



Pilot project

CREATER - NEW BUSINESSES SUPPORT PATH

Emilia-Romagna



Table of contents

Table of contents	2
1 Background and introduction	3
2 Aims and objective	3
3 Involved partners and stakeholders	3
4 Methodology and work process	4
5 Outputs/outcomes	5
6 Reflections and recommendations (transferability and other relevant information to consider)	7
7 Conclusion	8
8 Annexes (if relevant)	8

1 Background and introduction

Reinforcing management capacity, increasing visibility and developing partnerships are the main focuses when supporting “new knowledge content firms”. In Emilia-Romagna, the pilot project implemented by Aster within Creative Growth has been entitled CREATER - CREATive growth in Emilia-Romagna (Crescita cREATiva in Emilia-Romagna) and consists in a support path especially developed for creative companies. CREATER has been set on the basis of the following: (1) analysis carried out on the creative sector in Emilia-Romagna, (2) Aster experience in supporting new businesses (with an innovation content, mainly with high technology contents), (3) Partners experience in the support with creative firms.

2 Aims and objective

The objectives of CREATER are as follows:

- Develop a support path based on new creative companies needs
- Test the path on a selection of companies
- Support selected companies over a defined period (5 months) with a “service package” defined according to partners’ activities and Aster experience
- Identify positive aspects and fields to improve in a future path dedicated to creative companies.

3 Involved partners and stakeholders

The involvement of partner organizations has been very important both in the preparation phases and in the implementation period. Both European and local partners have collaborated in different ways.

The collaboration with the EU Creative Growth partners has been crucial for the service package definition: Cultural Enterprise Office in Glasgow (Scotland) has been the object of a deep analysis as regards its working mechanisms and support package contents. This has been possible through exchanges and a study visit in their offices. The collaboration with CEEI Asturias have been very useful to develop a tool to better follow-up companies over the support period.

The collaboration with local partners has also been extremely important for the call for proposals diffusion and for integrating CREATER within the overall plan to support new creative companies in Emilia-Romagna. In particular, the collaboration with the Culture Area at the Municipality of Bologna within “INCREDIBOL project”¹ – dedicated to new innovative creative companies - has been particularly fruitful.

¹ <http://www.incredibol.net/>

4 Methodology and work process


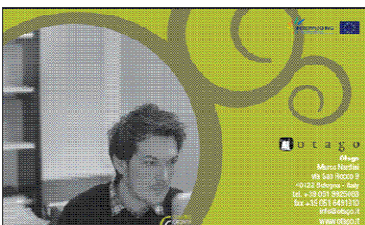


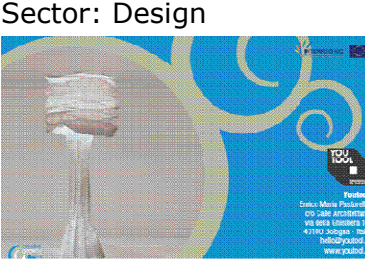
CREATER has been implemented through a series of steps:

1. **Analysis of creative sector** in Emilia-Romagna and identification of new creative companies' needs.
2. **Analysis of partners' experiences and tools** through exchanges with two partners in particular - Cultural Enterprise Office (Scotland, UK) and CEEI Asturias (Asturias, Spain) within study visits and regular collaboration.
3. Development of "**CREATER service package**".
4. Publication of a **call for proposals** directed to new businesses – based in Emilia-Romagna - in the creative sector (i.e. music, entertainment, media, communication, cinema, audio-video, literature, design, amusement park and visiting places) or in a different activity sector but with an application in the creative sector
5. **Selection of maximum 10 enterprises/projects** according to the following criteria: (1) Innovativeness, (2) Team, (3) Potential of success and (4) Proposal accurateness.
6. Test of the path on the selected businesses (9 companies in total): after contracts with each company/project have been developed to rule the support period, support has been provided in the following fields:
 - **Advisory services:**
 - Advisory services are mainly implemented during direct meetings (at least 3 during the period) and through back office activities (around 40 hours for each group).
 - Advisory services include: Check up of companies' needs, activities' planning, direct support with specific issues (writing a business plan, participating in a call for proposals, communication etc.).
 - Tool "Creative Enterprise Trajectory" developed to check companies needs and plan actions over the period.
 - **Training Sessions on Business Management.**
 - **On demand consultancy - 16 hours consultancy per group on specific subjects** (contracts, business administration, business plan development, sales and marketing).
 - **Networking services**
 - Each company is associated to a "**mentor start-up**" that has guided new entrepreneurs with operative advice.
 - Contacts identification among possible partners.
7. **Networking event "Create The Net" in Bologna** during the international fair "Research to Business" (Bologna, 8 June 2011)
8. **Pilot project outputs analysis and inclusion of the companies in the start-up community** and in initiatives dedicated to them.

5 Outputs/outcomes

There are 9 companies that have been involved in CREATER implementation.

<p>Apparati effimeri Sector: Communication (Visual design)</p> 	<p>Apparati Effimeri applies new technologies as 3D computer graphics to the advertising field through installations that, when projected on a wall or a building, change its usual look into something surprising and moving, while communicating the desired message.</p> <p>www.apparatieffimeri.com</p>
<p>Crosslab Sector: Communication</p> 	<p>CrossLab provides communication services in the field of cross-culture, the aim being to implement communication campaigns targeting citizens with a migrant background.</p> <p>www.crosslab.it</p>
<p>DEMS Sector: Music</p> 	<p>D.E.M.S. offers high quality ethnic music instruments for beginners and professional musicians. DEMS is a physical - and on line - shop and meeting place to organise seminars and courses.</p>
<p>Esercidistile Sector: Design</p> 	<p>Esercidistile designs, produces and sells new goods using recycled fabrics. Esercizi di Stile has launched a project to give new life to fabrics their customers are sentimentally attached to collecting the fabrics and transforming them in accessories such as hand bags.</p> <p>www.esercidistile.eu www.saisei.eu</p>

<p>La Cassettiera Sector: Architecture</p> 	<p>La Cassettiera will provide on-line services to architects such as: access to softwares, access to technical information, information on space for co-working activities and information on materials localisation.</p>
<p>Otago Sector: Publishing</p> 	<p>Literary Agency providing intermediary services to authors and communication and other services for the publishing sector.</p> <p>www.otago.it</p>
<p>TITITOM Sector: Music</p> 	<p>TITITOM is an original and patented music instrument to teach rythm. TITITOM is completed with a multimedia tool, teaching method and materials.</p> <p>www.tititom.com www.arthanetwork.com</p>
<p>Tiwi Sector: Video production</p> 	<p>TIWI designs and produces videos – with motion graphics technology - to effectively present complex ideas, services, data and products.</p> <p>www.tiwi.it</p>
<p>Youtool Sector: Design</p> 	<p>Youtool will provide e-learning tutorials for designers and industrial companies.</p> <p>www.youtool.it</p>

6 Reflections and recommendations

Importance of networks

The collaboration with EU partners and local actors in the culture and creative fields has been a key aspect at all stages. In collaboration with the EU partners, it has been possible to develop a service package building on their experience in the sector. In collaboration with local partners, it has been possible to adapt the service package to local features, promote the pilot project – among new creative companies especially – give more visibility to selected companies and help them exploit other opportunities.

Support provided in a regular basis

The support package has been studied to follow companies over a defined period on a regular basis. The package has been integrated to other initiatives dedicated to start-ups in Aster-Emilia-Romagna in order to maximize resources and results. In addition, after the support period, the companies will be integrated in other initiatives available in Emilia-Romagna for start-ups (i.e. information on resources, training sessions, participation in business fairs etc.) and in particular those developed within “EmiliaRomagnaStartUp” (www.emiliaromagnastartup.it) an initiative launched by Aster and the Emilia-Romagna regional government (Department for Productive Activities) to provide services to the start-up community.

Creative companies included in the start-up community in Emilia-Romagna

Creative companies supported within CREATER were not among the main targets of regional policies to help innovative start-ups. Those initiatives mainly focus on “technology” content companies whereas none of the selected companies are new technology developers. Those companies were lacking information on available opportunities and therefore they were not able to take advantage of those. Being part of this pilot project has enabled them to access some of those opportunities. For instance, four companies have been selected to participate in the area Start2B dedicated to Italian innovative start-ups within the international fair Research to Business in Bologna² on 8-9 June 2011. Among 85 start-ups, two companies (Apparati Effimeri and Crosslab) have been awarded the first and second prize for the most innovative ideas.

Help creative companies identify and integrate competences

Another aspect of the pilot project is that it has enabled concrete collaborations to be developed between CREATER companies and technology companies. CREATER companies were missing technology competences to develop specific projects and the networking activities with the start-ups community has helped them solve this issue.

² <http://www.rdueb.it>

7 Conclusion

Creative Growth has had several positive impacts both for supported companies and for our region. As regards positive aspects for companies, the companies have been able to reinforce their management competences, access advice and contacts in new fields and access other opportunities available for the start-up community in the region. As for Aster, it has been possible to develop a service package for a new activity field towards which attention at all levels has been reaching in the last period. For the region in general, CREATER has enabled to further link innovation and creativity with a concrete experience in supporting new businesses in a field that was not identified as the main target of innovation policies until recently. The pilot has enabled therefore to contribute to the building of a "smart, sustainable and inclusive economy".

8 Annexes

Communication material