

NEWS & UPCOMING OPPORTUNITIES



Individual Support Programme

The SMERF Individual Support Programme (ISP) is designed to provide personalized guidance to SMEs on their journey toward future-readiness. Building on insights from the SMERF Diagnosis Tool, the ISP focuses on strengthening the four SMERF pillars.

Through the ISP, SMEs receive:

- Free Individual Mentoring
- Expert Consultations tailored to specific needs
- Access to Cross-Regional Services from leading European partners

Each participating SME will benefit from a custom transformation plan, developed by mentors and experts, ensuring practical steps toward innovation and sustainability. This initiative goes beyond theory—offering actionable solutions and fostering collaboration across regions.

Why it matters:

- Tailored transformation plans based on real data and company priorities
- Direct support for low-tech and medium-tech SMEs to accelerate readiness
- Opportunities to implement practical solutions and leverage specialized expertise for sustainable growth



Study visits

Over the course of few upcoming weeks is the SMERF consortium preparing 16 cross-regional study visits to leading enterprises and top Higher Education Institutions and Research and Technology Organizations across Central Europe. These visits will give SMEs firsthand access to cutting-edge research, advanced technologies, and future market trends.

By learning directly from innovation leaders, participants will gain practical insights to boost transformation readiness and build valuable connections for cross-regional collaboration.



SMERF Final conference

Join us at the Transferability Conference – “Skills for Transformation” on 4 February 2026 in Stuttgart, Germany. This in-person event brings together eight EU-funded projects - including SMERF - to showcase results, share valuable lessons, and explore future strategies for capacity building, skills development, and sustainability across Europe. With an inspiring keynote, dynamic panel discussions, interactive workshops, and networking opportunities, this conference offers practical insights into scaling green, digital, and creative transformation.

Participation is free, but registration is required, so don't miss the chance to connect with experts, entrepreneurs, policymakers, and cultural leaders driving impactful change across sectors.

You can register for the in-person attendance here:

[Register now](#)



The banner features a stylized illustration of a conference room. A woman in a dark suit stands at the front, pointing towards a large screen. The screen displays various icons representing skills, innovation, and business, including a globe, gears, a lightbulb, and a bar chart. Several people are seated at tables in the foreground, looking towards the screen. The overall color palette is teal, yellow, and white.

Transferability Conference

4 February 2026 - Stuttgart

interreg
CENTRAL EUROPE

Co-funded by
the European Union

Capacity2Transform

Skills for Transformation: Empowering Change in the Creative & Entrepreneurial Ecosystem

HIGHLIGHTS OF PREVIOUS MONTHS



SMERF Trainings

The SMERF Trainings were designed to help SMEs become “Ready for the Future” by guiding their transformation journey. Using insights from the SMERF Diagnosis Tool, the program delivered expert-led, practical online sessions focused on four SMERF Pillars (Innovation Culture, Digital Manufacturing, Open Innovation 2.0 & Sharing Economy, and Green & Circular Economy).

Tailored to individual needs and regional contexts, these trainings equipped SMEs with essential knowledge to take their first steps toward future-readiness.

All sessions were hosted online via MS Teams and Zoom and are available on the SMERF YouTube channel:

[SMERF Trainings](#)



SMERF- Behind the scenes workshop for policy makers

On 24 November 2025, an online workshop brought together local and regional public authorities, business support organizations, and policy experts to exchange practical approaches for SME and innovation policies. Experts from Germany and Austria presented proven models and tools for SME innovation, while participants from Poland, Croatia, Italy, Slovakia, and Hungary explored opportunities for knowledge transfer and implementation.

The event fostered cross-regional collaboration and delivered actionable insights beyond policy texts.

SMERF 4th newsletter



InnoGreen Market

On September 23, 2025, the InnoGreen Market event took place within the dynamic setting of the Innovation Forum Industry 2025 in Linz, Austria. The event brought together SMEs, start-ups, and established industrial players from Central and Eastern Europe to collaborate on shaping a sustainable, digital, and resilient future.



Highlights included visionary keynotes on future-proof industry, smart factories, and AI transformation, as well as practical insights from the SMERF session itself.

Experts shared tools for SME support, strategies for innovation culture, and data-driven approaches to business model innovation. The InnoGreen Market proved to be a catalyst for international cooperation and sustainable transformation.



PROJECT PARTNER MEETINGS



Meeting in Opatija

On September 11th and 12th have SMERF partners gathered under the organization of project partner STEP RI in the beautiful city Opatija, Croatia to strengthen joint mission: helping small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) transform, grow, and embrace innovation for a sustainable future.

Among discussed topics were following:

- Exploration of how to support companies through mentorship and tailored programs.
- Preparation of exciting initiatives like the InnoGreen Market and international study visits to connect SMEs with new opportunities.
- Exchange of best practices from innovative regions to bring fresh ideas to less innovative ones.
- Groundwork for stronger cooperation with policymakers and regional authorities.

The atmosphere was filled with widespread discussions, with partners sharing knowledge, experiences, and visions for a more resilient and future-ready SME ecosystem.



SMERF 4th newsletter

What is SMERF?

SME Ready for the Future is an international project supported by Interreg Central Europe (Priority SMART), with its main mission to support low-tech and medium-tech SMEs' transition towards SMERF: SME Ready for the Future and providing new services to Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and Innomediaries (entities either supporting SMEs or closely cooperating with SMEs on innovations development that will enhance their competences and equally support SMEs).

This project is co-financed by the Interreg Central Europe programme and is set to run from April 2023 to March 2026.

The project is being implemented by 8 partners from 7 countries (Poland, Italy, Austria, Germany, Croatia, Hungary and Slovakia).



Partnership

Lead Partner



Wrocław University
of Science and Technology

Wrocław University of Science and Technology

Project partners



Business Upper Austria



Center of Research and
Technologic Innovation s.r.l.



Karlsruhe Institute
of Technology (KIT)



Pannon Business
Network Association



Science and Technology
Park of the University of
Rijeka Ltd.



University of Genoa



TECHNICKÁ UNIVERZITA
V KOŠICIACH

Technical University of Kosice

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 <https://www.interreg-central.eu/projects/smerf/>

 <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100093135880935>

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