

Interreg Europe – project idea on green start-ups

Background

The initiative originates from activities in the Agder region in Norway on clean tech and green business start-ups. It illustrates the need to identify and showcase ideas that have a national and international potential with help and support from the eco system locally and from international mechanisms like Climate Kic and others. The green business initiative have put emphasis on ideas, startups and the support systems locally.

The target areas in Agder has been improved resource efficiency, climate change, low carbon economy, societal challenges, new business opportunities, circular Economy, blue growth, renewable energy and more.

We are now seeking cooperation partners in Europe as a basis for improving our policies and practices on green business start-ups.

Specific objective: 2.1 – SMEs competitiveness

Opportunities and challenges

The necessity to accelerate the shift towards a low-carbon economy provides significant business opportunities for potential start-ups and SMEs in European regions.

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=REPORT&reference=A8-2015-0204&language=EN> on the Green Employment Initiative: Tapping into the job creation potential of the green economy (2014/2238(INI))

However, the rate of green business-generation is still too slow and the survival rate for such companies is too low throughout Europe. There are several reasons for this:

- Low awareness among potential start-ups of public support facilities and services
- Public business-support systems have limited knowledge of potential green start-ups and often insufficient ability to detect, mobilise and accommodate them in the system
- Limited capacity to develop relevant ideas
- Insufficient business development know-how among creative inventors
- Lack of administrative capacity and financial resources in start-ups and SMEs to compete in public procurements on green products and services

Climate-KIC is the EU's largest public private partnership addressing climate change through innovation to build a zero-carbon economy. Climate-KIC is supported by the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT), a body of the European Union. Launched in 2010, EIT Climate-KIC is one of the three original Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs) set up by the EIT.

Objective

Improve policies for SMEs competitiveness by promoting/facilitating/stimulating green start-ups

Sub-objectives

Exchange experience, identify, validate, benchmark and transfer good practices on:

- Approaches/methods to attract/mobilise green start-ups, e.g .through competitions, incentive schemes
- Capacity-building measures for green start-ups

- The set-up of public support systems and their interaction with / services to green start-ups
- Approaches to making public procurement of green products and services more attractive for start-ups and SMEs
- Measures for sustaining green start-ups beyond the first phase of business operation
- Easier access to risk capital outside local region

Activities

- Development of methodology for mapping of experiences, validation and benchmarking of practices
- Survey on the state of play of green start-ups in the partner regions (potential, challenges, obstacles, configuration of public support systems, start-up and survival rates in green markets etc.)
- Establishment of regional stakeholder groups to define needs for policy improvements, identify potential good practices in "home" regions, assess applicability of good practices presented by other partner regions, provide advice on the improvement of policy instruments
- Identification, validation and benchmarking of potential good practices in thematic seminars and study visits in the partner regions
- Continuous efforts to raise awareness, influence attitudes and behaviour among policy makers and stakeholders in the partner regions, and communicate project results to target groups at the national and European level (Interreg Europe Policy Learning Platform, EU institutions, European organisations and networks)
- Develop regional action plans for the improvement of policy instruments on the basis of the learning from the project
- Jointly monitor the implementation of regional action plans

Partners sought:

- Managing Authorities or Intermediary Bodies for Structural Funds programmes
- Public authorities responsible for other relevant policy instruments
- Other public authorities or institutions governed by public law, e.g. regional development agencies, with relevant thematic knowledge and experience, and ability to influence policy instruments

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