

DOSSIER

1st UNICORNQUEST MEETING

Évora, Portugal

09-10 May 2023



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Introduction

UnicornQuest aims to build entrepreneurial ecosystems by promoting, attracting, and retaining to-be-unicorns thriving under EU principles and values, such as respect of human rights, freedom, democracy, and equality. This project arises from the need to reduce the exodus of promising start-ups and unicorns from Europe, especially the regions outside the capitals, which results in losses in terms of job creation, intellectual property and more. As such, the project is focused on learning and experience sharing activities, regional assessments and peer analysis and review of real cases to delineate strategies to improve regional policies which influence SME competitiveness and the retention and attraction of entrepreneurial talent.

PROJECT PARTNERS

- Science and Technology Park of Alentejo (PACT) (PT)
- Slovak Innovation and Energy Agency (SK)
- Western Development Commission (IE)
- Innovation & Management Centre Limited (WestBIC) (IE)
- North-West Regional Development Agency (RO)
- Business Development Friesland Foundation (NL)
- Liguria Region (IT)
- Zemgale Planning Region (LV)
- Pannon Business Network Association (HU)
- Hauts-de-France Regional Council (FR)
- EuraTechnologies (FR)
- San Telmo Business School (ES)

1st Interregional Event Summary

On May 9 and 10 of 2023, the Science and Technology Park of Alentejo (PACT) hosted the first UnicornQuest meeting, which brought together project partners as well as some local and regional stakeholders.

The first day was initiated by an opening session, where partners had the opportunity to present their entities' work. This was followed by a visit to PACT facilities. In the afternoon, a workshop on learning methodology and stakeholder involvement strategy was held. After that, a meeting was held at Évora City Hall, between the participants and the Mayor of Évora. The day ended with a visit visited Fundação Eugénio de Almeida.

On the second day, the day began with a presentation by the Alentejo Coordination and Regional Development Commission (CCDRA). This was following by the in-person kick-off project meeting. The main topics discussed were project goals, activities and outcomes, exchange methodology, project management, and communication and dissemination.

Event agenda

DAY 1 (May 9th 2023)

Main venue: PACT - Herdade da Barba Rala, R. Luís Adelino Fonseca Lote 1A, 7005-345 Évora

09h30 Welcome and registration

10h00 Opening session:

Presentation by the lead partner followed by presentations of each partner's entities.

12h00 Study visit - PACT installations

12h30 Lunch

14h00 Workshop:

Definition of the learning methodology & stakeholder involvement strategy.

16h00 Stakeholder meeting with the Mayor at Evora City Hall

17h00 Visit - Fundação Eugénio de Almeida

19h00 Consortium dinner

DAY 2 (May 10th 2023)

Main venue: PACT - Herdade da Barba Rala, R. Luís Adelino Fonseca Lote 1A, 7005-345 Évora

09h00 Stakeholder intervention by Tiago Pereira (Regional Coordination and Development Commission of Alentejo - CCDRA)

09h30 Kick-off consortium meeting:

Project's activities and timelines

Financial and reporting aspects

Communication and dissemination matters

12h00 Study visit - University of Évora

13h00 Lunch

14h30 Stakeholder meeting with Vice-Rector Professor Paulo Quaresma at University of Évora

15h00 Visit - Évora city center

Opening session

The Lead partner briefly introduced the project and presented the work developed at PACT. Each partner then introduced their entity and work. This session allowed the partners to get to know each other's work, potentiating the sharing of ideas between partners, namely regarding similar or complementary fields of action.



Study visit – PACT

The consortium participated in a guided visit to PACT installations, having the opportunity to get to learn about the activities of the partner, their ecosystem, future installations and plans.



Workshop

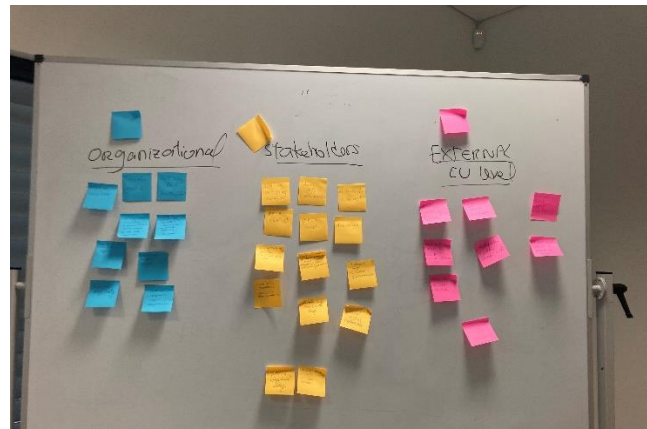
A Workshop on Learning methodology & stakeholder involvement strategy was held on the afternoon of the first day. It was divided into three blocks:

CONCEPT 1: INTEGRATED APPROACH TO LEARNING

CONCEPT 2: MULTILEVEL LEARNING

CONCEPT 3: QUALITY OF LEARNING

Each block consisted of a short presentation and group work. Learning was evaluated using online app Kahoot!. The main focus was on learning activities and exchange of experiences specific to project cooperation in Interreg Europe. It provided the participants with insights and tools to start drafting their own exchange methodologies.



Stakeholder meeting with the Mayor at Evora City Hall

The participants met with the Evora's city Mayor, Carlos Pinto de Sá. The Mayor shared the work and vision of the City Hall regarding the territory's development. Specifically, the stakeholder meeting was focused on the territorial strategies for economic, cultural, and technological development of the region. Moreover, the Mayor shared insights about the mechanisms of attraction of startups and other companies to the region.



Stakeholder intervention by Tiago Pereira (CCDRA)

In the morning of the second day, Tiago Pereira from the Regional Coordination and Development Commission of Alentejo (CCDRA) presented the strategy and work developed by the stakeholder entity. The presentation was focused on the Smart Specialization Strategy of Alentejo domains and pillars.



Project's kick-off meeting

The kick-off meeting was hosted by the Lead Partner PACT and provided the first opportunity for all project partners to discuss technical projects matters in person.

The main addressed points were:

- Interreg Europe Programme
- Calendar and future Interregional events
- Aims and goals
- Programme documents and financial reporting
- Communication and dissemination strategy

Stakeholder meeting with Vice-Rector of University of Évora

The participants had the opportunity to visit University of Évora and meet with the Vice-Rector of Research, Innovation and Internationalization. During the meeting, the participants had the opportunity to learn more about the history of the University of Évora and get to know the strategies and initiatives that are being developed, specifically in the area of entrepreneurship and start-up creation supportive actions.



Visits

During the first interregional event of the project, the consortium participated in two more informal visits – Fundação Eugénio de Almeida (Enoteca Cartuxa) and a visit to the city center. These activities allowed the group to know more about the history and current culture of the host partner city – Évora. Furthermore, these visits also allowed for the group to create and reinforce connections in a more informal environment, which is an important part of working together in interregional projects.

