

**Regional Executive Office**

Regional development  
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Project Idea – Draft 2.0

## How to Build a Long-lasting S3- Commitment – Facilitating Sustainable implementation of smart specialisation in the long run

### Issue/Challenge:

Working with smart specialization is a long-term endeavor. Achieving effects like new innovations or transformation towards a sustainable industry at the societal level requires perseverance and stability. The benefits for working with smart specialisation comes from working in networks and with the results being closer ties between industry entities and the innovation system. This creates opportunities for joint research projects, access to new technologies and improving employee qualifications but takes time and commitment.

All regions describe challenges in building stable, long-term sustainable innovation systems that address the challenges and needs of the business sector while also fostering a transition to a sustainable society in the long run (from all three perspectives - economic, social, and ecological). This project aims to develop frameworks for long-term cooperation networks with stakeholders and actors in smart specialization within the regions. The fundamental premise is to have a structure with high and genuine commitment from relevant actors within the specialization areas. The cooperation network should be based on a bottom-up perspective and the engagement gained through EDP or other inclusive processes.

The regions involved in the project feel that they have succeeded to some extent or within limited areas and are now seeking solutions to collectively develop and build systems that are both flexible yet embedded in the strategy



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to enable the long-term work required for the realization of a smart specialization strategy.

*On a European Level:*

Many regions have in recent years developed and adopted smart specialization strategies, often after a good process based on EDP. However, over time, it has been noted that either relevant actors are missing, engagement decreases, or newly formed actors struggle to be included in the work. This might be caused by misunderstanding among stakeholders and actors about what smart specialisations is, poor information and communication and poor promotion of the benefits of participation in the entrepreneurial discovery process or forming of clusters.

The structure formulated at the adoption of the strategy has needed to evolve over time, and new challenges have emerged. There are various alternative approaches to how to maintain, develop, and update the strategy over time, such as Partnerships for Regional Innovation. The challenge for many European regions is to maintain implementation capacity while also maintaining engagement from actors and the business sector. The business sector often needs solutions that work immediately, while a long-term transformation process takes time. This project aims to develop frameworks for how regional authorities can design this work to maintain or include relevant actors over time, thereby realizing their smart specialization strategies.

*Work Methods:*

The project will form one or more working groups from participating regions. The working group will visit each region to review, analyse, and recommend actions through a peer-review process. Various experts may be connected to the working group to broaden expertise. The purpose of the working group is partly to provide a focused review of each region's work and partly to build up broad and deep knowledge within the working group to increase the long-term capacity for effective and sustainable governance of smart specialization implementation. Workshops or seminars led by experts will also be conducted during the reviews to enhance the working group's knowledge.

Each partner region or organisation will be in focus each semester.

List of activities:

1. Organization of study visits during which representatives of the visiting regions will formulate recommendations and identify good practises regarding the possibility of developing the EDP model of the focus region. The visit will include discussions with relevant stakeholders in the region.
2. Thematic seminar or workshop based around the challenges in the focus region.

3. Development of a catalog with good practices from partner regions in the field of EDP.

*Objectives:*

The project will reduce disparities between European regions, enhance organizational capacities of regional authorities, and improve policy instruments for enhancement of sustainable growth, SMEs competitiveness and job creation in SMEs by enabling responsible policy authorities:

1. to share experiences among each other and identify good practices in terms of EDP and cluster building,
2. to develop new knowledge through participation in common learning activities and individual and organizational learning,
3. to engage with groups of relevant stakeholders and enhance the quality of (existing) governance systems,
4. to gain expertise from the involved universities, and
5. to draw policy lessons for improvement of regional interventions.

*Sub-objectives (effects at project conclusion):*

- Increased and sustained commitment from participating actors within each region over time.
- Enhanced knowledge within participating regions on how to create and design structures for smart specialization.
- Improved ability to transition to an ecologically sustainable society.

*The overall objective of promotion campaign of the project:*

- creating awareness, informing, and persuading external stakeholders and target groups at regional, national, and European level.
- organizing effective internal communication among project partners.
- engaging with relevant stakeholder's groups,
- sharing project's results with Interreg Europe community, all relevant stakeholders, policy makers, media, and broader public.

*Medium- and Long-term Effects in participation regions:*

- Increased capacity for support of innovations within the regional government system through a higher understanding of how to build supporting cooperation networks
- Increased capacity for supporting economic growth within the regional government system through a higher understanding of how to build supporting cooperation networks.
- Increased employment within specialized industries through a higher understanding of how to build supporting cooperation networks.

## Partners

The project proposal is a result of a collaboration between Region Jönköping County and the Marshal's Office of the Podkarpackie Region. Both regions will be part of the project consortium.

### Lead partner.

Region of Jönköping will be leading partner. Region of Jönköping is the regional government and responsible for leading the work with smart specialisation within the region. Jönköping County is a small region with a long tradition of working with industrial development and innovation. The work with smart specialisation is coordinated within a platform together with other regions in the Southeast of Sweden to increase strategic capacity and resources.

### Partners sought.

We seek partners who wants to strengthen their long-term capacity as a governmental organisation responsible for realisation of the S3. The partner should want to learn and seek recommendations from your peer on how to use new methods and models to improve the network structure for working with EDP. The partner should also want to get insights in other regions approach on smart specialisation and want to strengthen their European networks.

The partner should a regional public authority or innovation agency responsible for working with smart specialisation in the region. Partner should be responsible for or have a capacity to influence an Investment and jobs and growths program and smart specialisation strategy within the region (See section 3.3.3 and 3.4 in the Interreg Europe program manual). Advisory partner may be included.

The partner should have sufficient resources to be able to actively participate in the project and in the application process. The partner should also be able to identify the most relevant stakeholders within their region.

We are looking for partners to create a consortium with a balance between advanced or less advanced regions and from all parts of Europe.

## Budget and organization of the project

### Funding

The project will be funded according to the Interreg Europe regulations. The program will upon approval cover costs (se section 3.4.1.2 in the Interreg Europe program manual) up to 80% of the project. The remaining 20% or 30% must be provided by the partners themselves.

### Budget

1,6 – 1,9 M EUR depending on number of partners.

## Organization

The project will be organized according to the Interreg Europe program recommendations.

### Preliminary organization:

Steering Committee with one representative per partner responsible for the overall planning and leading of the project.

Working group with technical officers from partners responsible for the work in project. The working group will be conducting the study visits and writing of reports.

### Lead partner:

Project manager and technical officer – 2 Persons working part time in the project.

Project coordinator

Communications officer (part time)

Financial officer (part time)

### Partners

Technical officer – 1- or 2-persons working part time in the project (50-75%)

Coordination, communication, and financial support in some degree and based on the structure in the partner organization.

## Contact

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## Help and support

Help and support will be provided within the project application working group and can also be provided by national agencies and the Interreg Europe secretariat.

Feedback from 2024 edition of **Europe, let's cooperate!** - presentation slides from the plenary sessions and much more:

<https://www.interregeurope.eu/event/europecooperates2024/conclusions>

You will find there also useful information about third call (i.e. application pack and programme manual).

We strongly advise you to take part in **national info days** organised in your country (in person or online). The list of coming events you can find here:

<https://www.interregeurope.eu/news-and-events/news/info-days-2024-in-your-country>

**Q&A sessions** about the third call:

<https://www.interregeurope.eu/news-and-events/events/qa-session-about-the-third-call-on-5-april>

<https://www.interregeurope.eu/news-and-events/events/restricted-call-qa-and-networking>

**Building a successful partnership** webinar 2024 – 15 April 2024

<https://www.interregeurope.eu/news-and-events/events/building-a-successful-partnership-webinar-2024>

**Designing project methodology** webinar 2024

<https://www.interregeurope.eu/news-and-events/events/designing-project-methodology-webinar-2024>

**Management and finances** webinar 2024

<https://www.interregeurope.eu/news-and-events/events/management-and-finances-webinar-2024>

**Project communication** webinar 2024

<https://www.interregeurope.eu/news-and-events/events/project-communication-webinar-2024>