

# COCO4CCI ACTION PLANS

Integrating COCO4CCI services in the regional business support infrastructure in Poland/ West Pomerania

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COUNTRY: POLAND

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## Introduction

The purpose of this action plan is to exploit the outputs and experiences built up thanks to the Interreg COCO4CCI Project in order to define the sustainability of the project also at the end of the funded program.

Therefore, the main tools, lessons learnt and outputs of the project and their transformation into a new service for enterprises will be presented. The format includes: value proposition; key partners; key activities; main costs; revenues streams; local and transnational network.

The service proposed as a new offer for cross-sectoral collaboration between manufacturing and CCI is established in the context of open innovation. According to our regional research made at the beginning of the project small and medium sized companies are adopting open innovation tools rather slowly, while designers lack business perspective on implementing innovation to the market. Seasoned with a pinch of distrust and time for research and development, they build a loop of behaviors and stereotypes that require breaking and working through. That is why we especially for SMEs, that is still difficult to understand the methods and structures to make innovation processes effective and efficient.

In this context the connection with Cultural and Creative Industries represents a great opportunity to structuring forms of innovation based on broader socio-economic considerations, by rethinking entire business models, or products, services and forms of communication in unexplored but extremely valuable ways.

As demonstrated by the coco4cci project, the CCI sector has enormous potential for change and innovation in society and businesses, but there are still many difficulties in establishing a real, continuous, and effective dialogue and collaboration with Italian manufacturing.

COCO4CCI explored and tested many methods and tools to make this collaboration sustainable over time in order to build more sustainable enterprises and societies.

The continuous collaboration and exchange between the partners from the countries involved in the project made this learning phase even richer and more effective. On this basis, therefore, the following action plan intends to enhance the future of cross-sector collaboration, offering a new service for manufacturing companies but also building new and solid ecosystem relationships between universities, business support organizations, professionals, companies and innovators.



## Status - short outline of the COCO4CCI results

In Poland tandem partners are the Academy of Art in Szczecin, represented by Design Faculty and Northern Chambers of Commerce which represents small and medium sized companies from Westpomeranian region. We have a tandem in which education meets entrepreneurship and in which both partners stimulates each other for creating regional “ferment” and boost cross-collaboration among different partners and stakeholders.

Westpomeranian Region a voivodeship located in the north-western part of Poland, on the coast of the Baltic Sea. It borders in the east with the Pomeranian Voivodeship, in the south with the Wielkopolskie and Lubuskie voivodeships, and in the west with the German federal states: Brandenburg and Mecklenburg-Vorpommern. It covers an area of 22 892.48 km<sup>2</sup>, and on June 30, 2021, it had approximately 1.7 million inhabitants. The seat of the voivodeship authorities is Szczecin. It is the westernmost voivodeship in Poland.

Since 2010, the share of the creative economy in the total value added created in Poland has increased by more than half - from 4 per cent. in 2010 to 6.3 percent. in 2018, enterprises whose primary production factor is creativity and intellectual capital generated PLN 117 billion in added value in 2018. In recent years, their importance has grown the most. From 2015 to 2018, the average annual real growth rate of this sector was 13.1%. This is over three times faster than the entire economy. As a consequence, the creative economy accounted for one-sixth of national growth.

The West Pomerania is not the leading region in terms of the sector development, however, it is in line with this growing trend of the economic importance of creative industries.

Design Faculty at the Academy of Art in Szczecin

The strategic goal of the Design Department is: to obtain the status of a leading unit in the country in the field of design and achieving the status of a faculty of significant international position, conducting artistic and design activities at the European level, which serves to prepare highly



qualified staff with competences corresponding to the dynamically changing social and economic needs. This means that we strive to ensure that, by 2024, Design is a Faculty that has a significant intellectual, design and research potential in the country, it is an attractive place to study, it favors the release of potential and creativity, the fulfillment of aspirations, as well as scientific, artistic and didactic passions. We strive to make Design a recognized Faculty in Poland and the European Union by implementing prestigious international projects and programs, actively undertaking joint educational and research initiatives with renowned academic centers in Poland and abroad.

#### Northers Chambers of Commerce

Established in 1997, and representing 1500 companies, the Northern Chamber of Commerce (NCC) in Szczecin is the largest chamber of commerce in Poland. The principle task of NCC is to provide services to member companies, including training and education, the organization of cooperation visits and the facilitation of networking opportunities, financial assistance and interest representation and lobbying; it is therefore well attuned to their training and development needs.

NCC in connection to its mission of supporting entrepreneurship have been working intensively to in the area of innovation and growth in enterprises in West Pomerania since 2011.

NCC has undertaken activities to build cooperation between Creative Industries, Entrepreneurs of various economic sectors as well as HEIs. It plays an important role to encourage and initiate cooperation to ensure their sustainable development and mutual benefits. Hence, the involvement in the COCO4CCI project.

#### RESULTS

Sparked by COCO4CCI the tandem partners joined forces to bring their separate networks together and create an inspiring environment to encourage cross-sectoral collaborations (main focus: advanced manufacturing companies meets designers and artist for creating new realities). Base work was done through the active awareness raising with the help of events and personal interactions bottled into several different actions to have the AVM and CCI get to know each other:

1. **face to face event (Info Day)/INSPIRATION Key Talk** Prototyping Future with designers&futurist Zuzanna Skalska which happened twice during the project reveals that people-employees, managers, CEO's are searching ways for surviving VUCA times (V It was an inspiring format for



entrepreneurs and designers. A spark for rethinking what we do not know and what we should start be doing for preparing better future.

**2. Individual match making/FINDING Challenges:** during the research done at the very beginning of the project we have found that in Poland there is a lack of trust and time for experimentation in companies. And it was a reason why we organised Individual matchmaking format. Matching one AVM with one CCI, based on the small online workshops using MURAL - an online platform run by Magdalena Małachowska with advanced manufacturing company to find challenges for creative's. As soon as we had challenges potential designers were searching in the region.

**3. Follow the Object** - summer school for AS a format of free creativity which is materialised in objects, presented and confronted during the big design festival, building a start up's.

**4. Meet the expert** - interesting and inspirational meetings, talks and workshops with the well-known persons from the creative sector. Gathered CCI and AVM representatives can learn on the example of the successful person that the cooperation can lead to a professional success, they can learn practical knowledge and will be inspired to action leading to their own successful professional carrier.

These activities were very well accepted and liked. However, the most successful formats were the individual matchmakings.

## Objective

In Westpomeranian Region we as Academy of Art in Szczecin wanted to sparkle the need of cross-collaboration between sectors because we have noticed that we are working in sector's siloes. The cooperation happens in the in the supply chain. That is we wanted to shake a bit regional network and find out what will happen: Who will be interested in cooperation with Academia, what people do we meet? Who is willing to cooperate with Us? Why? What can we do about it? What are the expectations from as designers and project leaders in the Region?

Good cooperation between enterprises and creative centres is certainly one of the most important determinants in the development of innovation and improvement of the competitiveness of the economy.

Undoubtedly, in order to intensify contacts between business and creative centres, Business Support Organisations, in particular cluster initiatives, play an important role. Development of network systems and structures, e.g. clusters, which include research and development units and



enterprises. Considering the real chances of cooperation between science and business, it should be noted that the cooperation process taking into account the needs of the market, science, innovation and the research and development sphere is dynamic and constantly developing.

Recently, clusters, understood as a specific form of production organization, relying on the concentration of flexible enterprises running complementary economic activities in a close space, have become more and more popular. An important element that may contribute in the future to the development of appropriate cluster initiatives, linking business with creative and scientific centres, will be the placement of special financial programs under the Operational Programs in the next EU financial perspectives. An important element hampering the development of cooperation between sectors is the lack of appropriate sources of financing for specific networking activities.

In addition, the development of the creative sector requires skilful support for its actors in the internationalization of their products, and this support should cover the areas of: intellectual property protection, export of creative sector products, promotion of creative sector products on foreign markets, building a network of international cooperation links.

Key stakeholders/ partners and target groups in our region:

1. advanced manufacturing companies from the region, we were trying to find new contacts and companies we have never worked before,
2. stakeholders representing different specializations of creative and c... industries, such as: Architects Association which works mainly with the City of Szczecin, Media Dizajn Association which represent Creative Cluster, Regional Center for Technology Transfer and Innovation, RCiTT which represents University of Technology, Universities and institutions of higher education and University of Szczecin and
3. policy makers representing local municipality, regional authority, ministry as well as foundations and non-governmental organisations.

## Actions

**Transformation through cross-innovation** is happening among workshops, meetings, conferences. It comes up when creativity is full fill with curiosity. It need to be, just like in sports, exercised. Start small and built a habit of creativity and cross-collaboration.

- a. **Podcast**, review on successful cross-collaborations for learning the audience that collaboration I going on right next door. These publications will be continued after COCO4CCI times to inspire new collaborations. We are continuously looking for successful and inspiring collaborations to showcase. The publications will be spread to all relevant stakeholders via mail, at events and online.



- b. **Summer school** - a format when during a summer few teams either from one country nor from few together are working on the topic and presents the results at the exhibition, during one the design festivals. We have notice that finding ideas in a team, materialising it into an object and confrontations with the audience is a very good format for finding investors, building start-ups and opportunities for cooperation.





- c. **Creative Coffee Breaks:** quarterly meetings at the Academia for an hour, a lunch for a conversation, inspiring conversation, key talk. Inspiration for creatives and entrepreneurs with sampling insights who are the creatives, how do they approach a problem, how they find matching solutions and simply how they work.



- d. **Individual Matchmaking:** If a company struggles with a specific challenge, we will look for a matching Creative within our networks and bring them together to jointly work on the challenge together.
- e. **Picnics** - short experiments on one topic for young students for small experiments always with small snack and some games, sometimes in wood or textile labs, conversation on design



- f. **Open Innovation Journey:** One of our major learnings in the COCO4CCI project was, that cross-innovation has to follow clear structured formats specifying methodology timeframes, milestones as well as a being guided by an experienced facilitator, who focuses on an outcome orientated process. It's about getting a distance, short-2-3 days stop and a workshop with interdisciplinary people.
- g. **Business consulting and funding service:** Once the collaborations have formed the collaborating parties will be offered business and funding consultations to bring the new ideas to life and continue their momentum. The consultations will be offered by Northern Chamber of Commerce, as well as their sister organisations.
- h. **Supporting cluster initiatives at the stage of incubation:** Development of the creative sector requires skilful support for its actors in the internationalization of their products, and this support should cover the areas of: intellectual property protection, export of creative sector products, promotion of creative sector products on foreign markets, building a network of international cooperation links This support will be provided by the NCC and their cooperating experts.
- i. **Study visits:** Experience shows that the organization of study visits brings tangible benefits. It is a source of inspiration, new experience and business contacts. The



Northern Chamber of Commerce will make such recommendations in the planning of its future project activities.

## Resources

Academy of Art is financed by Ministry of Education. Sparked by COCO4CCI those supporting activities will also focus on the benefits of cross-sectoral collaborations and push the lessons learned to create an environment open to continue the COCO4CCI legacy. A closer cooperation between both organisations will ensure an array of activities attractive for both worlds and raise awareness to cross-sectoral collaborations. As a University we had:

- submitted a project for Interreg Central Europe which concerned sustainability and design
- submit a project for
- create a paths for Erasmus Plus programme

Northern Chamber of Commerce currently supports the creation of cluster initiatives as part of its operation. There are several clusters at the chamber (including construction, hotel, lean management, metal). It is planned to establish the Creative Industries Cluster in the near future. In addition, the Chamber constantly performs the role of an intermediary between the world of business and science and helps entrepreneurs in initiating cooperation and, if necessary, building appropriate project consortia. The Chamber has adequate human resources, preparation and substantive experience to conduct analyses, audits and needs mapping processes in companies. However, the implementation of needs mapping, networking and wider support for business cooperation with creative centres requires appropriate funding, which we are constantly looking for under the currently available programs.

## Regional and transnational context

Westpomeranian Region concentrates and puts extra focus on cross-sectoral collaborations for future international cooperation projects to push the COCO4CCI content further, ensure financing additional services and also implement and promote the potential of cross-sectoral collaborations transnationally.



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We are interested in sharing the knowledge and experience with partners Northern part of Europe, where similar projects are happening. Within different partnerships, we establish cooperation and connect activities outside the region and at the international level.