IN-BUSINESS GROWTH

Innovative Sustainable Business Growth at Global Level

In FOCUS:

The first phase of the project In-Business Growth focused on the analysis of the current situation in the participating countries in the field of support programs for SMEs and the results are now available. Seventeen good practices have been selected and analyzed, focusing on nine themes defined previously, (1) Adaptation to the real needs of SMEs, (2) Demand-led approaches (e.g. KET applications to SMEs), (3) Easy access to the existing supports, (4) Promotion and Dissemination of the information, (5) Technology transfer; (6) Commercialization of innovation, (7) Follow-up of the progress of the SMEs, (8) Establishment of constant means of improvement, (9) Access to resources through networked development. Today, we will focus on the first theme and the associated good practices detected ■

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newsletter

THEME 1: Adaptation to the real needs of SMEs

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

Most of the practices selected include this aspect in their strategy, the entrepreneurial program YUZZ, the public incubation network Promalaga, the Support Centers for Entrepreneurship Development CADE, the Business Development Model of the Technology Park of Andalucia, the regional system allowing the integration of new skills and competences in SMEs Ardan, the growth and internationalization program - Growth for Kainuu, the project of Financial Education Edufinet, the Innovation Ecosystem Green Ray and Link by UMA-Atech, the business acceleration program Alimenta2Talent, the large research infrastructure services for SMEs, the Eco-Point Service promoting the use of environmentally friendly technologies for business growth, the Regional Contest of Business ideas - CI Caixa, the Focus Groups and Innovation Communities, the mapping of innovation opportunities based on RIS3 strategy and a system of transnational Innovation vouchers ■

All these Good practices contribute to offer:

- Comprehensive entrepreneurship programs and institutions, supporting startups and young people entrepreneurship

- Growth – oriented business development programs

- Demand-based, i.e. assessment and adjustment to needs of SMEs in terms of concrete demand requirements

- Alignment with national level initiatives

What's happening

After the benchmarking of these practices, several meetings have taken place already involving the partners from Bulgaria, Finland, Portugal and Spain, to present the good practices to local and national stakeholders.

The first opportunity of synergy has concretely raised in the framework of the platform Edufinet, for which the Portuguese partner, and the responsible of the initiative in Spain have shown interest in collaborating, and are working on the preparation of a training session in Portugal related to financial education. Three additional events are already foreseen in October and November 2016 to present the practices and study the transfer opportunities in Casablanca (20th of October), Málaga (15th of November) and Lisbon (28th of November). More meetings will be confirmed soon. For the success of this

new activity of the project, the key is the human factor, getting involved strategic partners who want to improve the actual innovation support programs for SMEs and the meetings organized focus specifically in reaching this objective ▪

Synergies between European Initiatives

Three partners from Slovenia, Italy and Spain have recently start to implement an HORIZON 2020 project dealing with enhancement of innovation and entrepreneurship competencies of small and micro companies.

The general objective of the project called POWER2INNO is to engage in peer learning activities partners to raise their competences for empowerment of small and micro companies for innovative entrepreneurship - for transition from production-oriented mentality to scouting for opportunities on global market and creating value for customers. The partners, the Regional Development Agency Green Karst (lead partner) from Slovenia, Tecnopolis Parco Scientifico e Tecnologico from Italy and the European Business and Innovation Centre of Málaga, BIC EURONOVA, from Spain have design three major activities that will help them exchange knowledge and create a new model for encouraging innovative entrepreneurship: (1) mapping of competences and gaps, (2) transferring pilot actions and (3) delivering a strategic document for the European Commission and interested stakeholders (Design Options Paper).

So far several good practices in green business have been identified, focusing to the sector of tourism and new forms of financing. The good practices have been analyzed and partners' competences explored, basing new knowledge on their strengths, but also finding their weaknesses and trying to address them. Upon this approach, pilot programs are being designed and tested in each partner's region.

Within the activities of transfer to third parties of the In-Business Growth Project, responsible of both initiatives will meet during the month of October to exchange experience and study the possibility to incorporate some of the good practices in their activities ▪