Billion across Europe in 2017 - so the Monitoring Report 2019 of the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Energy in Germany. While statistics gives an overview by nation across Europe, it does not by sectors, not by tech trends or even consumer trends - so overall: Not enough knowledge and transparency about one of the largest sectors in Europe - with some €525 Billion GVA and 12 Mio. workers - to be called „Ready for Investments“. While we know that sectors like Streaming, Audiovisual and Games are high growth markets in general, the specific criteria for investors to invest or not invest are not accounted, researched, let alone certified and published by independent bodies. Turnover of the German games market jumped 2019/2020 by 32% from 6.463 Mio. € to 8.531 Mio. €. But still leading investment data-platforms like Pitch Book do not even list the games sector or the creative industries as an investment area'⁶.

According to the Creative Business Network, investing in a creative startup has never been more promising or topical, and returns on investment are one of the highest. By investing in a creative startup, you will be part of preserving culture and shaping social identities on a bigger scale. On a smaller scale, you'll portray the focal link between entrepreneur and product, fill knowledge gaps and contribute with experience and expertise while being part of an exciting innovative journey.

The global demand for innovative solutions becomes more crucial each day. These startups are focused on the current economy and society, in which technology and innovations have a huge responsibility. Innovations solving urgent problems can't be ignored to continue the economy.

**Creative Business Investors:
How to Get Investors Interested in
Your Creative Business**

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**Webinar 17 June
@ 4:00-5:00 PM CEST**

After the first succesful "This is CBN"-Webinar on the topic investing, we are back with even more insights on this theme! If you want to grab the attention of investors and get some cash flowing your way, you'll need to know what's up and down in the world of A and B rounds, seed capital and market reach. You'll also need to ask yourself - am I actually looking for an investor or do I need something else? In this webinar we've invited some familiar faces in the Creative Business Network to give us some insights, tips and good practices from the world of investment.

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Sign up at www.cbnet.com/thisiscbn/

Figure 2: Example of CBN Investor Animation Activity

Annual revenues of more than €200 billion, global exports of €223 billion, forecasts pointing at

⁶ <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/creative-industries-invest-bernd-fesel/>

the cultural and creative industries to represent around 10% of global GDP, employing nearly 30 million people worldwide, and of them, more 19–30 year-olds than any other sector. The creative economy is expected to show 40% growth by 2030 and is considered the fastest growing sector.

The industry's broad scope makes the start-ups' solutions equally versatile. Often, innovations are cross-sectional, and the ever-changing climate-, social- and digital era, keeps the cultural and creative industry on its toes to always meet changing demands and produce competitive innovations ahead of their time. The need for creative startups is on the rise, especially as more and more jobs become automated. This not only emphasizes creative startups' strength but also indicates a highly lucrative space in the market. Return on investment in creative startups is, in comparison to other sectors, high, but a lack of political and media acknowledgement, makes it an underrepresented category.



Figure 3: Investors and StartUps are connected and engaged in Open Discussions as part of the Creative Business Cup

Together with investors and industry experts in CBN network, they help startups with upskilling, valuable knowledge, advisory, exposure and networking in a wide range of activities throughout the year. This adds value, not only to startups, but also to investors who get firsthand access to the newest product and service developments as well as to new talented entrepreneurial profiles. CBN also helps investors expand their investment portfolio and connect with fellow creative industry investors.

CBI – Creative Business Investors⁷ is a global investors' network run by CBN, focused on promising creative businesses and start-ups, launched by the Creative Business Network, with the aim to unlock the full potential of creative industries by easing their access to finance. Being part of the CBI network of investors opens opportunities for investors. Here investors can connect with brilliant innovative start-ups through our regional, national, and global events.

⁷ <https://www.cbnet.com/services/creative-business-investors>

They also get to meet more than 6,000 potential business partners annually, expand their network and help companies grow.

Concrete offers to attract investors include:

- Access to global investors in the creative businesses with potential exit opportunities from existing portfolio companies.
- To be a part of CBN connect sessions. CBN bring together investors and startups through live and online pitches.
- Opportunities to bring companies from investors' portfolio to the attention of other global investors and co-investment opportunities with like-minded investors from around the world.
- The chance to become a member of the international jury and expert panels and mentoring start-ups at Creative Business Network events.

2.2.3 Media Deals, Germany – Theme: Investor Inclusivity

DeFINE⁸ was a collaborative project co-funded by the European Commission's COSME programme which aimed to support the fusion of cutting-edge technologies and innovation with the European fashion and design industries.

It developed a network of incubators & accelerators, start-ups & SMEs, and financiers to form a European fashion-technology community where cross-sectoral knowledge was shared, and ideas for growth and transnational collaboration nurtured.

Throughout the three years of the project (2018-2021), a Europe-wide programme of inter-related networking events, training, mentoring support, and knowledge-sharing, for the benefit of the whole community was delivered. Part of the project activities included facilitating the greater inclusion of financiers in the sustainable fashion sector, by addressing and supporting financiers with exposure to new types of value propositions, business models and technology.

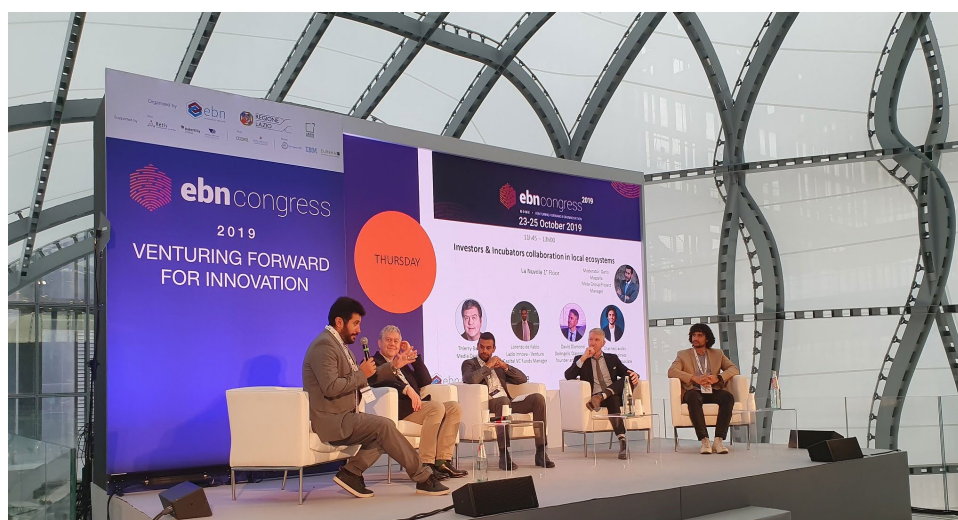


Figure 4: EBN Congress 2019, Rome, discussing inclusion of new financiers in different sectors

Media Deals is a pan-European Investment network focusing on financing and investing in the

⁸ <https://www.define-network.eu/>

Creative Industries. The network is now eighty private financiers-strong, including financiers from Europe and segmented around four main investment verticals: Audiovisual, Video Games, MusicTech and FashionTech.

The network is focusing on pre seed/seed investment with a sweet spot of €500K, encouraging co-financing and cross border investment. DeFINE work with Media Deals focused on mobilizing investors for the sector and getting start-ups ready for smart money.

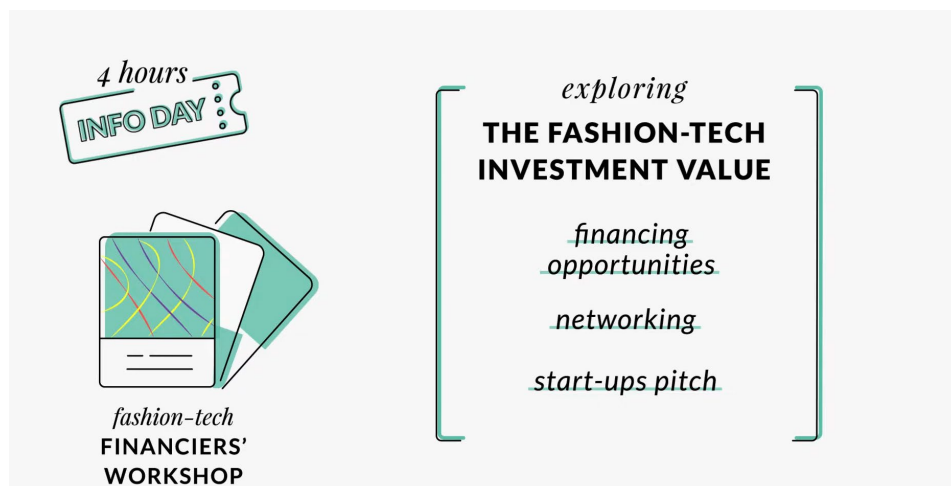


Figure 5: DeFINE Investor/Financier Inclusivity Approach

Financiers and the emerging space of fashion-tech businesses

Each investor has a different profile and looks for his/her own return that can vary a lot between the type of investor, the phase of investment and geography. Fashion-Tech is a sector with strong potential, especially for investors. The sector definition is very broad, so it offers enough interests for all kinds of investors, such as:

- Industry-oriented investors that are looking at simplifying a production chain.
- Wearable innovations.
- E-retail projects based on immaterial assets, branding and communication tools and many more.

The potential for investment, as determined by the project, is huge as it is both B2B and B2C with a strong appeal for the young generations. At the same time, research has shown that most investors look at the Fashion-Tech sector with an opportunistic approach. Very few investors are specialising in the sector, and it comes across as a more of a trial-and-error strategy among those investors.

Matching the right investors with start-ups can therefore be quite difficult, financiers can come from anywhere and include people with little or no experience in the sector. Perhaps, with some tech background but limited in terms of fashion. Investing in the Creative Industries in general is perceived as risky. Nevertheless, if the potential revenues can be presented, the return potential could be huge, addressing large and global target markets.

Innovation is at the center of this sector. It is changing dramatically to respond to the new generations' expectations in terms of sustainability, connectivity, and style. For financiers willing to better understand the sector, DeFINE presented investors sessions - Investor Training Workshops as a good way for novice financiers (new to the sector) to network with sector experts but also established investors with expertise and experience in the industry. This

approach was deemed also as a good way to start potential co-investment projects (financiers collaborating on investment propositions).



Figure 6: DeFINE Investor Workshop, EBN Conference 2019, Rome

The sessions provided investors with a deep insight into the latest trends and innovative business models through access to up-to-date market data as well as through four start-up presentations and expert discussions. The Investor Training Workshop boosted investors' ability to identify new and attractive investment and co-investment opportunities in a group of like-minded actors. The workshops also marked the launch of a European investor network as part of an ecosystem for start-ups in Fashion-Tech.

Accompanying this work were supports for startups in the sector, such as investment Tips for Fashion and Fashion-Tech Ventures where Media Deals, discussed investment tips and strategies for fashion and fashion-tech start-ups and SMEs. The webinar (captured on video⁹) covered a range of topics, including advice on creating the perfect pitch deck, what investors are looking for and how to make the founder and the venture stand out to an investor. Media Deals answered some of the most shared questions among the DeFINE Community members:

- Are co-founders more investible than a sole founder?
- What do potential investors want to see in a pitch deck?
- If investors want to see between 5 and 20 times return on early-stage companies, how does a start-up define its Business Model in a competitive niche market and still grow at the required rate to be an "investable" business?
- When is the right time to take on investment, considering equity dilution for (co-) founders? Is it really inevitable?
- How can investors evaluate a company in a market that is yet to exit?
- How can companies find investors, look at their portfolio and understand if they are right for them?
- What are the differences between United States and Europe, in terms of investment strategies?

Over 40 financiers and start-ups were engaged in this process.

⁹ <https://youtu.be/yITR7uvavpA>

3 SPECTRA Innovation Panel 1

3.1 Panel Topic and Expertise

The first expert panel discussion took place on 21st August 2023 from 15:00-16:00 CEST 'Stimulating internal innovation and use of Experimentation'.

It supported learning of new and extended innovation skills to support development of creative industries ecosystems. Such frameworks are extremely important to enable an ongoing process, that self-perpetuates and renews in order to create a sustainable cycle with regular influx of new ideas based on open innovation, new investment, and increased participation of innovators, in particular underrepresented groups such as women innovators. Event objectives were intended to help ecosystem stakeholders to:

- Pin-point specific learnings from the innovation though-leaders
- Identify and examine best practice and key future innovation directions and trends.
- Engage in intra-territorial learning and knowledge exchange, facilitating replication and new linkages.
- Identify examples for embedding innovation skills and methods for ecosystem development, to support advancement of innovation supports for creative industry sector.

The carefully selected panelists represented a range of perspectives on this topic, including:

The graphic displays the event title 'STIMULATING INTERNAL INNOVATION & USE OF EXPERIMENTATION' at the top. Below the title are five circular portraits of the panelists, each with their name and title. The logos for SPECTRA, Western Development Commission, and Creative Business Network are positioned at the top left, top center, and top right respectively. A date and time stamp '15:00-16:00 CET 21, AUGUST' is located in the bottom right corner.

Name	Title
Ulla Sommerfelt	Entrepreneur, Business Angel, Ex – CEO Eggs Design
Dr. Gjoko Muratovski	Director - Digital Futures, Deakin University / Victorian Government (Australia)
Patrik Sandin	Director and Head of Practice Area Sustainability, Cordial AB
Róisín Buckley	Director and Producer of PIQUANT
Marjan Nikolovski	Innovation expert & EU program & projects lead, creative business network (Moderator)

Overview of 'Stimulating internal innovation and use of Experimentation' panel experts.

1. Ulla Sommerfelt, Entrepreneur, Business Angel, Ex – CEO Eggs Design

Ulla is an entrepreneur and business angel. She recently sold her company and transitioned from her position as the CEO of EGGS Design – a successful and leading Nordic design & innovation consultancy. Today, Ulla is focusing on helping startups and scale-ups succeed with their businesses. She is an expert in building and scaling innovation cultures. Ulla is in the process of writing a book about how to build cultures for startups that are scaling up and gives talks and holds workshops about the topic.

2. Dr. Gjoko Muratovski, Director – Digital Futures, Deakin University / Victorian Government (Australia)

By combining design-led innovation and strategic foresight with lean business principles, Dr. Gjoko Muratovski helps organizations become human-centric, more efficient, and future-proofed. Muratovski has more than 25 years of experience working and collaborating with Fortune 500 companies, NGOs, and governments from around the world, including the US Federal Government, Australian State Governments, NASA, International Space Station (ISS), World Health Organization, UNESCO, Greenpeace, TATA Consultancy Services, Johnson & Johnson, P&G, Toyota, Ford, General Motors, Fiat Chrysler Automobiles, Amazon, and Facebook. Currently, Muratovski is the Director of the Victorian Government-funded program, Digital Futures, which is delivered in partnership with Deakin University (Australia). He is also an Innovation Consultant at Stanford University (USA) and Project Partner with the BMW Group + QUT Design Academy (Australia). Muratovski has also been an invited member of thought leading organizations such as the Yale Higher Education Leadership Summit (USA), Oxford Digital Leaders Network (UK), Forbes Councils (USA), and the Future of Learning (India).

3. Patrik Sandin, Director and Head of Practice Area Sustainability, Cordial AB

Patrik is currently Director and Head of Practice Area Sustainability at Cordial AB. Prior to Cordial, Patrik was Associate Partner and part of the EMEA Innovation and Sustainability leadership teams at Bain & Co and before that Director of Ventures & Growth at Ericsson ONE. Patrik has 25 years of consulting experience and is particularly passionate about facilitating transformation towards sustainable business models leveraging exponential technologies and digitalization. He is a sought-after speaker and lecturer having spoken at TEDx, Green Design Forum, Planetiers World Gathering, China High Tech Expo, RISE Corporate Innovation Summit and Singapore SWITCH as well as a frequent guest lecturer on strategy, sustainability and innovation at CEIBS, Shanghai University MBA Program, Low Carbon College and Chinese University Hong Kong.

4. Róisín Buckley, Director and Producer of PIQUANT Creative Agency, Ireland

Communications expert Róisín Buckley is a director at Piquant, a full-service creative agency based in Limerick City with over 10+ years of an international track-record. Róisín specialises in communications consultancy, online campaign planning, media production and management. Róisín leads Piquant's communication and media production teams in the realisation of effective multi-platform digital projects. She implemented internal innovation processes, such as the 'Piquant Reflective Process' used to generate and implement systemic changes lead from within the team. She regularly speaks on the topics of design and innovation and has helped run and participated in a number of growth and capacity building regional and national initiatives, such as with the Irish Design Institute on the topic of building in-house design capability. She holds a Professional Diploma, Creativity, Innovation & Leadership from University College Dublin, as well as a BSc in Communications, Communications and Broadcasting.

The panel was moderated by **Marjan Nikolovski, Innovation Expert Lead and EU Programmes & Project Lead for Creative Business Network (CBN)**. Marjan is a Design Thinker, an intrapreneur, and a relationship builder with 13+ years of experience in innovation, people, business, and concept development. He is also highly experienced in building and maintaining Strategic Partnerships, Private-public collaborations, as well as Senior Career Development consultant for Academics and Leaders. Marjan has several international degrees from different Danish universities, where the latest is a master's degree in organizational

Innovation and Entrepreneurship from Copenhagen Business School – a top 5 master programme for Innovation, globally.

3.2 Main Takeaway Points

The discussion covered a wide range of topics, including design-driven innovation, the importance of creating a culture of internal anchoring and ownership, leveraging pre-existing infrastructure, and innovation as a manageable part of internal processes and actions.

Key takeaways included:

- The vision should be to build the world's best workplaces for creative people and enable them to experiment and innovate.
- Design-driven innovation involves co-creating products with users and internal people and can be an important tool for organization to use.
- Innovation can be learned, but it requires internal anchoring and ownership – dedicated resources with responsibility for innovation.
- Reflective processes can allow teams to manage innovation as part of routine.
- Innovation is as much about the process and the journey, not just the outputs.
- There are no guarantees that a successful innovation outcome can be produced every time, regardless of the methodology used – failure is a valid outcome.
- Empowering individuals with sufficient freedom of time and space to execute - is key to driving innovation.
- Successful innovation partnerships require agreement around a common objective and a multi-stakeholder approach to ensure sustainability of the solutions produced.

Key takeaways in response to the question "Seasoned Advice for a new business Owner" posed by entrepreneur Brandie Janow, were:

- It is challenging to create a company by yourself; try to find a group of people you can trust and rely on who have complementary skills that you do not have.
- Regularly schedule time to exercise your innovation muscle, whether by working with a consultant or scheduling calls with an innovative coach.
- Surround yourself with inspiring, creative people to become more innovative.

4 SPECTRA Innovation Panel 2

4.1 Panel Topic and Expertise

The second expert panel discussion was held on 21st August 16:30-17:30 CEST, virtually, co-organised by the SPECTRA partners Creative Business Network and Western Development Commission, and supported learning of new and extended innovation skills to support development of creative industries ecosystems. Such frameworks are extremely important to enable an ongoing process, that self-perpetuates and renews in order to create a sustainable cycle with regular influx of new ideas based on open innovation, new investment, and increased participation of innovators, in particular underrepresented groups such as women innovators.

Panel discussion objectives aimed to help stakeholders to:

- Pin-point specific learnings from the thought-leaders on inclusivity and diversity.
- Identify and examine best practice and key directions.
- Engage in intra-territorial learning and knowledge exchange, facilitating replication and new linkages.
- Identify examples for great inclusivity and open innovation methods for ecosystem development, to support advancement of innovation supports for creative industry sector and greater involvement of typically underrepresented groups and communities.

The expert Panelists included:

The banner features logos for SPECTRA (Stimulating Performance in Creative Territories and Regional Actors), Western Development Commission, and Creative Business Network. The central text reads: "ECOSYSTEM AS AN OPEN INNOVATION PLATFORM, UTILISING INCLUSIVITY, & DIVERSITY AS A KEY ENabler". Below this, four panelists are introduced with their photos and titles: Mikkel Orlovski (Associated Partner, ConnectingCultures and Owner, Diversity HR Partner), Martin B. Justesen (Senior Consultant at Kooperationen, Ex- Founder and Director of SundHub & CSE), Daiva Staneikaite Naidal (Strategic Advisor and Owner at DSTN Ventures, Ex - Director Lego Ideas and Open Innovation at LEGO, Expert at Creative Business Network), and Jessica Fuller (Moderator: Western development commission, creative industries-atlantic Innovation region programme manager). The banner also includes the date and time: "04:30-5:30 CET 21 AUGUST".

Overview of 'Stimulating internal innovation and use of Experimentation' panel experts.

1. Mikkel Orlovski, Associated Partner, ConnectingCultures & Owner, Diversity HR Partner

Mikkel is a senior expert on Inclusivity and Diversity. Currently he is Principal Consultant and Associated Partner at ConnectingCultures and owner of Diversity HR Partner. He has more than 15 years of experience working with developing cultural intelligence in global teams and facilitating Diversity & Inclusion (D&I)/Unconscious Bias workshops.

Mikkel has a background in Intercultural Psychology, is CQ certified from the Cultural

Intelligence Centre, and primarily works with building Cultural Intelligence in teams and organisations as well as Diversity and Inclusion programs.

As a consultant, Mikkel often combines his knowledge on how to lead or collaborate effectively in diverse groups and across cultures, genders, professional backgrounds, ages and personality styles. He is certified and experienced in a variety of personality and developmental tests and tools.”

2. Martin B. Justesen, Senior Consultant at Kooperationen, Ex – Founder and Director of SundHub & CSE

Professional, committed developer of successful Innovation and Learning environments. Experience entrepreneurial eco-system builder, with 15+ years of experience in Business Development, Coaching and Matchmaking.

Currently he is Senior Consultant for Kooperationen, a new business model of startup incubation. In his past, he has run and started some of the most successful Danish student’s innovation and entrepreneurial hubs including Copenhagen School of Entrepreneurship as part of Copenhagen Business School, and SundHub as part of University of Copenhagen.

He is passionate about helping skilled, creative people solve problems, finding solutions, and starting new business.

3. Daiva Staneikaite Naldal, Strategic Advisor and Owner at DSTN Ventures, Ex – Director Lego Ideas and Open Innovation at LEGO, Expert at Creative Business Network

Experienced international marketing and innovation leader with 20+ years of professional career, working with international brands and startup ecosystems.

As former Director of Marketing & Open Innovation at the LEGO Group, she is behind the success of LEGO Ideas (ideas.lego.com) – the best-in-class crowdsourcing hub that integrates user-driven innovation into LEGO’s innovation pipeline and facilitating meaningful engagement across the user-ecosystem.

Daiva comes with a track record of successfully developing and bringing to market new products and growing newbiz opportunities through unconventional innovation formats and partnerships– all the way from testing radical product concepts, piloting new business formulas and scaling these into sizable & sustainable global businesses.

Currently, Daiva runs her own consulting practice ([DSTN-ventures.com](https://dstn-ventures.com)), helping various companies to develop their own open innovation programs and business strategies. She is a business mentor, guest lecturer at selected universities, board member and advisor for several startups and accelerators, as well as a popular keynote speaker.

The moderator of the panel discussion was **Jessica Fuller, Creative Industries Programme Manager, Atlantic Region of Innovation, Western Development Commission.**

Responsible for leading and delivering the CCSI cluster ambition in the Atlantic Region over the next five years. Led out on models to engage diverse entities across the CCSI and other industries to drive productive industry opportunity, enterprise development and job creation. A dynamic leader, with +25 years track record in senior management driving successful development and tangible impact in all spheres of the quadruple helix including Industry, Higher Education, Community and Government. Extensive experience working on a multi-lateral basis with government departments, state and EU agencies, tertiary education, regulatory bodies and private industry, and comprehensive knowledge of national and European policies,

strategies, and regulatory resource frameworks. Founder director of two creative enterprises, with direct experience of the complexities of establishing, operating, and scaling self-sustaining creative enterprises with a global market focus. Diploma in Corporate Governance (UCD Smurfit) and a Masters in Cultural Policy (UDC). Regular contributor to public institutions policy and strategy debates/papers.

4.2 Main Takeaway Points

The discussion focused on the innovation process and its openness, as well as the value of inclusivity and diversity, including within the context of the start-up journey, with following points being made by the panel of experts:

- Harnessing a broader swath of ideas (coming from different perspectives), such as for example within the LEGO programme. Including diverse crowds, diverse cultures, different set of skills, different talents would actually create a range of new opportunities.
- Have courage when people come to you and say we would like to invite others that usually would be relevant in this space – employ an open culture.
- The idea of many people thinking many different ways, working constructively together will mean that we have a repertoire of solutions and methods that wouldn't otherwise be available. Getting as many people thinking in as many different ways as possible on creating something together will just mean that we make better decisions, that we create better products, that we have possibilities to enter new markets and so forth.
- 'Little' processes need to be managed - facilitating speaking time, understanding unconscious biases, for every idea. That means that trust, which is something that is so important when we want to build innovation together, is needed - and we build trust differently, depending on what type of cultural background we have.
- Digital tools, platforms, can be harnessed to capture ideas, and facilitate the innovation process, as per the LEGO example.
- Different considerations to be taken, depending on top-down or bottom-up approaches, in terms of facilitation, leadership, strategy. Is there an understanding of a common vision – what is our why?
- Competition, and a sense of what the market value looks like, has a role to play in the innovation process – harnessing ambition and sometimes working outside the cultural norms experienced in society.
- Being ready to embrace the unexpected that open innovation can produce.
- We all have grown a little bit in our understanding of the fact that people come with thinking in different ways - but we need to continuously promote that, because great ideas come from many different places.
- Validation of ideas needs resource, needs openness as well, transparency – focus on value creation.
- Business case for inclusivity and diversity needs to go beyond quick expectations of quick bottom line fixes, and embrace the longer-term perspective of the process, which can also be fun and motivational.

5 Evaluation & Recommendations

5.1 Evaluation of Best Practice and Expert Insights

The Evaluation Framework used focuses on main elements for learning structured around 3 main strands:

- People – what human behaviors, attitudes (including bias) and cultural considerations need to be taken into account and what role do they play.
- Process & Technology – what are the most important factors in building processes that work and that contribute to a stronger, more inclusive ecosystem.
- Programme – what interventions work, how can be delivery and implementation be managed.

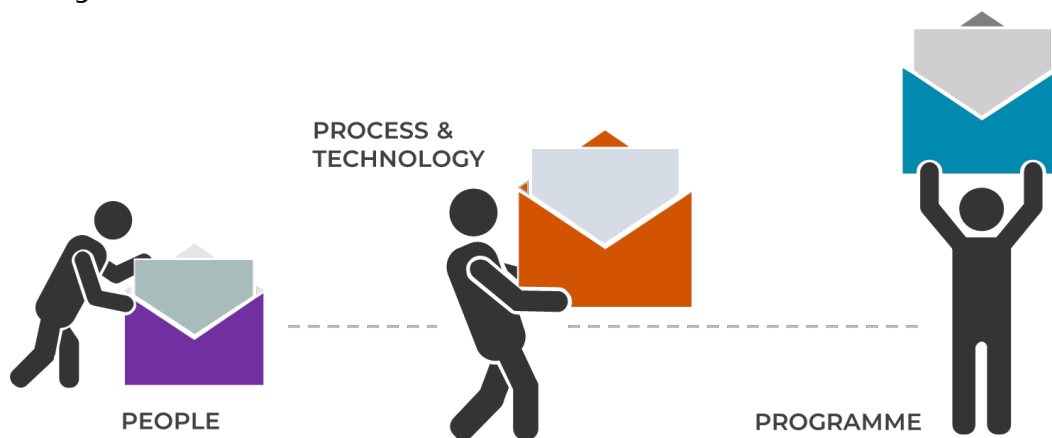


Figure 7: Evaluation Framework

5.1.1 People

In terms of creating and maintaining ecosystems that foster inclusivity and diversity, the best practices examined, together with the expert insights form the SPECTRA discussion panels point to several important ingredients that need to be taken into consideration, when strategizing:

- Empathy: utilization of design thinking in creating interventions that are responsive and account for potential bias, include appreciation of different cultures.
- Deeper understanding developed through a wide spectrum of conversations.
- An attitude towards openness, open culture, open processes, ability to invite many different perspectives, openness to collaboration.

5.1.2 Process & Technology

Great deal of importance has been given to the process that is seen as critical in effectively supporting people, harnessing idea, supporting innovation, and facilitating creation of commercial marketable products and services, and most importantly, creating value. Lessons learned include:

- Designing a process that in itself is capable of being open and inclusive, and capable of dealing with a wide range of ideas and inputs, functioning within a multifaceted, dynamic ecosystem.

- Having a process that is fun, capable of evolution and capable of dealing with unexpected outcomes, as well as conducive to progressing the ideas, by qualifying them, analyzing them, enabling the next steps.
- Technology can be harnessed to be a facilitator but must not become a replacement for the serendipitous outcomes that can come into existence through human interaction.
- Platforms can be a means of capturing knowledge, ideas and learning, with the ability to perpetuate the processes for enhanced sustainability.
- Resources remain important factors to drive the processes towards tangible outcomes (impact).

5.1.3 Programme

Programmes can be seen as a 'physical' manifestation of capturing the people, processes, and technology, into a vehicle that delivers the desired outcomes (a more inclusive diverse ecosystem), a specific intervention for impact. They take into account the collective knowledge and highlight the importance of:

- Recognition that 'one size does not fit all' – content needs to be engaging and wide-ranging.
- The style in which people engage, learn and collaborate varies, and the modus operandi in which the programmes can deliver success should account for these differences – including a mix of in-person and virtual delivery mediums.
- Networks continue to play an important role – connecting people and organisations, creating fora and communities as conduits for programmatic interventions.
- Including creative space and room for experimentation as part of the programmatic responses, as an impact enhancing strategy.

5.2 Recommendations

There are a number of elements that are relevant to consider for strengthening of the ecosystems, for greater inclusivity and diversity:

- Recognition that greater inclusivity and diversity requires deliberate interventions, dedicated resources and investment.
- Inclusivity should be considered as a long-term goal; while short term outcomes can be immediate targets, systemic changes require time to be implemented thoroughly and deliver results.
- Even when designing processes to facilitate the strengthening of ecosystems with a more diverse base of stakeholders, it is clear that there is no 'one shot' strategy – it requires a wide range of interventions that consider many different approaches – which need to be refined over time.
- Processes are really important and should be carefully considered, tailored to the desired outcomes and target groups. Defining what success looks like, monitoring, evaluating, and reassessing are important components.
- Technology can greatly underpin the efforts for greater inclusivity and diversity but should not be entirely relied upon.

SPECTRA

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