

ARDIA – Net
Developing an Alpine Space Research,
Development and Innovation Area
by lowering barriers for cross-regional cooperation

Interreg
Alpine Space



EUROPEAN UNION

European Regional Development Fund



ARDIA-Net

Developing an Alpine Space Research, Development
and Innovation Area

Capacity Building and Piloting based on the ARDIA-Net Cross-regional Cooperation Scheme

Programme priority SO4.1 Increase the application of multilevel
and transnational governance in the Alpine Space

Work package T2 – Capacity Building and Piloting

Activity A.T2.1 – Capacity Building for Implementing Demonstrator Calls
Activity A.T2.2 – Capacity Building for Implementing Demonstrator Projects
Output O.T2.1 and O.T2.2

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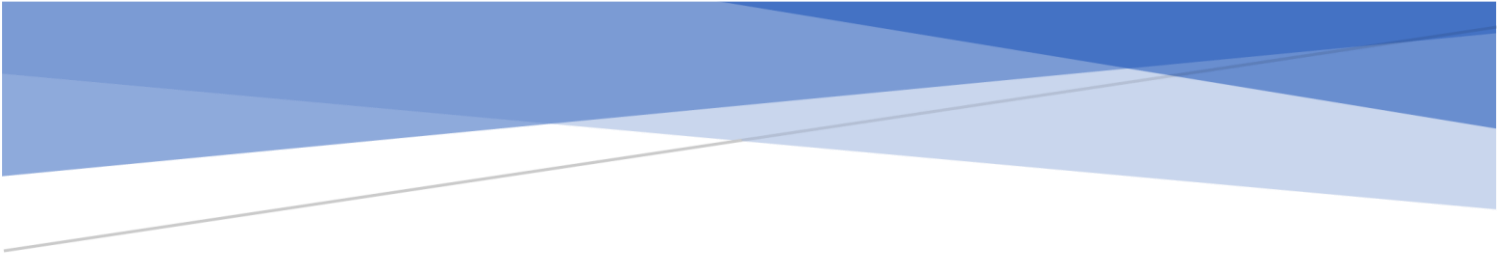
This output report has been produced within the frame of the ARDIA-Net project, funded by the Alpine Space INTERREG Programme of the European Commission. It was prepared on bass of the synopses reports on capacity building activities for implementing cross-regional cooperation schemes and developing cross-regional cooperation RDI project - in the thematic fields of bioeconomy and health economy - performed by the project partners BIOPRO, SC, biz-up, Poly4Eml, BayFOR, ITG Salzburg, HES-SO//FR HEIA-FR and LGCA.

Similar to the deliverables D.T2.1.1 and D.T2.2.1 for the activities in WPT2 the output reports O.T2.1 and O.T2.2 have been combined into one document for a better understanding, since the activities as well as the outputs are very much linked.

Disclaimer

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1. Introduction: Capacity Building and Piloting based on the ARDIA-Net Cross-regional Cooperation Scheme “AlpsConnect Cross-regional Cooperation-scheme”

Since the start of the project the ARDIA-Net consortium discussed different approaches on how to bring the ideas of a cross-regional funding scheme to a common ground. It turned out that there is no ‘one size fits all’ solution which can meet the different regional structures, preconditions and expectations.

During the capacity building phase, the ARDIA-Net consortium was already aware that region-specific approaches were needed for capacity building as well.

There are eight project partners of seven regions with a lot of similarities as well as differences. They belong to the same EU macro-region with common challenges defined in the EUSALP, all of them have a S3 guiding their RDI priorities, they believe in the benefit of cross-regional cooperation and invest in coordination and support agencies (e.g. cluster- or business support organisations). On the other side there are differences in the level experience with synchronizing regional funding schemes, in the structure and framework conditions for S3 implementation, in cooperation and relations to governmental level and programme owners and of course differences in funding programmes’ timeframes and budgets.

8 PARTNERS / 7 REGIONS ...	
Similarities: <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Belong to the same EU macro-region➤ Macro-region challenges identified in EUSALP➤ Smart Specialisation Strategies➤ Believe in the benefit of cross-regional cooperation➤ Coordination and support agencies (e.g. clusters organisations) facilitating cross-regional cooperation	Differences: <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ (No) Experience with Innovation Express➤ Structure & framework conditions for S3 implementation➤ Links and relations to governmental level and programme owners➤ Funding programmes: timeframe of call, available budget, thematic scope
... need realistic solutions for different needs <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ AlpsConnect – Cross-regional Cooperation Scheme	

1.1. AlpsConnect Cross-regional Cooperation Scheme

7 Regions with similarities & differences need realistic solutions for different needs, therefore, AlpsConnect cross-regional cooperation scheme was developed and it was agreed to focus the capacity building activities on those three options of cross-regional funding schemes.

In December 2020 the ARDIA-Net consortia agreed to focus the capacity building activities on 3 options for cross-regional funding schemes based on 2 different approaches.

These are:

- a. Low-key involvement of the regional/national funding authorities → Development of a scheme for cross-regional cooperation which creates added value and fosters cross-regional cooperation, but with a lower impact on the quality of the RDI-cooperation and lower complexity of the scheme design.

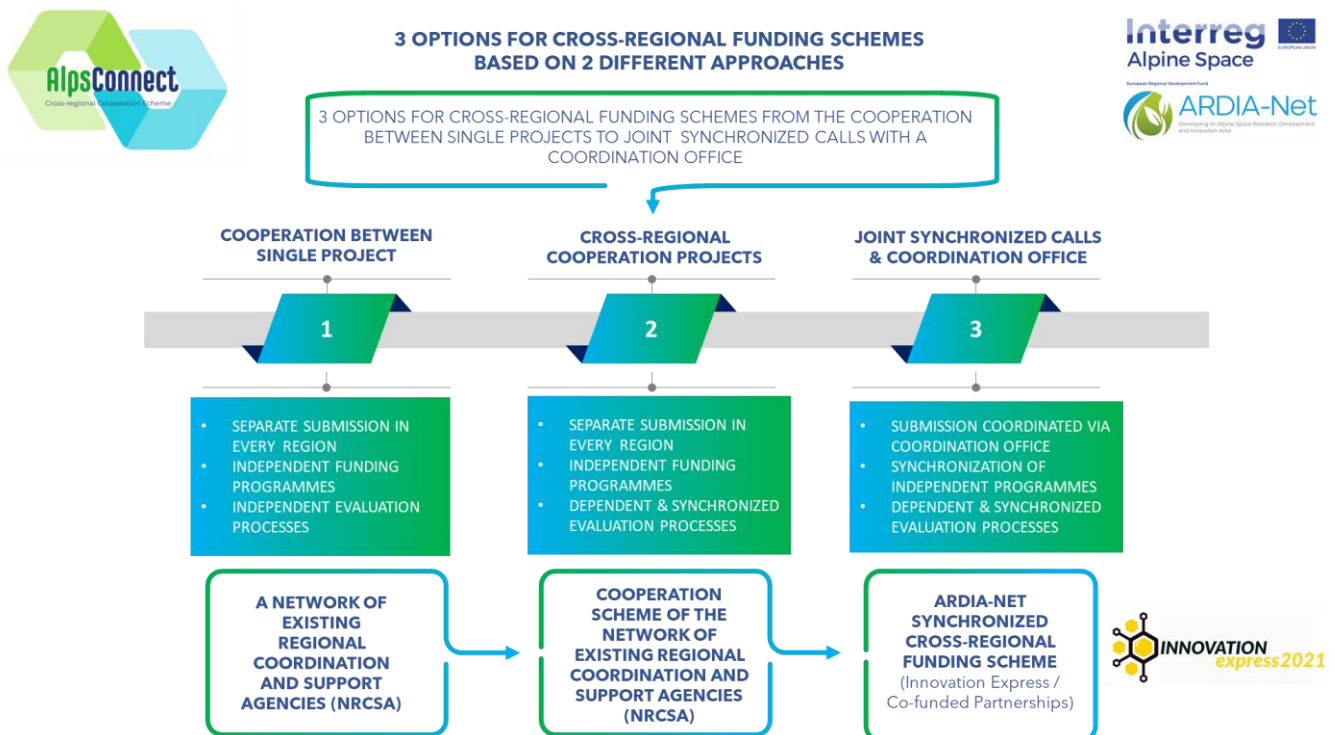
AlpsConnect Cross-regional Cooperation Scheme:

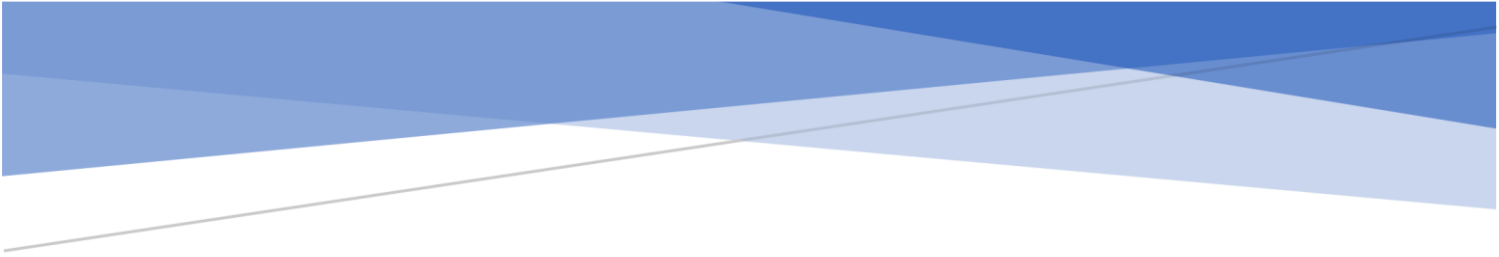
- Option 1: Cooperation between single projects
- Option 2: Cross-regional cooperation projects

- b. High-key involvement of the regional/national funding authorities → Development of a multi-level governance scheme which is expected to create a funding scheme governance structure, depends on several external factors, but with a higher impact on the quality of the joint RDI-cooperation and higher complexity of the scheme design:

AlpsConnect Cross-regional Cooperation Scheme:

- Option 3: Joint synchronized calls & coordination office





For the ARDIA-Net project respectively the developed AlpsConnect Cross-regional Cooperation scheme capacity building was needed to enable regions to set up cross-regional collaborative projects by using existing (regional) funding programmes.

1.2. Capacity Building to overcome Lack of Knowledge

The overall task of WPT2 was to implement capacity building activities to overcome the lack of knowledge on how to concretely facilitate and implement cross regional support schemes. Namely the three options of the AlpsConnect Cross-regional Cooperation Scheme were focused on.

Therefor each region had to conduct at least one capacity building activity (e.g. meeting, workshop, 'training') with their stakeholders to

- develop an understanding of the two approaches and the 3 cooperation options we focus in the project
- identify available funding programmes to be used for option 1, 2 or 3 of the AlpsConnect cooperation scheme
- discuss/define thematic topics (based on S3 strategy) of special interest (particular relevance in the region) and with cooperation potential
- offer facilitated discussion and exchange with same-level colleagues with similar responsibilities and decision-making authorities
- offer proactive support of adjustment between group 1 "buddies" beyond the regional border for identification of a 'window of opportunity' instead of waiting for any lucky coincidence

Further each region had to conduct capacity building for development of demonstrator projects. Depending on the regional possibilities and readiness level each project partner should initialize at least 1 demonstrator project.

1.3. Two different Target Groups (1 and 2)

Promotion of the idea of synchronising regional funding programmes and corresponding capacity building activities were focussed on to two different groups.

The group (1) of programme owners and funding agencies (the administrative/ governmental level responsible for designing, publishing, funding and/or managing calls);

The group (2) of project applicants, e.g., entrepreneurs and SMEs, intermediaries, business support organisations, R&D (university/non-university) and NGOs



2. Capacity Building output at a glance

ARDIA-Net partners performed 20 capacity building activities respectively interactions with managing authorities and/or project applicants/promoters towards the implementation of the AlpsConnect Cross-regional Cooperation Scheme.

Option 3 of the AlpsConnect Cross-regional Cooperation Scheme – the Innovation Express funding scheme – was identified as the most appropriate option at the beginning of 2021.

The very much parallel running work packages 2 and 3 were challenging but ultimately successful. Because, while in frame of work package (WPT3) lead by Anteja ECG the pilot call “Innovation Express 2021” was set up, the project partners were performing regional and cross-regional capacity building activities towards joining this pilot call. Regional and cross-regional capacity building meetings targeted on the one hand the group of programme owners and funding agencies and on the other hand the group of potential project applicants. Depending of the regional readiness to participate at that time the pilot call, regional programme owners made their decisions.

Finally, 4 regions were ready to participate the pilot call and 3 cross-regional cooperation projects were submitted.

Option 2 offers a good opportunity to collaborate for regions with a tradition in cooperation and a trusting way of working with each other. First, a mindset shift may be needed away from the ambitious attempt to unify the funding programmes towards an application process adjusted with the programme owners and facilitated by the regional coordination and support agencies. Therefore, for a common understanding of the application process in the ARDIA participating regions and identification of its bottlenecks a “Customer Journey from the project idea to the funding decision” was implemented with the programme owners in three Austrian regions (Land Salzburg, Lower and Upper Austria).

Subsequently a project factsheet was developed to inform the participating regions that there is a cross-regional project idea in development and ask the responsible facilitators to support their local project applicants in terms of regional funding and application. Already close to project end – end of May – a physical workshop was possible to arrange an by applying the LSP (Lego Serious Play Method) 3 further cross-regional project ideas could be initiated by members of the bio economy cluster Austria.

In regard to option 1 - the cooperation between single projects - it became clear that it is a new and innovative way on how to initiate cross-regional cooperation without regional funding programmes which allow cross-regional cooperation. Of course, it is quite challenging to find the perfect alignment of available cooperation partners in other regions, funding programmes in all involved regions fitting to the joint project idea, and the right timing for all partners involved in terms of project calls, and submission deadlines. Unfortunately, the efforts of Bavaria and Fribourg in creating a cooperation between single projects did not work out.

As a learning from this experience it is expected to be more successful to concentrate on already funded projects in order to generate synergetic activities between them.

Overview capacity building activities performed by ARDIA-Net consortium			Related del.		Options for cross-regional funding schemes			top-down /bottom-up motivation	
organizing PP	Name of activity/workshop	Date	D.T2.1.1	D.T2.2.1	O1 Cooperation between single projects	O2 Cross-regional cooperation projects	O3 Joint synchronized calls & coord. office	1. Strategy 2. Funding Programme 3. Project based	cross-regional
ITG/PP06 & biz-up/PP03	Customer Journey - how to better cooperate and coordinate option 2 funding scheme NÖ,OÖ,SBG	26.03.2021	1			x		1+2+3	x
ITG/PP06	"Green Innovation & Circular Economy" workshop and "Circular Economy Network for Salzburg's Construction & Timber Industry"	26.4.21, 23.6. 21	1	1			x	1+2+3	
ITG/PP06	Capacity Building for joint synchronized pilot call "INNOVATION EXPRESS 2021"	Nov. 21 - Aug. 21	1				x	1+2+3	x
ITG/PP06	Capacity Building for project development and Innovation Express 2021 pilot matchmaking events "INNOVATION EXPRESS 2021"	31.5.21, 15.6.21, 29.6.21		3			x	1+2+3	
biz-up/PP03	Capacity Building for joint synchronized pilot call "INNOVATION EXPRESS 2021"	Dec 20 - Mar 21	1				x	1+2	
Bayfor/PP05 & Hes-SO/PP07	Enabling and Implementing Circular Materials Solutions	2020 / 2021		1	x			3	x
Bayfor/PP05	Capacity Building for joint synchronized pilot call "INNOVATION EXPRESS 2021" and "Cooperation between single projects"	02/21-11/21	1		x		x	1+2	
Bayfor/PP05 & Biz-up/PP03	Capacity Building for cooperation of BayernInnovative and OÖ	1st quarter 21		1	x	x		3	x
HES-SO/PP07	Capacity Building for joint synchronized pilot call "INNOVATION EXPRESS 2021"	2020-2021	1	1	x		x	1+2+3	x
BIOPRO/LP	Info on ARDIA-Net approaches (cooperation scheme), cross-fertilisation of knowledge between ministries (mainly O3)	06.07.2021	1		x	x	x	1+2	
BW (via BIOPRO/LP)	CB building for submitting demonstrator projects related to Innovation Express 2021	June - Oct. 2021		1			x	2+3	x
LGCA/PP08 (Lombardy)	ARDIA-Net presentation and discussion about implementing demonstrator project with regional R&D representatives (mainly O1), March 2021 "Smart Specialisation Strategy for bioeconomy growth", July 2021	Jan - July 21		1	x	x		1+2+3	
SC/PP02 (Lombardy)	Presentation & discussion of 'cooperation scheme', encouraging stakeholders and professional network (mainly O1) of Veneto, Friuli, Switzerland, Austria (Tyrol?)	Jan - June 21		1	x			1+2+3	x
Poly4EmI/PP04	CB workshop with Government office for Development and European Cohesion policy and Ministry of Finance	Dec. 2020 - March 21, 8.4.22	1			x	x	1+2	x
biz-up/PP03	CB Workshop - How not to get lost while synchronizing funding schemes!	16.06.2021	1		x	x	x	1+2	x
LP & biz-up/PP03	Stakeholder Session @ EU Macro Regional Strategies Week	10.03.2022	1		x	x	x	1+2	x
biz-up/PP03 & ITG/PP06	Capacity Building for implementing demonstrator projects (option 2) Lower Austria + Upper Austria+Salzburg	31.05.2022		1		x		1+2	x
Total no. of capacity building activities for implementation of option 1, 2 and/or 3 of AlpsConnet Cross-regional Cooperation Scheme			10		D.T2.1.1 Trainings for preparing the implementation of the demonstrator call (8)				
Total no. of capacity building activities targeting deveolopment/initiation of transnational/cross-regional/cross-sectoral demonstrator projects.				10	D.T2.2.1 Demonstrator projects for S3 cross-regional & cross-sectoral coop. (8)				

2.1. Different approaches depending on the region-specific needs for capacity building

The synopsis reports on the various capacity building activities again confirmed the different collaborative approaches developed through the project and most relevant are listed in the table below.

Different approaches depending on the region-specific needs for capacity building
(Top-down: strategy and funding programme driven | Bottom-up: project based):

Rationale & intentions of capacity building activities:

- ➔ Raising awareness / creating mind-set of cross-regional cooperation potential besides standard EU-funded programmes (e.g. Horizon, Interreg)
- ➔ Presentation of cooperation opportunities and promotion of cross-regional partnerships (within the country) and targeting new financing options
- ➔ Exchange with policy and governmental level to promote AlpsConnect; presentation of AlpsConnect in detail in order to create a common understanding on 'synchronizing funding schemes'
- ➔ Exploring obstacles, barriers and opportunities
- ➔ Exploring the interest of the relevant policy makers and programme owners to synchronize ongoing or upcoming calls
- ➔ Facilitating exchange with experienced Innovation Express participants and external ambassadors
- ➔ Bottom-up approach for confirmation of interest & need of cross-regional cooperation in case of difficult funding situation and hesitating programme owners
- ➔ Exploring the interest of SMEs, universities and RDI organisations to participate in cross-regional cooperation project
- ➔ Discussing topics, interest and expectations for the regions' economy and research areas
- ➔ Connect supply and demand to accelerate innovation on shared priority areas of Smart Specialisation
- ➔ Presenting AlpsConnect to potential applicants for e.g. cross regional cooperation between single projects (option 1), SMEs who look for cross-regional cooperation
- ➔ Identifying potential regional funding programmes applicable to AlpsConnect
- ➔ Evaluation of cooperation potential between regions in a specific topic
- ➔ Advance towards cross-regional cooperation in a specific option of AlpsConnect
- ➔ Learning by doing: capacity building by participating in the development of pilot call Innovation Express 2021 (option 3) and later in the project development process.
- ➔ Initiation and submission of a joint project by applying AlpsConnect cross-regional cooperation scheme
- ➔ Understanding of the application process and handling in different regions, identifying bottlenecks and challenges in application of option 2 by performing a 'Customer Journey' from project idea to funding decision
- ➔ Applying LSP (Lego Serious Play) for elaborating innovative solutions for cross-regional challenges
- ➔ Information on Innovation Express call, the eligibility criteria, funding process and the regional perspective on the thematic focus of the call
- ➔ B2B meeting for project development in frame of Innovation Express 2021

3. A Network of Regional Coordination and Support Agencies

Since all regions invest into coordination and support agencies to boost their regional economy and RDI ecosystem, these intermediaries are connected regionally and cross-regionally. The key role of a Network of Regional Coordination and Support Agencies is to be coordinator and driver for:

- Continuous awareness raising (facilitator & caretaker)
- Promotion of the idea of synchronising regional funding programmes to two different groups: the group of programme owners and funding agencies (the administrative/governmental level responsible to design, publish, fund and/or manage calls); and the group of project applicants, e.g. entrepreneurs and SMEs, intermediaries, business support organisations, R&D (university/non-university) and NGOs
- Supporting the three options of AlpsConnect

In a nutshell, in parallel to the support given by a call Secretariat – relevant for option 3 Innovation Express - a network of this kind would play an essential role facilitating any of the options of the AlpsConnect scheme. That was already proven during the course of ARDIA-Net project, but it could be a mid-term outcome after the end of the project, as far as managing authorities and funding agencies from the Alpine regions are interested to promote this network.

4. Project partners

4.1. Lead Partner - LP

BIOPRO Baden-Württemberg GmbH, Deutschland

4.2. Project Partners - PP

PP2 - SC Sviluppo Chimica SpA, Italy

PP3 - Business Upper Austria – OÖ Wirtschaftsagentur GmbH, Österreich

PP4 - Anteja ECG d.o.o. Koordinator Poly4ml initiative, Slovenija

PP5 - Bayerische Forschungsallianz (Bavarian Research Alliance) GmbH, Deutschland

PP6 - Innovations- und Technologietransfer Salzburg GmbH, Österreich

PP7 - Haute école spécialisée de Suisse occidentale – Haute école d'ingénierie et d'architecture de Fribourg, Suisse

PP8 - Lombardy Green Chemistry Association, Italy

