

FINAL ACTION PLAN

VENETO REGION

D.T4.2.3;
UNIVE PP2

Version 1
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Introduction

The present document illustrates the steps that will be conducive to the sustainability of the pilot action. As illustrated in the documentation submitted in WP3, the UNIVE unit already took concrete steps towards the extension of the lessons learned during the pilot action to integrate it as a stable feature of the regional ecosystem of innovation and the regional ecosystem supporting industry 4.0. The present document will, in order:

1. Synthesize the nature of the action and describe the format to be sustained and replicated;
2. Identify the gaps the format will address;
3. Identify a timeline for the execution of the plan including KPIS, resources needed and the sources of funding;
4. Illustrate the local institutional actors to be involved in the development and sustainment of the initiative;
5. Define the sources of finance and the resources that will be needed to replicate the experience and make it stable.

1. A summary of the initiative developed in the pilot action

The pilot action was extensively described in the deliverables collected and elaborated in WP3. In this document it is sufficient to abstract its logics as to help actors in the local ecosystem to adopt, adapt and deploy it.

The initiative aimed at facilitating the access to digital technologies and industry 4.0 technologies by small and micro-enterprises in a variety of sectors. It also aimed at strengthening the relations and flows of information, knowledge and services among the many different private, public, institutional actors that populate the local Industry 4.0 Ecosystem, mainly rationalizing their contributions and directing firms in a more specific fashion towards each one of them based on their distinctive competences.

The format we developed in the pilot action consists of:

1. A digital library of contents related to industry 4.0 that mainly addresses the issues of the opportunities and implications for strategies and operations entailed in the use of Industry 4.0 technologies in SMEs. Videos were realized through the involvement of experts representing firms, services and institutions of the region;
2. A series of workshops with which SMEs go through a design thinking-based process that brings them from the identification of specific technological needs to the development of an action plan for the actual investment and deployment of technologies;
3. A follow-up constituted by interviews with firms that allow the university team to direct firms towards financing opportunities and specialized mentoring and support by public or private actors.



The format comes from previous experimentation conducted in the Region by UNIVE, chambers of commerce and the local Competence Center for Industry 4.0 (Competence Center delle tre venezie - Smact). The university formalized and streamlined a series of practices and initiatives that allowed to effectively direct and orient SMEs.

2. Gaps

In respect to a simple and standardized type of contact point, the initiative allows to address gaps that affect a variety of Ecosystems in Europe. The most relevant among these are:

1. The lack of competences and correct assessment frameworks for firms to evaluate the costs, opportunities, returns on the implementation of industry 4.0 technologies;
2. A lack of detailed and specific knowledge on the logics of industry 4.0 solutions among SMEs;
3. A substantial confusion in terms of the relations and contacts an SMEs should activate and maintain to find the adequate support in the local ecosystem;
4. The proliferation and substantial juxtaposition of support initiatives in the same region;
5. The difficulty firms find in progressing from “knowing what” industry 4.0 technologies are, to “knowing how” they can be implemented, in particular with regards to the integration of these technologies with the logics, operations and constraints that each single SMEs witnesses.

3. Action plan: timeline

The current document illustrates the action plan timeline that the team in UNIVE developed during the last months of the ECOS4IN project. That said, we will illustrate how the steps were highly anticipated and the initiative is already being deployed and rolled out in the local Ecosystem.

First Phase: awareness and diffusion (months 0-3)

The UNIVE team will take stock of the initiative and communicate it as widely as possible to all the actors of the local ecosystem in the region, to collect feedbacks and most of all commitments to replicating it and making it a stable feature of the ecosystem’s way of supporting SMEs.

KPIs: at least 2 expressions of commitment by institutional actors in the ecosystem

Resources: UNIVE Team - expenses for travel and meetings (few hundreds Euros)

Second Phase: Definition and execution of projects with institutional partners/funding (months 4-12)

The team will propose and develop specific replications of the pilot action financed by local institutions and actors in the regional ecosystem.

KPIs: at least 2 projects financed and concluded in 2022; at least 80 individuals “processed” in the initiatives.

Resources - 50 thousand Euros: UNIVE team (personnel, 25 thousand Euros); IT support in the form of licenses for software (Zoom and Miro, as stated in WP3, few hundreds of Euros; admin and project management: 15 thousand Euros); operating expenses (5 thousand euros)

Third Phase: integration of the format in the initiatives of the Regional ecosystem (months 4- 24)

Beyond sustaining discrete replications of the initiative tested in the pilot action to refine it, the UNIVE team will create the conditions for its integration in all the activities that different actors in the ecosystem will develop to support SMEs. This will mean to create the conditions for capability transfer and development from the University to the actors in the ecosystem and in ECOS4IN ecosystems (if they will show interest to do so). To do so, the UNIVE team will:

1. Transfer competences to institutions in the ecosystem;
2. Transfer competences and materials to ECOS4IN partners and organize adequate training sessions online on request;
3. Collaborate with private and public actors in drafting European projects to find adequate sources of financing.

KPIs:

- At least one series of workshops with personnel of public institutions/private actors of the ecosystem for the transfer of capabilities.
- If requested, maximum three training sessions for ECOS4IN partners
- At least one European horizon 2022 Innovation Action projects presented.

Resources: UNIVE TEAM (15thousand Euros).

4. Institutions to be involved in the deployment of the plan

This section illustrates both the list of institutions already involved and the actual results already achieved in advance of time. The sustainability of the initiative and its integration in the RIS3 of the region will depend on the diffusion of the practices studied, developed and formalized in ECOS4IN to become a staple in the regional programs aimed at closing the technological gap of SMEs in Veneto. To do so, the main actors to be involved and to engage in the coming months are, ideally, the pivotal actors in the ecosystem thanks to their role in intermediating SMEs, institutions, sources of financing. Thus, the main actors engaged by UNIVE should be:

1. Chambers of commerce and their regional/national network
2. Trade and industry associations
3. Local Digital Innovation Hubs and the local Competence Centers
4. Other universities in the region
5. Tech transfer organizations

Currently, some of the long-term results we were aiming for were already achieved and the initiative is being replicated already. In particular, as the declaration of intent attached and signed by the university Rector confirms, currently the Format is being included in already signed agreements with local actors, in particular:

1. The Venice-Rovigo Chamber of commerce (PID food Project, November 2021, February 2022 - concluded);
2. The national Network of Chambers of Commerce (Agreement under signature, UNIVE will partner with the Chambers of Commerce of Padua, Florence and Cosenza to transfer capabilities in the personnel of the chambers to then develop innovative services and mentoring initiatives aimed at SMEs);
3. The Regional Administration (FEAMP funding, already funded, November 2021-october 2022) for the digitalization of small fisheries and aquaculture firms;
4. The regional Association of Artisan Firms (CNA -contract under signature) to mentor SMEs and micro-firms towards digitization and strategic innovation and to transfer competences to the exponents and professionals of the association so they can better mentor SMEs in the region.

The format will be the same as the one developed in ECOS4IN project. As stated in the attached endorsement signed by the Rector, the University is currently being stimulated to replicate as much as



possible the format in a series of initiatives promoted by actors in the Ecosystem. To find additional funding and expand the scope of the activities, the university already submitted European projects including the replication of the format. In addition, the results of the pilot action were included in the project that UNIVE submitted for the National Plan for Recovery and Resilience, that should distribute in the North East of Italy 125 million €, 5 of which dedicated to initiatives like the format and to acceleration and mentoring activities spread in the North East of Italy.

The plan is conceived as a plug in to the regional RIS3 specialization, that focuses eminently on empowering the competitiveness of SMEs in the following areas:

- Smart agrifood;
- Smart manufacturing
- Creative industries;
- Sustainable living.

In particular, food and manufacturing are central in the projects already signed and being signed that were mentioned above.



The Rector

Venice, March 28th, 2022

To whom it may concern,

I am writing in my capacity as Rector of Ca' Foscari University of Venice to highlight how the outcomes of the Ecos4In project pilot activities will be pivotal in the efforts of the university to enlarge the scope and increase the effectiveness of its support to the digitization of SMEs.

As you know, the UNIVE Pilot action consisted in a series of workshops held online that allowed 50 entrepreneurs and managers to become familiar with the opportunities offered by digital and Industry 4.0 technologies and then to proceed in a co-design activity that allowed them to figure out the possible implementation of digital technologies in their processes and strategies. The effort was completed by the realization of a digital repository of contents related to Industry 4.0 and by the individual mentoring of firms towards funding opportunities offered by public and private institutions in the region.

The project is both the distillation of the experiences that professor Finotto's team had in the past and the culmination of the search for a replicable format the University aims at sustaining in the future. As far as the past is concerned, the project brings to their full potential the experimentations in running co-design workshops with small and medium-sized enterprises undertaken in collaboration with the local Chamber of Commerce in year 2019. As far as the future is concerned, the University is committed to sustaining this type of effort and at replicating it to contribute to the overall regional ecosystem of innovation and of Industry 4.0.

Lessons learned from the pilot were already deployed in projects that are going to start in the next few months or that have already started. In particular, the same format was replicated in a collaborative project funded by the local Chamber of commerce, named PID Food: started in November 2021 and terminated in February 2022, the project saw the university team, the University foundation and the Chamber of Commerce of Venice and Rovigo collaborate in mentoring 16 agrifood companies in the two provinces. Currently, the University is also signing an agreement for the replication of the pilot on the national network of Chambers of Commerce (Unioncamere) to help Chambers to offer value-added services to small and medium-sized enterprises with a special focus on digital and industry 4.0

technologies. Finally, the format developed in the project is being included in a variety of proposals for European and National projects, specifically the recent HORIZON-CL6-2022-FARM2FORK-02-two-stage call (Fair, healthy and environmentally friendly food systems from primary production to consumption) and the recent Italian PRIN (National Project of Relevant Importance).

Do not hesitate to contact our offices and prof. Finotto's team for further updates on the sustainability and replication of the pilot in the future months.

Best regards,

Tiziana Lippiello