

SPECTRA

STIMULATING PERFORMANCE IN CREATIVE
TERRITORIES AND REGIONAL ACTORS



Funded by
the European Union



D2.5 Territorial and International Case Studies and Role Models

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Deliverable Summary

Deliverable:

D2.5 E-book containing collection of territorial and international case studies and role models

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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).

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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 is linked to task T2.5 International and Territorial Case Studies and Role Models. This task reinforces the activities begun under Task 2.2 and continued under Task 2.3, this task elaborates a set of detailed case studies on how the business support organisations partnering in this proposal interact with other ecosystem players to support innovation in the creative economy sector, with specific focus on dealing with challenges of digital technologies, inclusivity, and human-centric approaches, as well as sustainability.

In the spirit of the Network and its commitment to European added value, the case studies feature examples of how each partner has or intends to adapt best practices from other regions to their own, internationally.

The case studies identify a contact person in the partner organisation who will be available to respond to enquiries from other business support organisations across Europe interested to learn more about the best practices and novel solutions identified in the case study. Role Models are identified in terms of successful cases of start-ups and scale-ups developed as a result of the impact of such interventions.

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 Regional Case Studies and Role Models

2.1 IMMERSE (Ireland)

Background

IMMERSE is an initiative that addressed recommended actions in The Irish Immersive Economy - Irish Immersive Technology Landscape Report (Skillnet & Eirmersive 2022), funded through Creative Communities Economic Action Fund by Creative Ireland.

IMMERSE involved a structured programme of engagement with creative and other industry stakeholders and with enterprise enablers to address enterprises development growth in the immersive technology industry in the Western region. An action-research initiative, it aimed to provide an evidence base on which to develop a framework for an immersive technology strategy for Ireland. The intended impact was a strengthening of the ecosystem in order to further build enterprise networks and connections to deliver a sustainable XR industry.

Partners

A collaborative initiative by Donegal County Council, Eirmersive, the Western Development Commission, Connected Hubs Network, Regional Enterprise Offices in the Mid-West, North-West and West, CREW Creative Enterprise & Innovation Hub and Údarás na Gaeltachta.

Figure 1: Overview of IMMERSE Partnership



Approach

The project follows a three-strand model that engaged industry and enterprise enablers. It involved primary and secondary research which was undertaken by the Eirmersive and Western Development Commission team. The research process involved a Quantitative Survey for general enterprise data capture. Workshop participants were invited to complete this survey in advance of participation.

The aim was to capture general enterprise data to gain an understanding of the enterprises involved and to inform the workshop content.

The workshops were pre-planned and moderated. Strands 1 (Creative Industry Engagement- 4 workshops) and Strand 2 (Other industry Engagement - 4 workshops) were one day in duration. Strand 3 (Enterprise Enablers Engagement - 2 workshops) were approximately 3 hours in duration.

The key elements of the workshops were:

- A showreel of interviews featuring commercial Irish enterprises using and generating revenue from XR (produced inhouse by the Eirmersive team).
- Hands-on state-of-the-art examples of current XR market innovations
- Showcase of vertical use cases from industry peers.
- Hands on demos of current XR market innovations.
- Design Thinking process to explore deployment of one of the XR market innovations in a sample enterprise (group project).
- Process workbooks - for data capture and analysis for the final report.

Quantitative and Qualitative Data was captured in every workshop across Strands 1,2,3. The details were provided directly by each participant in a written workbook. The data was collated and analysed and informed the findings and recommended actions.

Learnings

There is, because of this initiative, an identifiable community of enterprises and enablers with whom to engage on an ongoing basis. A national strategic framework for the Immersive Technology industry is required. Reach, Access, Engagement, Awareness/Understanding of Market Opportunity remain key challenges for development of the XR industry in rural regions.

The 3-strand programme model worked well. It facilitated the consortium to simultaneously advance engagement, networking, community build, cross strand connection and data gathering. There is an ongoing role for all consortium partners in the growth and development of the industry in the Western region & contribution to national strategy development.

Participants in all strands expressed interest in future similar workshops. Key feedback was the ongoing inclusion of hands-on access to the technology. The process has provided insights to inform the future development of the process with regards community engagement, reach, specific industry and sectoral needs for knowledge sharing, access to information about the XR industry, access to information about supports for enterprises wishing to adopt/enhance/accelerate adoption of XR tech into their service and/or product offering; provision of data about market to ascertain potential Investment and ROI and growth opportunities; information about investment resources available to enterprises.

Contact

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2.2 Atlantic TIDE (Ireland)

Background

The initiative was inspired by the design industry - a priority industry and a part of the CreaTech Cluster, Atlantic region (Western Ireland), as well as recent EU policy developments stimulating digitalization and the green agenda, and a range of Irish national policy publications, such as Design Principles on Public Sector, White Paper for Enterprise, the Smart Specialization Strategy, Our Rural Future etc. Initial work undertaken sought to position the design industry in the region as a competitive advantage on the global stage.

Activities undertaken explored enterprise needs of the design industry, inter-industry and cross industry engagement (as well as opportunities) and the enabler ecosystem, with the aim to build a regional, long-term model for engagement, communication and networking. It was anticipated that this would be achieved by building initial stakeholder relationships during the project and to maintain and build a working relationship to address design and cross industry development and growth.

Partners

- Sligo County Council
- Western Development Commission
- Institute Designers Ireland
- Innovate Limerick
- Ludgate Hub
- CREW
- An Chroi Digital Hub
- FutureCast
- Connected Hubs
- Regional Enterprise Plans: West. North-West, Mid-West
- Funded by Creative Ireland.

Figure 2: Atlantic TIDE Partnership



Approach

The process involved devising and rollout of programme strands that model up “internal” design industry communication and engagement programmes and the “external” cross industry client communication and engagement. Atlantic TIDE was activated in May 2022 on a pilot basis for six months to: design and implement a pilot engagement programme with prioritised design industry segments and professional design bodies and design and implement a communications programme in order to activate cross industry networking and opportunity.

The programme was comprising 3 Strands (“Internal” industry engagement, Internal engagement + Communications, External engagement + Communications). 4 Cross-sector networking and comms sessions were held, followed up by 4 sessions carrying the learnings from the workshops into other industries. Focus for pilot is on: AR/VR; Construction; MedTech and Mobility.

Learnings

Feasible to develop networks& hotspots into existing industry gateways, hubs, and proposed clusters.

Evidence collected informed rationale for the retention of a dedicated resource.

The initiative was vital as it identified a cohort of enterprises that describe themselves as “actively innovating” and “actively seeking investment” to enable growth on global markets.

Appetite confirmed for Industry, government, education and the community to participate & continue to engage - evidence of a sustainable collaborative community.

Formal mechanism identified to facilitate region-specific industry innovation, enterprise engagement and investment.

Contact

Sligo County Council

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2.3 Green Impact Week (Denmark)

Background

Green Impact Week (GIW), Danmarks Grønne Iværksætteruge, is Denmark's official and main series of events within the EU's Green Week. GIW serves as the umbrella brand for various initiatives taking place in early June in Denmark. It usually takes place between February and June, in 2023, it took place between June 1st and June 6th in Copenhagen (venue: Volume by DISIE) and Aarhus (Aarhus Vand).

Partners

The project is made in a partnership between Sustainary, Creative Business Network, and DISIE.

- Sustainary is the association for green tech and innovation. Established in 2018, they have since gained 500+ members from the startup, SME, and corporate sectors.
- Creative Business Network (CBN) is a global network of startups and stakeholders in the cultural and creative industries.
- DISIE, the Danish Institute for Sustainable Innovation & Entrepreneurship is dedicated to unleashing the potential of sustainable entrepreneurship across Denmark by helping sustainable startups to take their business from the idea to the growth stage.
- Among the partners of the event in 2023 were: Copenhagen City // New Moment Communication // Rebeldot // Nextatlas // CVX Ventures // Miro // Corebook // Hubspot // Mighty Networks // DTU // TIGER MARKETING // VNTRS Venture Studios // Copenhagen Capacity // Danish Sound Network // Erhvershus Hovedstaden // Coop Crowdfunding // COHO Content House // Chromaway // Beyond Beta // CLEAN // TuborgFondet // Marigold Innovation // Innovation Fund Denmark.

Approach

Green Impact Week focused on green entrepreneurship and creative solutions for a better future. Aimed at bringing together the entire Danish entrepreneurial ecosystem and stakeholders, and in GIW 2023 expanded its geographical reach through international participants and partners of the Creative Business Cup competition. Thanks to this synthesis of regional and global solutions, cross-innovations, and the synergy of ideas and investments became possible.

The three core partners closely collaborate to develop, agree upon, and contribute to the GIW program, expanding the audience and partnerships through the integration of:

- Financial resources.
- PR and marketing campaigns (calendar and channels).
- Various events consolidated on a single website under an umbrella branding.
- Networks and ecosystems – cross-invitations of diverse target groups to different events organized by partners.

Learnings

- Wider reach in media and on-site, targeting a broader audience.

- A richer program and diverse topics.
- Enhancing visibility and influence on decisions and importance (locally and globally).
- Fostering cross-sectoral collaboration in the CCI ecosystem.
- Consolidating resources, engaging more partners for increased support for startups.
- More opportunities for pre-event activities such as a preparation event hosted by DISIE on February 28th: Matchmaking Event for Green Food Entrepreneurs. with Kooperation and Food & Bio Cluster Denmark. The objective of the event was to bring together entrepreneurs, municipalities, and companies interested in sustainable food solutions and use this opportunity to establish a connection to the upcoming Green Impact Week.

Event in numbers:

- Outreach: 27000+
- Speakers and experts: 70+
- Participant: 600+
- Startups: 100+.

Contact

Creative Business Network

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2.4 CEED Programme (Ireland)

Background

Creative Entrepreneurship & Enterprise Development Certificate Programme is a high growth creative entrepreneurship start-up programme to inspire and engage the next generation of dynamic Creative Digital Entrepreneurs.

The CEED incubation programme will help turn a creative idea into a sustainable business in a variety of disciplines (TV & Film, Virtual Production, Games, Animation, Content Development, Digital Arts, Immersive Technologies, Digital Design, Creative Technologies & more). This programme is an accredited incubator programme, delivered in partnership with Atlantic Technological University and CREW with support from LEO Galway, Údarás na Gaeltachta, Gréasán Na Meán Skillnet.

The programme takes participants through key topics in developing their business idea: design thinking for entrepreneurship, value creation and value proposition, customer discover, market size and fit, customer acquisition strategy, managing IP and protecting creativity, pitching and storytelling, business models for the creative industries, leadership, financial projections, corporative governance, and business plan development.

The programme has ranged in delivery, on a part time basis, from 5 to 8-months based on participant requirements and feedback, with 1 cohort per year. The pilot programme was launched in January 2022, and currently the third programme will run until May 2024.

Partners

- CREW,
- Atlantic Technological University,
- Local Enterprise Office (Galway),
- Údarás na Gaeltachta,
- Gréasán Na Meán Skillnet.

Approach

This programme is delivered in a hybrid, blended learning model that includes ATU lecturing staff delivering core modules with complementary content delivered by CREW's panel of industry experts and business mentors. Participants take part in weekly seminars online and meet for an in-person symposium on a monthly basis. The programme has run as both a 5-month and 8-month programme. Each participant is partnered with an industry mentor who provides individual support; peer to peer learning and mentorship also underpins the programme and alumni networks.

Participants have joined from 10 different counties in Ireland and are provided with hub accommodation in their local connected hubs or GTeics in order to immerse themselves in the entrepreneurial ecosystem in their regions. The CEED programme is designed for entrepreneurs to accelerate the start-up process, to test their ideas and enter the marketplace, while additionally providing a postgraduate qualification and pathway to further education.

Figure 3: CEED Cohort Showcase



Learnings

Graduates of the programme have availed of enterprise support from Local Enterprise offices and have joined entrepreneurship programmes across Ireland such as the New Frontiers programme delivered nationally by Enterprise Ireland. The alumni network meets regularly, formally, and informally, and is developing into a strong community of creative entrepreneurs.

The programme has engaged with over 40 early-stage entrepreneurs in the creative tech sector over the past 2 years and has successfully developed a strong network of practice for creative entrepreneurs. A key piece of feedback from participants and partners has been the importance of fostering entrepreneurial skills for creatives, acknowledging the skills and skills gaps with creative practitioners specifically. Additionally, the participation of graduates in existing start-up development programmes has opened up a discussion around the creative tech sector and has furthered the understanding of this industry and its potential.

A learning from the programme is that there is a need for a more inclusive programme that could be offered in parallel, without the accreditation component. A postgraduate programme has eligibility requirements that limits participation for some individuals in the ecosystem. Further, there is an opportunity to further develop the *translation* role of programme partners between creative entrepreneurs and enterprise enablers, so there is deeper understanding of the sector by enablers and understanding for creatives of the relevant supports available. Some subsectors of the creative tech industries that have been represented by participants also demonstrates an opportunity for further programme development that is more narrowly focused on the needs of creative entrepreneurs in these specific sectors, for example: the circular economy and climate action planning for game developers and immersive design.

Role Model: Aisling Burke – Developed a start up through the CEED Programme, and further developed through the highly competitive Enterprise Ireland New Frontiers Programme Phase 1, 2 and 3, and she is also an alumni of The Break Fellowship for women entrepreneurs in the EU.

Contact

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2.5 Byowave (Ireland)

Background

ByoWave was founded back in 2020 when Brandon Blacoe and Eibhlin O' Riordan formed a partnership over their shared love of video gaming. Eibhlin's Ehlers Danlos Syndrome meant that she couldn't game the way she wanted, so they decided to make a solution that meant both she and Brandon could game on their own terms. Brandon's engineering and business background, combined with Eibhlin's game design expertise, was an excellent match.

ByoWave's Proteus Controller effectively gives anyone the power to build their own custom controller to suit distinctive needs. In fact, a single Proteus Controller kit allows for up to 100 million different configurations which says a lot about the detailed engineering and design work that has gone into crafting this exceptional product.

Today, Brandon is the CEO and Eibhlin is the CXO, and they work closely with the team of 8 full time employees, the earliest of those joining was Ronan Murphy, an electronic engineer.

Figure 4: Byowave Team



Approach

Byowave wanted to find a way to make a gaming controller that would work for a variety of people — but there are so many disabilities and they're all so unique, resulting in the need to consult with as many people as possible. They consulted with 100's of disabled and non-disabled gamers from around the world via Zoom and listen to what they believe is the perfect solution for them so they can game their way. Proteus controller, which essentially is like a LEGO controller that can be customised to each individual. Even if someone has the same disability, they could end up creating a completely different controller, making each individual one unique. To help each individual get the spec right for their own personal controller, there is a 3D webtool to help people to visualise exactly what it is they want and need from it.

Figure 5: Proteus Controller



Learnings

Having won numerous awards, attracted great investment, and created a physical working product, they are really pushing boundaries and breaking down barriers. Their endgame is to make gaming more accessible, help people to level up in their everyday lives, and create more accessible fun. Challenges along the way include the narrow definition or perception of what social enterprise is, and the need for more impact investment: *With funding, some people might just decide that your business isn't going to 10x – it might 2x or 3x, but investment that's going to 'only' give a 3x return but can have a social good should not be overlooked.*

Cocreation with potential users was a key component of the product development journey. Some ideas make it, some don't, some have to be put on pause for a later date.

Utilise teams of advisors and experts to support the move to manufacturing and market.

Contact

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3 European/International Case Studies and Role Models

3.1 Spielfabrique (European)

Background

European Video Game Ecosystem Catalyst: Pan-European acceleration program for European Indie Game studios. SpielFabrique stems from a Franco-German video game initiative created in April 2015 by Media Deals at the French Embassy on the occasion of the International Games Week Berlin. As a catalyst for the video game ecosystem, they bring together all industry stakeholders to create greater understanding, knowledge, and collaboration. From mentoring indie game studios looking to bring their first game to market or established indie studios looking to scale up, to its consulting business towards public entities, SpielFabrique has built a comprehensive understanding of the video game ecosystem. Their goal is to stimulate international activity and strengthen ecosystems. Their annual pan-European programme comprises 6 intense months of workshops, networking, and 1-on-1 mentoring. The programme helps participants make the leap from having a functioning prototype to becoming a financially independent and successful studio.

Partners

European Commission- Programme Creative Europe Media

Consortium partners: Polo Digitales Cluster, Malaga, Spain

Arctic Game Cluster, Sweden

Other partners:

OFAJ: Franco-Germany Youth Office- Paris/Berlin

ICEX/Games from Spain

WBS: Law Firm – Germany

Kickstarter: New York – Berlin

Media Deals UG – Germany

Approach

In order to cover North and south parts of Europe, it was decided to partner with Swedish and Spanish public clusters focusing on video gaming. The Acceleration Kick off program takes place in Malaga while most online mentoring is done by the Swedish partner. The final on-site event is taking place at the largest European Game Fair in Cologne (Gamescom). There is a very good complementarity of geography from the partners as well as skills and contacts.

Each partner has very good networks with indie game studios in their region and gaming experts that can take part in the project. The other partners are bringing both financial and content support to the project. Media Deals is focusing on the investment part by developing

the network of game financiers and offers capacity building to the studios. A pitching event is organized for a selected group of studios at the end of the program. The program has been developed and has evolved over the last 7 years and is supported by the European Commission for at least the next 2 years.

Figure 6: Spielfabrique – The Games Accelerator



Global Indie Mentorship

We create international mentoring programs for indie games studios.



Empowering Development

We boost video games development through mentoring and networking.



Global Market Advisory

We advise institutions, funds and studios to develop their international market



Globalizing Local Gaming

We make local gaming ecosystem international.



Learnings

- Geographic spread is important to access diversity of projects.
- Commercial criteria have to be tough to focus on possible funding and investment.
- Onsite and online made to measure mentoring is a key success factor.
- Curated matching between studios and publishers and financiers is really important.

Contact

Odile Limpach – Co Founder of Spielfabrique UG – odile@spielfabrique.eu

3.2 MusicTech Europe Academy: Music Innovation Hub (European)

Background

The music sector has completely changed in the last 10 years with the strong development of the streaming platforms like Spotify, Deezer or Apple Music. Data is now the key growth factor for the music industry but the link between music and technology is still underdeveloped.

Music Tech Europe Academy is a pan-European acceleration scheme for music-tech innovators, startups, entrepreneurs, and SMEs. The main goal of the program, initiated in 2020, is to support musictech startups in 4 main areas:

- Product development and positioning
- Goto market strategy
- Marketing
- Access to finance.

Partners

European Commission – Creative Europe Culture

Consortium Partners:

Music Innovation Hub – Milan- Italy

Media Deals UG- Germany

Technoport – Luxembourg

Meso – Athen Music Week – Greece

Barcelona MusicTech association – Spain

Figure 7: MusicTech Hub Programme



Approach

Music Innovation Hub is the project leader with a strong knowledge of the Music eco system and a reference conference in Europe called Line check and taking place in Milan every year during the Music Week.

Media Deals is taking care of the investment part with the development of a unique database of musictech investors in Europe. Capacity building is offered to both startups and investors to support the scalability of the business. Technoport is the Technology partner helping startups to test and improve the used technology to gain competitive edge for the project.

Finally, Athens and Barcelona are offering strong marketing and visibility capacities through key B2B events taking place every year.

Learning

- Music is a relatively small sector, and the technology component allows enlarging scope to other sectors like health or automotive.
- Technology used is very quickly out of date because of strong competition and a limited number of streaming platforms.
- Access to data from the platform is very hard to get and need to work on community is very high.
- There are very few musictech specialized investors even though there is a strong interest and some key successful cases.

Contact

Anna Zò, Project manager - anna.zo@mi-h.org

3.3 Musimap - Start up in MusicTech (Belgium)

Background

Musimap is an emotional artificial intelligence company powered by over 20 years of academic research that uses music to understand the emotional world of users thanks to its emotional profiling capabilities.

Media Deals supported the development of the company as from 2016.

The company started developing music recommendation algorithms in 2013 thanks to R&D tax credit in France. After the development of the prototype, Musimap contacted Media Deals to help them with restructuring of their market strategy and to increase capital for its further development.

Media Deals took over a large part of the shares from the companies as well as the presidency and Managing Director positions of the company. After a realignment of the market strategy and an upgrade of the corporate identity, they have been looking for investors and data scientists to develop AI capabilities to the project as soon as 2018.

They started accessing business angels from France and Belgium and then 2 key public venture capital companies from Belgium again. A further fund raising brought a key French VC on board to complete the cap-table. The company started to have traction on the market with key pilot projects with major music companies in Europe.

The team has been reshuffled one last time to fit with the new market valuation and the phase of exit for a trade sale under the pressure of the investors. After 2 more years of product development and bridge financing, the company was sold in Autumn 2021 for a confidential 2-digit Million Euro to a Swiss-based company.

Figure 8: Musimap, powered by Utopia



Approach

Product and adaptation to market changes to attract investors.

Diversity of investors to grow the cap-table according to the company valuation.

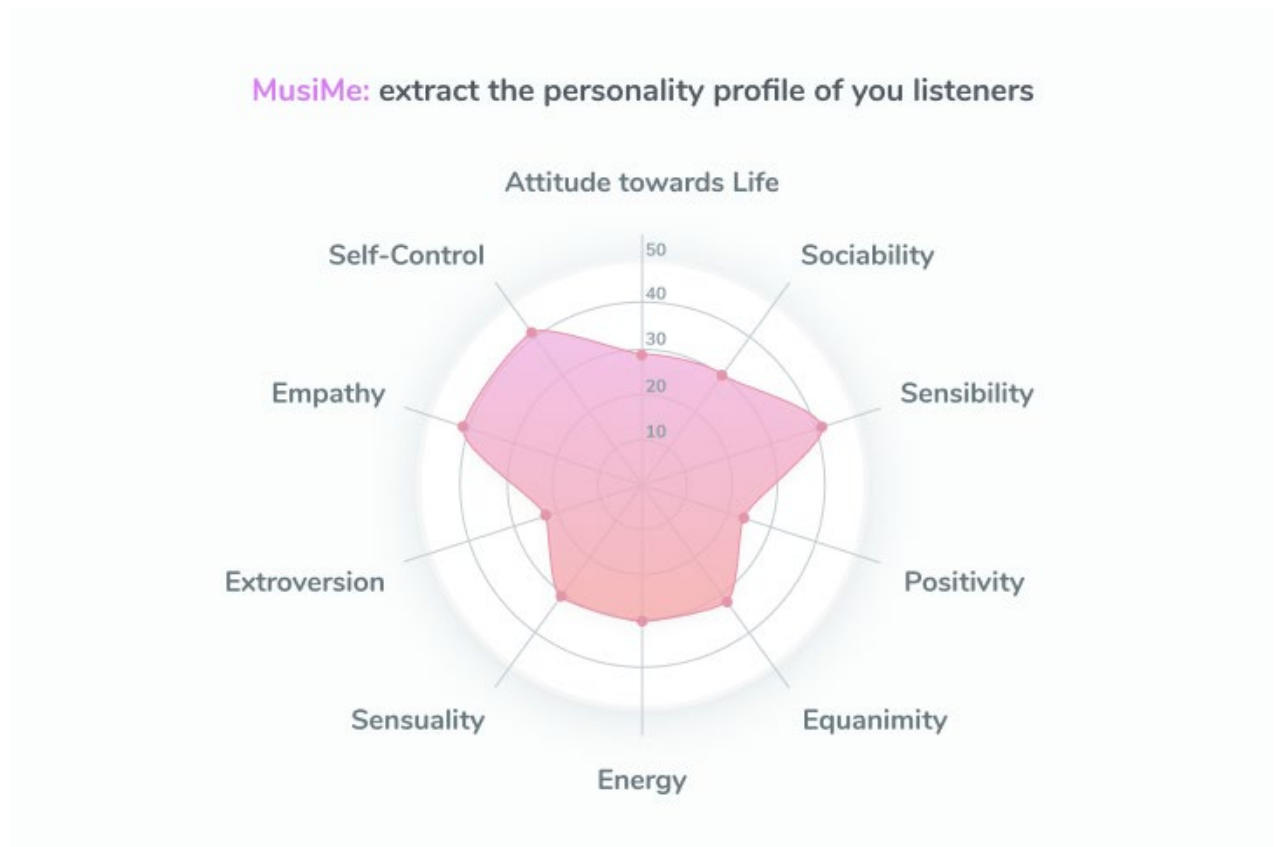
Constant agile update of the team with specific skills to fit market development.

Agreement between the large number of investors on the strategy and the exit phase.

Use of different geographic funding opportunities (France and Belgium mostly) to follow the needs step by step.

Very high visibility at fair and social networks to raise awareness from market players but also possible buyers.

Figure 9: One of The Features of Musimap is Ability to extract Knowledge of Listeners



Learnings

- Quality of team is essential,
- Agility on market positioning
- Funding raises are difficult and too long, becoming already obsolete when signed.
- Need to have investors that can follow up on investment rounds to show credibility!
- Exit negotiations are tough and last long (on purpose).

Contact

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3.4 CREATINNES (European)

Background

CREATINNES- Strategic Partnership for Innovation and Business Skills Development in Cultural and Creative Industries Sector. This initiative was a successful project aimed to provide support for innovative startups to apply creativity and support the creative industries scaling up their businesses internationally via innovative training programs based on knowledge co-creation and cross-sectoral collaboration.

2 BLENDED LEARNING TRAINING PROGRAMS: Developing of two multilingual training programs for enabling CCI entities and innovative startups to identify and seize opportunities for growth and access to finance:

Training program 1: "Entrepreneurship for CCI freelancers and start-ups"

Training program 2: "Creative thinking for Innovation"

CREATINNES ACADEMY- Built for blended learning and open online courses.

Targeting educators, students, freelancers, and entrepreneurs active in the CCI and digital sectors. The web-platform "CreatINNES Academy" provides effective organization of the learning process and ensures secure access and registration of all users.

Figure 10: CREATINNES Entrepreneurial Programme



Partners

- INI-Novation GmbH, Germany (coordinator): www.ini-novation.com
- BIC INNOBRIDGE, Bulgaria: www.innobridge.org
- MEDF Skopje, North Macedonia: www.mrfp.mk
- Budakov Films EOOD, Bulgaria: www.adacademy.eu
- Teleberry Kft, Hungary: www.teleberry.com
- Alanam, France: www.alanam.fr

Approach

The process of achieving final results was divided into several steps:

- Analysis and definition of qualification needs in CCI area: dedicated to collect relevant information and analyze the needs of CCI freelancers, startups, and innovative companies within the partners' countries. In return, this helped to create the training programs.
- Creation of 2 Multi-lingual training programs.
- Creation of free access Web-platform for blended learning "CreatINNES Academy".
- CreatINNES blended learning methodology containing tips and recommendations for independent learning.

Learning

This initiative addressed the priority needs of start-ups and freelancers in the ICT sector by teaching them how to be successful entrepreneurs and attract investors, how to adapt to digitalization and co-create new solutions with start-ups from other industries and how to monetize IPR and commercialize innovation are among the most important topics for the further development of the ICT sector.

Contact

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3.5 Craft 4.0 (European)

Background

Digital tools, computers, software, imaging, and modelling are stretching the boundaries of making both in the process of creating form and in the development of the design itself. On the face of it, there may appear to be a conflict between the machine/computer and hand-made where historically the machine has represented a threat to craft. However, these technologies also represent a significant opportunity to support the production of hand-crafted objects and to enhance the development of the craft sector.

The emergence of affordable digital manufacturing and fabrication tools are acknowledged as having the potential to radically reshape contemporary craft practice, production, and consumption.

Current trends in the craft sector show how important it is for craftspeople to embrace opportunities brought by the digital revolution. Craft 4.0 aimed to create training tools and a peer network for craftspeople in the areas of digital modelling and digital/additive manufacturing. Furthermore, the project aimed to improve digital competencies in the craft sector and in doing so enhance the craft making process. Providing an opportunity for the craftsperson to cultivate product design and development skills, increase sectoral networking locally and internationally while also increasing customer engagement, with the purpose of improving and developing individual craft businesses.

Figure 11: Craft 4.0 Activities



Craft 4.0 resulted in three main outputs:

- A training model which ensures transparency, transferability, and clear learning outcomes
- Training content, which allows craftspeople to acquire a set of innovative technological skills.

Guidelines and recommendations which provide an exemplar for potential exploitation in other sectors and levels of education.

Partners

- Technological University Dublin, Ireland: <http://www.dit.ie/>
- Mälardalen University, Sweden: <https://www.mdh.se/>
- DLEARN, Italy: <https://dlearn.eu>
- CIVIC COMPUTING LIMITED, Edinburgh: <https://www.civicuk.com>
- CENFIM, Spain, <https://www.cenfim.org>
- BIC INNOBRIDGE, Bulgaria: <http://www.innobridge.org>
- NERDA, Romania: <http://www.adrnordest.ro/>

Approach

The process of achieving the final results:

Craft 4.0 training strategy where all expected outcomes were defined.

CRAFT 4.0 Training course (creating the training content and adapting it to the needs) in the form of video tutorials, presentations, and tests, providing craft professionals with learning resources to help develop their practice and business through adoption of digital making technologies.

Learning

The initiative gendered a community of arts & crafts professionals from all partners countries who benefited and improved their digital skills through 3D printing in order to improve their:

- Market performance
- Customer engagement
- Marketing strategy
- Use of IT tools for the production processes
- Business possibility
- Sense of entrepreneurship.

Contact

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3.6 ACCELERO (European)

Background

ACCELERO – Accelerating Local Innovation Ecosystems in Europe aims at contributing to reversing the unbalanced business activity in Europe by increasing the attractiveness of (less advanced) ecosystems: making ‘modest’ and ‘moderate’ innovation ecosystems more attractive to local start-ups that will benefit from strong local support and avoid relocation to EU hubs as well to international companies interested in setting up their businesses outside the established and well-known centres.

Figure 12: ACCELERO Offering



ACCELERO has the ambition of creating a pan-European community of business support organisations (BSOs) as the one-stop shop for all BSOs and its “customers”, the start-ups and SMEs, as well as for peer-to-peer exchange, networking, and connectedness for all stakeholders engaged in the broader innovation ecosystem. This will be achieved with an initial ACCELERO extended community that will collaborate to co-create and pilot-test high-quality business acceleration services with European Business Support Organizations from emerging and moderate innovation regions together with experts from strong and leader innovation regions or Member States, followed by the activities organized within ACCELERO community in the Euroquity platform. This initiative is being funded by Horizon Europe for the duration of 2 years from 2022-2024.

Partners

- EurA PT, Portugal: <https://www.eura-ag.com/en/>
- EBN, Belgium: <https://ebn.eu/>
- BWCON GmbH, Germany: <https://www.bwcon.de>
- Bpifrance – EuroQuity, France: <https://www.bpifrance.fr>

- Krakowski Park Technologiczny, Poland: <https://www.kpt.krakow.pl/en/>
- BIC INNOBRIDGE, Bulgaria: <http://www.innobridge.org>

Approach

Applying the place-based innovation and design thinking methodology the consortium will discover, define, develop, and deliver the services resulting as final stage of the initiative.

In a nutshell, this diamond model allows to map how the design process moves from broader possibilities and analysis to very clearly detailed action points up to its delivery.

Learnings

ACCELERO will have a strong positive impact on spreading the business acceleration services to less connected innovation ecosystems through the competitiveness and sustainability of startups in emerging and moderate innovator countries and regions. ACCELERO aims to influence the way the LEBs deliver their services to the innovators, the way that startups access funding and the way that all the stakeholders look to their own innovation ecosystems.

It aims to foster an environment of service focused on Open Innovation, international collaboration, and cooperation among the EU innovation ecosystems, to avoid unnecessary relocation, maintaining the system entropy for the startups.

Contact

<https://www.euroquity.com/en/community/accelero>

3.7 Nebesys (Czech Republic)

Background

Nebesys, founded in 2022, is a compact roof, indistinguishable from ordinary roofs, which not only protects the roof landscape, but also the privacy inside. Translucent and even transparent from the inside, the system ensures perfect lighting of the interior. There are many roofs in the Czech Republic's historical towns that disable the use of skylights and dormers without causing damage to the visual character of the roof landscape. The key component of NEBESYS™ is the roofing whose shapes and colours remain visually identical with the commonly used shapes. The roof plane is thus covered with stencils or ceramic tiles without disturbing the integrity of roofs especially in historical and landscape protected areas.

Specific problems the product solves:

- the protection of the cultural landscape of historic roofs, which are changing and losing their uniqueness.
- the protection of the agricultural landscape from real estate development.
- Green deal - the product behaves like a tree, providing shade, absorbing noise, and dust, retaining water and evaporating it on hot days.

Figure 13: Winners of Creative Business Cup 2023



Approach

Nebesys was participating in Creative Business Cup Global Finals on June 5th, 2023, giving pitches and showcasing their product at creative market.

The team took the 1st place and won numerous prizes from partners (access to business services from Miro, Hubspot, Nextatlas and others, mentoring sessions from top-experts in marketing, community building, business development; invitations to the Global startup events).

Among the support provided: participation in Creative Business Investors Program on November 22, 2023 – the pitch session with a goal to get feedback and offer from global investors (among the investors were: Guillaume Therien, Partner, Triptyq Capital; Jeffrey Paine, Managing Partner Golden Gate Ventures Singapore; Luigi Amati, Founder Of META).

Learnings

Beyond investor support, there is a need for media, EU, and legislative backing. This ensures that protective organizations recognize the solution's benefits for investors, as well as advocates for natural and energy resources and cultural heritage.

Figure 14: Applications of Nebesys



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