Project: DesAlps - Design Thinking for a smart innovation ecosystem in AS

Interreg
Alpine Space
EUROPEAN UNION
DesAlps

O.T4.1

DesAlps Strategy for DT inclusion in the AS innovation ecosystem

WP n°:	T4
Author(s):	PP 2 – Padova Chamber of Commerce
Contributors:	All PPs
Type:	R = Report
Dissemination level:	PU = public
Revision:	final
Due Date:	Here the deadline indicated by the Application
Date of submission:	02/2020

DesAlps project is co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) through the Interreg Alpine Space programme.

1

Project: DesAlps - Design Thinking for a smart innovation ecosystem in AS

Table of Contents

Project: DesAlps - Design Thinking for a smart innovation ecosystem in AS

Executive Summary

Design is not just about the way things look; it is also about the way they work. Design creates value and contributes to competitiveness, prosperity, and well-being in Europe. The European Commission aims to accelerate the take-up of design in industrial and innovation activities at European, national, and regional level.

The framework conditions to strengthen DT diffusion were identified in O.T1.1 focusing on Intermediaries and SMEs' role and have as starting point a *state-of-the-art* analysis conducted by the DesAlps project partners. The recommendations for a better framework condition to support DT innovation that will ensure a better sustainability of the DesAlps activities and enable a better global DT diffusion in the Alpine Space are:

- o N°1 Convince Public Bodies or Stakeholder to put DT in their Innovation Program Support Schemes.
- o N°2 Helping organization dealing with DT to structure & stabilize their DT offer
- o N°3 Stimulate joint actions between DT actors/ intermediaries / Trainers
- o N°4 Promote new services to foster innovation & DT for / within SMEs

During the DesAlps project various DT trainings were held and the lessons learned were collected to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of future DT trainings (D.T2.2.2). The main input received from the DesAlps Advisory Board meeting are reported for driving the strategy, focussing on how to organise and conduct future trainings based on the collected experiences (D.T2.4.2).

Taking into account the framework conditions to help DT diffusion, the SWOT analysis conducted, the lessons learned through the experience gained from the training actions and the feedback from the AB, the DesAlps Model for DT innovation paths for SMEs was elaborated by the DesAlps Project Consortium to support SMEs in the framework of the DesAlps project (D.T2.4.4).

Project: DesAlps - Design Thinking for a smart innovation ecosystem in AS

The Model, to be intended as a comprehensive DT innovation path (guidelines, methods and materials) for SMEs, has been issued aiming at impacting on 4 levels: SMEs, intermediaries, policy makers and stakeholders. Taking into account these paths, the consortium has realized an assessment tool (questionnaire) to allow SMEs to recognize the path that most fit to their needs.

To reach a broader public, in the framework of the DesAlps project a Design Thinking Teaser (DTT) was created as a toolkit designed specifically to help those who are intrigued by the DT method to become familiar with its tools, working methods, and mindset. All the Design Thinking LABs plus their Design Thinking materials and events are available in the virtual platform www.designthinkinglab.eu.

Considering all the above, for a Design Thinking Ecosystem to strive and flourish an environment that covers the bases and nourishes itself needs to be built. The DesAlps Paper (O.T3.1) suggests 10 steps that need to be covered and looked after to ensure a sustainable Design Thinking Community: 1. create a space; 2. create a big tent (include everyone); 3. mobilize contributors; 4. key attributes of ecosystem (reliability, clarity, impact, innovation, creativity and inspiration); 5. create roadmaps and pathways to success; 6. live the culture; 7. bring all pieces together -fill the gaps; 8. work on the enabling environment; 9. address sustainability; 10. articlutae a visiona and promote it.

The DesAlps Sustainability Plan defines the actions needed to implement permanent actions to increase DT innovation methodology awarenes and use on Stakeholders and Policy Makers. The Plan identifies the necessary steps to be undertaken from the beginning of the project to reach 2 specific objectives: 1) sustainability of 6 DT Labs on PPs venues 2) Mantainance of the DesAlps Virtual Training Center and its business model. The sustainability plan for DesAlps DT innovation methodology (D.T4.1.1.) is the roadmap implemented by DesAlps partners to assure the durability of main DesAlps outputs, that can be summarised within the DT Labs and the DesAlps Community, where the latter is the "frame" able to host the DT Labs activities, to support the cooperation among them and the exchange of knowledge, best practices, etc etc. In particular a survey to collect information by the PPs on the DT Labs

Project: DesAlps - Design Thinking for a smart innovation ecosystem in AS

(Annex 1 - D4.1.1) was elaborated requesting PPs to describe their DT Labs in terms of staff, equipment, experts involved, services provided, connection with overall organization, strategy for the future, expectations and maintenance plan. Annex 2 – D4.1.1 - Model to develop the DT Labs feasibility plan in the form of Case Statement, is a document to be filled in by each PP with their case statement.

The DT Labs maintenance plan (D.T4.1.2) applies mainly to the DesAlps community established with the support of the DesAlps IT platform.

The DesAlps platform available at the following link: www.designthinkinglab.eu, creates a permanent virtual environment to keep the international DesAlps community alive and allows to share information about workshops, seminars, learning opportunities, in the project area.

In the framework of the DesAlps project, Synergies and cooperation are searched and encouraged with the EU Design-driven initiatives. The Intenational Synergy Plan (A.T4.2) identifies common activities during and after the project to strengthen the impact on the Alps area of the DT methods.

DesAlps project is co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) through the Interreg Alpine Space programme.

5

Project: DesAlps - Design Thinking for a smart innovation ecosystem in AS

1. Project Context

The DesAlps project will define new strategies and tools to improve the framework conditions for innovation in the Alpine Space through Design Thinking diffusion, focus on increasing knowledge and know-how exchanging at a transnational level. Therefore, the DesAlps strategy for DT inclusion to strengthen the AS innovation ecosystem needs to be designed in order to strengthen the cooperation among the innovation ecosystem, support SMEs competitiveness, meet social challenges and overcome Alpine barriers.

2. Introduction

To design the DesAlps Strategy for DT inclusion in the AS innovation system a comprehensive review of all the actions undertaken, deliverable produced and results and lessons learned during the duration of the project was undertaken. This allowed to design a strategy for DT inclusion in the AS innovation system and to set up permanent actions to increase DT methodology awareness and transferability and its use by Stakeholders and policy makers.

3. Objective of the deliverable

O.T4.1 output is a report that will summarize the outcomes of the models and concepts developed during the project and will form the basis for the DesAlps follow-up actions that will guarantee the durability of the DT Labs/Training Center and the transferability of the results to other sectors

4. Applied approach/methodology adopted

O.T4.1 it is the outcome of the finalization of previous models and concepts developed during the project. It is the basis for the DesAlps follow-up actions, durability of DT Labs/Training Center and transferability of results to other sectors and it contains the strategic elements improving the framework conditions for innovation.

DesAlps project is co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) through the Interreg Alpine Space programme.

6

Project: DesAlps - Design Thinking for a smart innovation ecosystem in AS

The aim of this report is to design the Desalps Strategy for Design Thinking (DT) inclusion in the AS innovation ecosystem. A comprehensive plan that will collect data, innovation patterns, inputs from Intermediaries (T2), SMEs and stakeholders (T3) and recommendation from the AB and all the Policy Makers involved. It will strengthen the cooperation among the innovation eco-system, support SMEs competitiveness, meet social challenges and overcome Alpine barriers.

DesAlps paper (O.T3.1) DesAlps Model (A.T2.4.4). DesAlps framework conditions (O.T1.1) are the frames for the DesAlps strategy generation.

Inputs will be taken from Annex 1 and Annex 2 of A.T4.1 (Sustainability plan for DesAlps DT innovation methodology - A.T4.1) and from the Synergy Plan (A.T4.2). The aim is to bring out the process that led - during the realization of the DesAlps project - to the creation of local networks.

Feedback and lessons learned (D.T2.2.2) and the recommendations from the AB for further synergies will also be considered (D.T2.4.2).

The Design Thinking Teaser created in the framework of the DesAlps project (D.T2.5.1). will be the crucial toolkit for the transferability of the method together with the web platform https://www.designthinkinglab.eu.

Finally, the results of the pilot actions of T3 will be included (DesAlps Paper O.T3.1).

5. DesAlps strategy for DT inclusion to strengthen the AS innovation system

The DesAlps Strategy for DT inclusion in the AS innovation ecosystem is the outcome of the finalization of previous models and concepts developed during the project and forms the basis for the DesAlps follow-up actions, durability of DT Labs/Training Center and transferability of results to other sectors.

Project: DesAlps - Design Thinking for a smart innovation ecosystem in AS

The Design of the Strategy starts with the identification of the **framework conditions to strengthen DT diffusion.** These were identified in **O.T1.1** focusing on Intermediaries and SMEs' role and have as starting point a state of the art analysis conducted by the DesAlps peoject partners and provided within the 3 first activities of WP1 as follows:

- o Mapping of actual innovation ecosystems from the 5 PPs countries (3.1);
- o Benchmarking and definition of the innovation actors profile and the innovation coach profile (3.2);
- o Analysis of the main EU DT initiatives as well as national and regional policies and practices on DT methods and a synergy plan to set-up a community of representatives of EU, National and Regional initiative, DT oriented (3.3).

From that starting point, a scheme was elaborated describing the framework conditions to be met to improve the attitude of Alpine SMEs to use DT methods for the innovation processes. The scheme was supportive to the subsequent project steps as a framework for action and practical implementation within the DesAlps project.

From the state-of-the-art evaluation activities (WP1), the main following information were provided for the SWOT analysis and the KEY FINDINGS elaboration:

SWOT ANALYSIS:
 The Strengths
  • DT = special service provided, with high differentiation from other support schemes.
  • Rich ecosystem with various actors ready to perform/integrate DT in their SME support process
The Weaknesses
  • Limited perception of what is really Design Thinking (from stakeholders or SMEs)

Project: DesAlps - Design Thinking for a smart innovation ecosystem in AS

- Funding instruments/schemes dedicated to DT support is lacking
- Limited visibility / collaboration between organizations

The Opportunities

- Willingness of Public bodies & Stakeholder to raise their level of DT awareness
- Open innovation & new user centric approaches for innovation project/programs

The Threats

- DT not explicitly mentioned in RIS
- Demonstrate DT added value to Public bodies & stakeholders (impact & Com)
- Maintain DT support for SMEs in the duration (funds and incentive programs)

KEY FINDINGS:

2 « types » of Innovative Regions are collaborating in the DESALPS project:

- Fast Growing sectors / SMEs & startup providing R&D activities or bricks
- Strong Industrial sectors/ industrial companies providing components or subcontracting activities

DT in the Regional Innovation Strategies:

- Not explicitly mentioned in RIS (Regional innovation Strategy) from PP's regions,
- Public Bodies have a Limited perception of what is really Design Thinking
- Already some good practices implemented / tested in some region that PP will share during WP2 implementation

From the 46 Online filled Surveys:

- DT Actors and Innovation support intermediaries need to better know each other, and are keen to work in joint actions at a regional scale,
- DT actors and Innovation support intermediaries declare financial difficulties to propose DT services on a regular basis,
- DT services structuration is necessary to stabilize a strong and visible offer from SMEs (as clients) and stakeholders (as cofounding partners).

Project: DesAlps - Design Thinking for a smart innovation ecosystem in AS

- Several lacks pointed out by DT & Innovation actors:
  - Public funding and /or program to strengthen Design approach in SMEs project strategy
  - More Training (for the SMEs, for the intermediaries/trainers) on DT method & tools
  - More visibility on other DT offers at regional area to build joint actions.

The following are the **recommendations** for a better framework condition to support DT innovation that will ensure a better sustainability of the DesAlps activities and enable a better global DT diffusion in the Alpine Space:

N°1: Convince Public Bodies or Stakeholder to put DT in their Innovation Program Support Schemes.

N°2: Helping organization dealing with DT to structure & stabilize their DT offer

N°3: Stimulate joint actions between DT actors/ intermediaries / Trainers

N°4: Promote new services to foster innovation & DT for / within SMEs

During the DesAlps project various DT trainings were held and the **lessons learned** were collected to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of future DT trainings **(D.T2.2.2).** During the 2-days DT »train the trainer« joint session in Germany, 28 participants from all DesAlps partners were trained to become DT coaches (WP 2, T2.2). The aim was to start practice DT in person to share and acquire a common level of knowledge in DT. Besides that, training actions for DT innovation coaches took place in three different workshops through joint cooperation among partners in Slovenia, France and Austria. Thereby the existing knowledge of DT was built up, more experiences in the practical doing of the methodology was collected and the competences of facilitating a DT training were improved. The key feedback and lessons learned from all DT training activities were collected in order to:

- Record good practices that can be repeated in future DT workshops in the DT labs to bring similar positive results;
- Collect failures to learn from and guide the DT facilitators in future to

avoid them;

o Improve the performance of the DT workshops;

o Decrease the preparation time of a DT workshop by not reinventing the wheel every time for a new workshop;

o Create an open learning environment.

The feedback and lessons learned were used throughout the project duration and will have a sustainable usability. The main findings and are reported in the two figures below:

Project: DesAlps - Design Thinking for a smart innovation ecosystem in AS
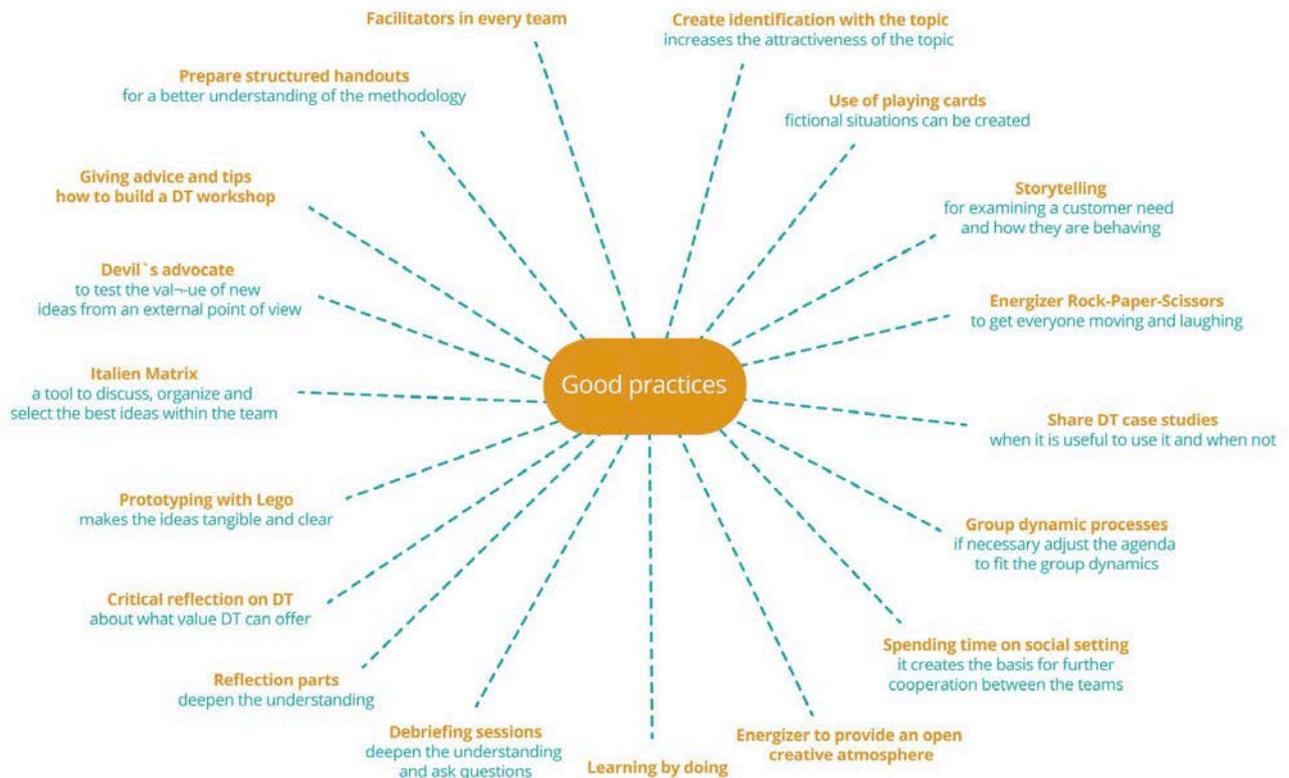
Moreover, the main input received from the DesAlps Advisory Board meeting are reported for driving the strategy, focussing on how to organise and conduct future trainings based on the collected experiences as follows (D.T2.4.2):

o   More uses of real cases from companies/industries: privilege practical aspects according to needs and interests;

o   DT knowledge has to be checked before the training, avoiding different levels in order to encourage the participation and interaction to get more involvement and efficacy also through specific exercises to stimulate and raise creativity;

o   Trainers have to create an innovation-friendly setting, oversee all the processes and solve conflicts contributing to develop ideas smoothly;

o   Trainers have to focus on the development of the DT process more than on the organisation of the session and also it is recommended to prepare a common challenge in advance, so participants can focus on the process and not on the idea. Before starting, it is important to

show the company the whole process they will go through in order to give the right perspective and the right expectations;

o Avoid performing workshops that are too short;

o During pilot actions it will be important to remember that sometimes facilitators and companies have different goals, this means that is crucial to have a sort of agreement between companies and facilitators before starting the process: sometimes DT is more useful to find problems than to solve them so sometimes the main goal can be to find where the problem is. In order to avoid wrong expectations, it is also recommended not to ask companies to find their problems in advance.

The AB also suggests:

o Synergies with EU initiatives are to be encouraged (particularly DESIGN EU-ROPE Initiative);

o Cooperation with past and/or running projects (at AS and not only) are a «must»;

o At regional level, DT should be part of the «innovation» axis of OP ERDF 2021-2027. At the moment it isn't in the majority of the situations. A strong action addressed to policy makers and Regional Authorities to include it is necessary;

o Technological Innovation is still the most important topic funded by EU. Design-oriented innovation lacks attention and dedicated funds;

o Design thinking can have an opportunity of further development and dedicated call for proposals, looking at the Cross-fertilization activities aiming at unblocking the potential of Cultural and Creative Industries with traditional industrial sectors;

o Design thinking and Digital innovation is a relationship to be further investigated even because of the focus that will be addressed by EU Programmes with 2020+

o Design Thinking should be part of other Funding Programmes (ERASMUS+; e-creative Europe; COSME, etc) and not be limited to direct EU Commission.

Project: DesAlps - Design Thinking for a smart innovation ecosystem in AS

Taking into account the framework conditions to help DT diffusion, the SWOT analysis conducted, the lessons learned through the experience gained from the training actions and the feedback from the AB (see above), the **DesAlps Model for DT innovation paths for SMEs** was elaborated by the DesAlps Project Consortium to support SMEs in the framework of the DesAlps project **(D.T2.4.4).** The Model, to be intended as a comprehensive DT innovation path (guidelines, methods and materials) for SMEs, has been issued aiming at impacting on 4 levels: SMEs, intermediaries, policy makers and stakeholders. Four different kinds of DT paths for SMEs were defined as starting point, both to assess SMEs for an effective well-tailored assistance and to transfer knowledge to the operators in charge to assist them, considering that the DT paradigm can assume different forms and interpretations according to the nature of the companies involved, the specific challenges and the objectives of the innovation project, as follows:

- o Design Thinking as creative problem solving: a human-centred, traditional approach to innovation, that draws from the designer's toolkit to integrate the needs of people, the possibility of technology, and the requirements for business success. Companies innovate understanding the needs of the user and imagining the highest range of possible solutions to respond to their needs, and then narrowing the field until the final solution;

- o Design Thinking as sprint execution: technology driven approach aiming at delivering products ready to be launched on the market in line with users' needs, not just designing a product concept on or an innovative idea. The focus is on solutions, instead of the problem and users, which have a fundamental role, do not enter in the process directly but their feedback are collected through daily and permanently processes;

- o Design Thinking as Creative confidence: focuses on engaging people to create an organizational culture and a mentality suitable to face with confidence the processes of innovation, aiming at nurturing mind-sets and shaping the organizational culture, which are the fundamental premises for any kind of innovation: products, service, processes, business models;

Project: DesAlps - Design Thinking for a smart innovation ecosystem in AS

o Design Thinking Innovation of meaning: a novel vision based on criticizing, aiming at redefining the problems worth addressing, proposing a new reason why people use something, a new value proposition, a new vision. Organizations envision scenarios to support the search for new meaning.

Taking into account these paths, the consortium has realized an assessment tool (questionnaire) to allow SMEs to recognize the path that most fit to their needs. The tool is composed by questions directly linked to the 4 paths , SMEs will fill in the questionnaires (1-5=from less to strong importance to achieve innovation goals)   and the results of the questionnaire will help Partners/experts for their work with the company

To reach a broader public, in the framework of the DesAlps project a **Design Thinking Teaser (DTT) (D.T2.5.1)** was created as a toolkit designed specifically to help those who are intrigued by the DT method to become familiar with its tools, working methods, and mindset. The shape of the toolkit was chosen not with the aim to make people autonomous or to transmit an entire mindset, but to let people test the methodology and understand what it is about. The purpose of the DTT is also to let people experience a different mindset and thinking process than they are used to and it is based on a typical starting situation of a SME aiming for innovation to stimulate a collaborative and collective way of working within the groups in which it is used to work. The Teaser is structured for a 1-2 day learning introduction that suits the need of the AS SMEs that need shorty and concise training and will serve as a guide to understand if a more deep and structured path for the business following the Design Thinking methodology need to be activated.

The DTT was developed following the "Double Diamond process" and it does not offer solutions. Instead, it offers techniques, methods, tips and templates to support everyone involved in the SMEs world through the Design Thinking process and it contains the fundamental and basic tools of the DT methodology, the ones that are considered fundamental and basic to transmit the mindset.

One of the fundamental ingredients of the Design Thinking methodology is

the concept of collective intelligence: a way of working based on the comparison and collaboration of different individuals with different perspectives and backgrounds that generates richer and more stimulating conversations and consequently more solid and innovative ideas. The toolkit should be used in a group of a minimum of 3 and a maximum of 5 people, as heterogeneous as possible, taking into account not only the sector of origin in the company, but also the age and gender. The heterogeneity of the members of the group ensures a fruitful exchange of ideas and opinions, as it brings to the table not only a different perspective on the work, but also different personal and cultural backgrounds.

For optimal management of the activity, the guidance of an expert facilitator on the methodology of DT is recommended. Another useful element to foster a collaborative working environment, in which people can express themselves and work fruitfully, is a suitable space that supports and favours the approach to the new mindset. For example a room with natural lighting, so that people stay awake and focused during the work. More details and suggestions can be find in the DT Teaser (D.T2.5.1). All the Design Thinking LABs plus their Design Thinking materials and events are available in the virtual platform **www.designthinkinglab.eu**.

Considering all the above, for a Design Thinking Ecosystem to strive and flourish an environment that covers the bases and nourishes itself needs to be built. The **DesAlps Paper (O.T3.1)** suggests the following 10 steps that need to be covered and looked after to ensure a sustainable Design Thinking Community.

1. Create a space. Various elements constitute a workspace that is an inspiring worhshop space: mobility and flexibility (possibility to change the equipment/elements easily and quickly), keep it simple (everything should be self-explanatory for a group of people with very different background), courage to imperfection (unfinished place/piece of furniture and not too expensive/perfect as it will keep the participants from using it), and DT Lab elements are recommended.

Project: DesAlps - Design Thinking for a smart innovation ecosystem in AS

2. Create a big tent (include everyone). For a successful and vivid Design Thinking environment, a diverse group of individuals, with different experiences and expertise is needed, together with a facilitator that will help include everyone and regularly connect with different networks of entrepreneurs, designers, students, entrepreneurs/designers, public & private stakeholders and innovation experts. SMEs may prove difficult to convince as their daily business takes up all their time. Internal communication channels can be tapped to reach members of the organization, associated SMEs networks (clusters) and linked communities. In order to get the first attention, it's advisable to offer free workshops and events, which introduce and tie successful projects and involved SMEs to the DT Labs. To direct interest and attention to the DT Lab and process, a suggestion is to start dedicated calls for tenders.

3. Mobilize contributors. Mobilizing contributors will first have to happen through existing alliances and cooperation with the stakeholders in the local area. In order to find and train the intermediaries and experts there are several things which need to be taken into consideration to achieve a reliable outcome as: explore all the phases proposed by the DT approach, choose the DT challenge wisely, pick one case study, prefer quality over quantity, take time for the activities and sum them up in a report. Workshops elements and tools need to be applied taking into account the good practices and lessons learned (see D.T2.2.2 Feedback and lessons learned brochure).

4. Key attribute in the ecosystem are: reliability, clarity, impact, innovation, creativity and inspiration.

5 Create roadmaps and pathways to success. There are different ways to support companies and participants in the Design Thinking process. This roadmap is just one of these: teaser, deep dive, homework, valuation and review. Methods and tools to evaluate the overall method DT are user feedback, DT activities, s-t results, KPIs. Reflection, working culture. DT is a quite versatile and flexible approach and can fit most every challenge, if

precisely investigated. However, a checklist for a first rough estimate to evaluate if the method fits the challenge is:

Checklist:

1. Is there a need for innovation?
2. Is there a plan for the implementation?
3. Is there an experienced facilitator?
4. Do you have full support from the management's side?
5. Is the setting right (room, location, etc.)
6. Do you have the necessary competences within the DT teams?
7. Is it possible to focus on user needs?

➔ *If the answer to all questions with "YES", then the method fits the challenge*

Tools and methods to ensure the transferability of the workshop outcomes into the company: developing a new idea/product or service may be challenging. However, to implement the workshop outcomes into the company may prove even a little bit tougher. Here are a few tips on how to manage this big obstacle:

o Share the workshop material: make sure to involve everyone in the company and make them see the big picture and vision;

o Case studies and presentations: Sometimes it might look like an impossible task to implement something completely new. Case studies may help to create an idea and direction, where this new development may lead to;

o Implement activities to involve colleagues, to show them the benefits, e.g. visiting a service design studio to get in touch with an expert;

o Schedule regular sessions to reflect on the status of the implemented process/product.

6 Live the culture. Design Thinking isn't just a workshop method, but should rather be implemented as a core value within the organisation.

18

7. Bring all pieces together-fill the gaps. Having DT facilitators that ensure the coordination and communication on the activities is key and regular commitment of the expert Designers and innovation stakeholders.

8. Work on the enabling environment. A digital environment often proves as the easiest way to maintain relationships and guarantees flexible schedules and members' reliability. A great tool to support an innovative environment is a well-defined policy inception strategy. Funding schemes can be an easy and effective way of guiding the region into an innovation-driven environment.

9. Address sustainability. The DT Lab will help entrepreneurs figure out new ways to innovate and find solutions with the end users for a more sustainable development. A good idea needs support and collective help should be considered. The Lab and the promotion of DT to support innovation process in SMEs needs to be supported by public funding (local authorities, BPI...) and specifically by the Region: In France, the SUDLABS label is an opportunity, which helps to trigger its successful integration and help SMEs get access to DT support.

10.Articulate a vision, promote it. Every DT Lab which was created in the course of the DesAlps project has a specific focus, which they specialize in.

In order to implement innovations, a 5-step approach has been created, to allow **tracking** the process, but also to have a rough idea of which core activities and tasks are required. Contrary to the well-known Double Diamond process, the 5-step approach puts into consideration that each phase doesn't need equal amounts of time but rather differs in the time that needs to be invested into it.

This approach mainly focuses on prototypes as the outcomes of the Design Thinking process. It should be also noted, that the challenge will increase the knowledge of involved employees and adapt their work approach into a more user-centered focus: discover, define, develop, deliver, test (as better described in O.T3.1DesAlps Paper)

Project: DesAlps - Design Thinking for a smart innovation ecosystem in AS

In order to present the durability and performance of a DT process, it is important to understand that a scalable solution will be the result of many attempts and ideations.

If companies actively deal with innovation, there are generally three types of organisations, which are an indicator of their innovation maturity.

The first organisation has an internal department of innovation, the second one has the innovation agendas outsourced and the third, most innovative stage of organisation has the processes and innovative mindset internalized into its DNA. Every part of the company thinks and works towards innovation and it is part of every-day work.

Finally, the DesAlps Sustainability Plan will define the actions needed to implement permanent actions to increase DT innovation methodology awarenes and use on Stakeholders and Policy Makers. The Plan will identify the necessary steps to be undertaken from the beginning of the project to reach 2 specific objectives: 1) **sustainability of 6 DT Labs on PPs venues** 2) **Mantainance of the DesAlps Virtual Training Center** and its business model.

The sustainability plan for DesAlps DT innovation methodology **(D.T4.1.1.)** is the roadmap implemented by DesAlps partners to assure the durability of main DesAlps outputs, that can be summarised within the DT Labs and the DesAlps Community, where the latter is the "frame" able to host the DT Labs activities, to support the cooperation among them and the exchange of knowledge, best practices, etc etc.

According to the DesAlps Project, two different plans need to be elaborated:

- D.T4.1.2: DT Labs maintenance Plan: this plan will be the result of the collection of plans by each DT Labs. Two dedicated Annexes (Annex 1 and Annex 2) will support the elaboration of them;

- D.T4.1.3: DesAlps Virtual Training/Community follow-up plan: this plan will be elaborated by CCIAA PD in strict cooperation with the LP and shared with the DesAlps partnership for contributes and validation. Annex 3 of this methodology will support the elaboration of this plan.

Project: DesAlps - Design Thinking for a smart innovation ecosystem in AS

The six steps for building a sustainability plan are:

1. Identify What Needs to be sustained
2. Identify What Resources Are Required
3. Create Case Statements
4. Determine Funding Strategies
5. Identify Potential Partners
6. Action Plan

The Roadmap for the elaboration and finalization of DesAlps sustainability plans consists in the following:

o Model for the Survey to collect information by the PPs;
o Model to develop the DT Labs maintenance plan in the form of Case Statement;
o Template to develop the DesAlps community maintenance plan

In particular a **survey to collect information by the PPs on the DT Labs (Annex 1 - D4.1.1)** was elaborated requesting PPs to describe their DT Labs in terms of staff, equipment, experts involved, services provided, connection with overall organization, strategy for the future, expectations and maintenance plan.

Annex 2 – D4.1.1, **Model to develop the DT Labs feasibility plan in the form of Case Statement** is a document to be filled in by each PP with their case statement.

Every case, like a story, should have a beginning, middle, and end. The beginning presents the problem/solution met with DesAlps project with evidence and the end is the call to action, where other actors to support are involved for the follow-up plans of the DT Lab. The case statement should:

• Build interest on the targets of users (customers)
• Stimulate participation at local level by stakeholders
• Make a call to support by public and private investors

The elements of a case statement also include:

• A description of the organization, its mission, and its history.

Project: DesAlps - Design Thinking for a smart innovation ecosystem in AS

- A sense of urgency. This reminds the reader of how pressing the need is and how it must be dealt with immediately.
- Making it happen. This describes what will be required to meet the need

The **DT Labs maintenance plan (D.T4.1.2)** applies mainly to the DesAlps community established with the support of the DesAlps IT platform (https://www.designthinkinglab.eu/). The community is gathering all DT Labs and helps them to cooperate and interact. In the framework of the project a specific template of a survey for the collection of info about the general aspects was circulated to harmonize partners contributions and to collect information about local DT Labs. A brief overview of the main results for Italy, France, Slovenia, Germany and Austriais reported below:

In Italy only a DT lab will be realised for Veneto Region in Treviso under T2i coordination. The T2i DT Lab provides training for group of companies, training for single companies, training for schools and experience exchange for innovation experts. Galileo Visionary District was hired as external expert.

The French DT Lab will be organized with the DT Lab located at TVT Innovation in the Digital Innovation Center of Toulon and a regional DT network of stakeholders involved in the DT activities (DT training and support). The lab provides Design Thinking trainings, DT Tools, Support to innovation projects, Coordination of regional stakeholders, A network of designers, Communication on DT using social networks, websites and the Desalps DT online platform.

In Slovenia only a DT lab will be realised in Ljubljana offering workshops.

In Germany the DT lab will be one located in Stuttgart. The Lab provides the following services: 1. activity: Speeches and discussions about opportunities & challenges of digital change - importance of human centered design. 2. activity: Workshop DT and impro theater, topic: "Beyond methods – agile is an attitude", with the aim of getting to know the attitude and mindset behind Design Thinking. 3. activity: Design Thinking crash course, with the goal of demonstrating the DT process in a practical way which allows

Project: DesAlps - Design Thinking for a smart innovation ecosystem in AS

learning by doing by going through the whole DT process. 4. activity: "Design Thinking meets Blockchain" with the aim of developing new business models with Design Thinking and the Blockchain technology. 5. activity: Innovation Learning Journey, Kick Off with deep coaching session focused on status quo and expected goals after the DT process for the selected SME from the open call. In Austria the DT lab will be one located in Linz providing DT Teaser, DT Deep Dive Custom made DT Workshops for each Phase of the "double diamond".

The **DesAlps platform** available at the following link: www.designthinkinglab.eu, creates a permanent virtual environment to keep the international DesAlps community alive and allows to share information about workshops, seminars, learning opportunities, in the project area. The costs for its domain maintenance will be covered by LP after the end of the project and its use will be free for DesAlps partners. Ordinary activities will be performed to support its maintenance such as: promote events on Design Thinking topic; share miscellaneous content related to Design Thinking topic; increase the community of experts and contributors. The communication strategy is basically linked to the visual identity of the community: each partner, who has the right to use the logo, will use the label in its institutional website, in connection to activities directly linked to design thinking and namely to the Design Thinking Lab. For the networking the platform is a complementary instrument and a useful tool for all individuals and companies who attended the event organized and that want to remain connected to the DesAlps network and to receive updated information on local and international events. Finally, for the funding strategy, although not currently envisaged, in the event the community will reach a consistent audience (quantified in 500 active users) and will start to gather the attention of the public, LP and partners will assume the right to introduce a fee for accessing specific sections of materials and case studies, in order to cover the increasing effort to manage a larger community. A formal agreement on the minimum effort to be carried out by each partner

in order to guarantee the efficacy of this strategy will be signed among consortium before project closure. Also, a specific section will be dedicated to the use regulation of the DT LAB logo.

A systematic exchange with the EU initiatives and EUSALP working groups will be planned in order to avoid duplicates of existing actions. Synergies and cooperation will be searched and encouraged also through a specific networking event. DT Labs will continue the cooperation and meeting after project end, in order to exchange best practices, event and opportunities on DT on a transnational level. Policy Makers from other regions involved in defining the synergies.

In the framework of the DesAlps project, Synergies and cooperation are searched and encouraged with the EU Design-driven initiatives. The **Intenational Synergy Plan (A.T4.2)** identifies common activities during and after the project to strengthen the impact on the Alps area of the DT methods.

Purpose of Intenational Synergy Plan is to define, support, encourage and sustain synergies and cooperation of DesAlps project partners with the EU Design-driven initiatives and relevant stakeholders in the DT ecosystem: to intensify common activities identified during and after the project to strengthen the impact on the Alps area of the DT methods and to serve as a tool partners can use national and international stakeholder development.

In the first phase of development of the Synergy Plan project partners have contacted national and regional stakeholders active in DT activities. The information has been collected based on prepared questionnaires. Advisory board members provided resources that helped create sustainability.

The research methods that were used in the study in the beginning of the project were interviews, observations and benchmarking. Services that were studied were design thinking services. Stakeholder mapping is a collaborative process of research, debate, and discussion that draws from multiple perspectives to determine a key list of stakeholders across the entire stakeholder spectrum. As an initial step in stakeholder analysis, classifying the

stakeholders into defined groups assisted in the next, more detailed steps. Developing relationships results in increased trust. And where there is trust, people work together more easily and effectively. Investing effort in identifying and building stakeholder relationships can increase confidence across the project environment, minimise uncertainty, and speed problem solving and decision-making. There are five steps to developing a stakeholder engagement plan: classify stakeholders, developing power/interest grid, define power, define interest, develop the stakeholder engagement plan. The stakeholder communication needs are itemized based on the power and influence. The type of communication and its frequency is specified. For projects stakeholder engagement plans are indispensable. But often the secret to project success is in the continuous improvement of the stakeholder consultation process rather than in rigid adherence to a plan. That is, there is a creative component rather than a purely analytical one.

Stakeholders maps are used to document the key stakeholders and their relationship. When integrating new team members, starting a new project, exploring a new market, or expanding an offering, this activity helps in identifying project stakeholders, their expectations, and relationships. At the beginning of a design project it is important to identify the key stakeholders and their relationships. The Stakeholder Map is an excellent resource for the design team.