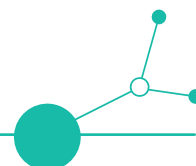


x-Inno Pilot Concept 1

x-Inno Radar

Strengthening transversal soft skills and
cross-sectoral inspiration in industrial
regions



8 2025



Pilot activity 1: Concept

Senior lead: CCIAA Padova (PP4)

Junior lead: KHK KK (PP3)

Contact person: Roberto Sandrini

Email: sandrini@sandriniroberto.it





A. About x-Inno Radar and its Pilots

x-Inno Radar is an Interreg Central Europe project that aims to explore, promote, and integrate soft skills in industrial environments (2024-2027). A consortium of eight non-metropolitan regions, a think tank and a scientific institute runs it.

x-Inno Radar builds on a joint structured approach consisting of three main phases:

1. screenings of the regional soft skill landscapes
2. jointly developed pilot activities
3. regional strategies and policy recommendations

In the 2nd phase “pilot activities”, partner teams test new approaches in four thematically different pilots. These pilots take up the needs discovered in the screening phase. As well, their outcomes feed into the strategic considerations of partners. Each pilot consists of two test zones.

The four pilot themes are:

- (1) **Cross-Innovation:** “Strengthening transversal soft skills and cross-sectoral inspiration in industrial regions” (focus: transversal skills)
- (2) **Level Integration:** “Integrating maker skills in innovation ecosystem of industrial regions” (focus: maker skills)
- (3) **Pioneer Spirit:** “Reviving industrial society’s pioneer skills as basis for transformation” (focus: entrepreneurial skills)
- (4) **Territorial Cooperation:** “Improving skill capacities in industrial regions through territorial cooperation” (focus: networking amongst soft skill stakeholders)

This document here presents the concept for pilot 1 as the respective partner team jointly elaborated it. All four pilot concepts can be found on the project homepage www.x-inno-radar.eu.

B. Pilot Theme: Strengthening transversal soft skills and cross-sectoral inspiration in industrial regions

Up to day, the potential of cooperation / cross inspiration between soft and tech skill realms is rarely tapped in industrial regions hindering innovation. x-Inno responds to this identified short-coming by promoting and showcasing the following two approaches:

- 1 - Creative trainings for introducing transversal skills such as creativity, communication, cooperation, self-reflection in tech oriented economic and administrative settings
- 2 - Living labs as cross-sectoral meeting options for bridging creative and tech skills amongst professionals

This pilot is tailored to upgrade creative skill competences in technologically oriented SMEs and public administrations as well as to improve cooperation between SME from industrial and creative sectors, research, administrations, BSOs.



C. Pilot Test Zone 1A: Creative trainings for introducing transversal skills in tech oriented economic and administrative settings

C.1 Focus

“Creative trainings for introducing transversal skills in tech oriented economic and administrative settings”: formats training activities and peer2peer actions to enhance ability and competence by employees from target addressed on creative skills.

Pilot team:

- Chamber of Commerce of Padova | CCIAA PD - Italy (PP4 | Test zone leader)
- Creative Industry Košice, n. o. | CIKE - Slovak Republic (PP03)
- Regional Development Agency in Bielsko-Biała | ARSSA - Poland (PP07)

Main target groups:

- Industrial SME
- Research
- Municipal administrations and local public institutions (municipalities, provinces, other local public authorities)
- Business Support Organisations (Chamber of Commerce, Entrepreneurial Associations, clusters, etc)

Reference practices:

(1) CCI Competency training for administrative staff, Padova (organised by CCIAA PD)

Between April and May 2021, the Padova Chamber of Commerce held an online training course under the InduCCI project to promote collaboration between public bodies and Cultural and Creative Industries (CCI). Through three modules—mapping CCI ecosystems, introducing Art and Design Thinking, and a hands-on lab—the course engaged 43 participants from chambers of commerce, public authorities, agencies, and creatives. It showed how creativity can improve policymaking, service delivery, and innovation in administration. Combining theory, practice, and peer exchange, the course proved that creative approaches are key to modernizing and humanizing public institutions while enhancing stakeholder engagement.

More info: <https://programme2014-20.interreg-central.eu/Content.Node/InduCCI.html>

(2) TRANSVAL-EU project - Tackling undervaluation of transversal skills, (ARPAL Perugia, Italy)

From 2021 to 2023, the Erasmus+-funded TRANSVAL-EU project tackled the low recognition of transversal skills acquired outside formal education. Piloted in five countries, it developed a 12-skill framework aligned with the EQF and tested tools like portfolios and interviews. In Italy, training centres, companies, and validation authorities engaged in national pilots, with 30 practitioners trained in Perugia. The project concluded with a European toolkit and conference. TRANSVAL-EU demonstrated how to assess and validate informal competences—especially creativity, cooperation, and self-reflection—in tech and administrative fields. Its tools and governance model offer high transferability across Europe, supporting the integration of soft skills into certification pathways and lifelong learning strategies.

More info: <https://www.transvalproject.eu/>



C.2 Conceptual approach

As a pilot team, we jointly defined a harmonised approach that builds on shared best practices while allowing for regional specificity. Inspired by initiatives such as InduCCI Competency training for administrative staff and Transval-EU Project, we agreed to identify training needs to enhance creative skills of public administrations and technical oriented institutions/companies, implement training contents, recruit participants and enhance their attitude for creative skills to carry out their ordinary activities. For that purpose, we will bring in the competences of creative SMEs and BSOs as soft skill providers.

Together, we will develop Peer2Peer activities aiming at sharing experiences, exchange good practices and identify relevant training content and activities during the pilot activities and beyond. These activities will culminate in one transborder peer2peer event organized by PP04-CCIAA PD that foster meaningful interaction, with careful documentation of processes and outcomes. Through a structured follow-up process, we will gather feedback and reflect both locally and transnationally, ensuring that local insights contribute to a shared, cross-border learning experience. In this way, the synchronised local activities reinforce and enrich our collaborative pilot effort, making it a cohesive and scalable reference practice.

C.3 Expected outcomes and desired effects

The pilot aims to enhance competence and ability by employees from organizations (mainly technical and administrative oriented settings) toward creative skills and to create meaningful new connections between administrations and creative communities, sparking collaborations that would not have occurred otherwise. By bringing together these often separate worlds, the initiative seeks to foster greater mutual understanding and open up fresh opportunities for innovation.

Additionally, the pilot is designed to deliver replicable methods for connecting fragmented communities and bridging gaps within regional innovation ecosystems.

Looking ahead, the results of the pilot will feed directly into regional action plans, embedding makers and fixers as active contributors to more effective services addressed to citizens and SMEs. The experiences and insights gained will also serve as a valuable reference for shaping regional soft skill strategies, demonstrating the importance of informal, hands-on learning environments.

On a broader scale, the pilot will contribute to transnational recommendations by drawing on comparative findings from the participating regions. Blueprint development will capture the tested methods and formats in a transferable structure, enabling other regions to replicate or adapt the approach.

C.4 Key activities

- **Training needs' assessment** - Identify training needs by target users to enhance their attitude to use creative skills - each area will organize a peer2peer activity to assess needs and collect relevant inputs for the following steps. Totally 3 local peer2peer activities are organized
- **Development of the training content** - each area will develop well customised training content. The training content, based on different formats, will focus on: a) description of the relevant creative soft skills and the tools that can be used for their valorization; and b) collection of some use cases focusing on the contribution of creative soft skills to: innovation/technology transfer; customers' assistance; provision/design of services; working environment/relationships.
- **Training course implementation** - Realisation of an engaging, thematic programme tailored to employees from local administrations, industrial SMEs and research with the support of Creative agencies, BSO, etc. The training content will focus on: a) describing and discussing creative soft skills and propose tools for their management; b) to apply one/more creative skills with the users to specific topics (innovation and technology transfer, customers' assistance, service design, etc) to verify the added value; c) to evaluate the impact of the creative soft skills and to discuss further their implementation



- **Follow-up** - Collect feedback, reflect on the collaboration process, and report results both locally and transnationally. Organization of one transborder peer2peer activity with the contribution of all engaged partners. As an outcome: follow-up plans to continue the valorization of CCC soft skills.

C.5 Roadmap

Timing	Pilot team / single PP	Joint / local key activities
Preparation phase (Mar - Jun 2025)		
Mar 25	Pilot team	Joint concept development in 2 nd partner meeting Czechia
April 25	Pilot team	Online meeting: follow up joint concept development, translation of joint concept to local regions
May 25	Pilot team	Online meeting: follow up joint concept development, further planning of local pilot ideas and sharing progress
Implementation phase (Jun 2025 - Apr 2026)		
Sept 25	PP04,07	Preparatory activities (recruitment of the participants; assessing training needs, local peer2peer activities)
June 25	PP05	Preparatory activities (recruitment of the participants; assessing training needs, local peer2peer activity)
Sep-Nov 25	PPs04,05,07	Elaboration of the training content (transborder and local activity)
Dec-March 26	PPs04,05,07	Implementation of the training activities addressed to the participants
Nov 25	Project team	Monitoring and sharing inputs for the following activities
Apr 26	Pilot team	Organization of the transborder peer2peer activity; Final reporting of pilot outcomes within the x-Inno network
Assessment and reporting phase (Apr - May 2026)		
Mar / Apr 26	Pilot team	Jointly assessing pilot implementation in 4 th partner meeting Germany
By May 26	Pilot team	Jointly elaborating pilot implementation report
Roll-out phase (Jun - Nov 2026)		
By Sep 2026	PPs04,05,07	Locally defining future action planning based on pilot results
By Oct 2026	Pilot team	Jointly elaborating pilot blueprint



D. Pilot Test Zone 1B: Living Labs as Cross-Sectoral Meeting Options for bridging creative and tech skills amongst professionals

D.1 Focus

This pilot test zone focuses on establishing “Living Labs” as flexible environments for cross-sectoral exchange between professionals from creative industries and technical/industrial. The aim is to foster the visibility and integration of transversal soft skills in tech-driven environments by implementing collaborative formats that allow for mutual learning, trust-building, and experimentation.

Pilot team:

- The Regional Chamber of Commerce of the Karlovy Vary Region | KHK KK - Czech Republic (PP3 | Test zone leader)
- Creative Region Linz& Upper Austria GmbH | CREARE - Austria (PP2)
- Stebo Competence Centre Community Development | STEBO - Belgium (PP8)
- Association of Cultural and Creative Industries Chemnitz and Region (Creative Chemnitz) | Germany (PP10)

Reference practices:

- **Fuck-Up Nights** - a globally recognized storytelling format that celebrates failure as a source of innovation, connection, and personal growth. Sharing stories of failure and how people overcame them helps inspire those thinking about starting their own business. The follow-up discussions about potential mistakes help identify and avoid risks in entrepreneurship.
- **Maker Faire** - a worldwide event concept for DIY enthusiasts, creators, innovators, and small businesses to showcase their work to the public. It helps them reach their target audiences without the high costs of traditional marketing. Makers also gain experience in communication, presenting their products, and receiving valuable feedback on their work.
- **Networking events** held after conferences or workshops - an informal format where people from different backgrounds and industries meet in a relaxed setting. These face-to-face conversations help break down barriers and build personal connections, which can later lead to collaboration or further project development.

These examples were discussed among the project partners and served as inspiration for the proposed local activities.

Main target groups:

- SMEs from creative and industrial sectors
- researchers
- Business support organisations

D.2 Conceptual approach

All pilot partners agreed to use the „Living Lab“ concept as a shared umbrella to run locally rooted but thematically aligned actions. These include creative forms of cross-sector collaboration (e.g. „Ground Zero: Failing as an entrepreneurial baseline for creatives and techies alike“, Creative Collab Talks, Innovation Expos, Collaboration Days), which are set in the real world to overcome sectoral and professional barriers and make visible the role of soft skills for Innovation in tech-oriented environments. Individual local examples of pilot projects have been developed together with regional focus group based on territorial needs. While each partner draws on its own local needs and capacities (e.g. the lack of visibility of the creative industries in Upper Austria, industrial-creative cooperation formats in Belgium, maker space in Saxony or the small business ecosystem in the Karlovy Vary region), the **common framework focuses on:**



- Promoting mutual understanding between creative and tech sectors for future cooperation,
- Making creative thinking and soft skills (communication, collaboration, creativity, adaptability) visible and applicable in a tech-oriented environment,
- Creating low-threshold entry points for networking and trust-building,
- Introducing the "tangible and intangible impact" of creativity to the tech world,
- Sharing of knowledge and formats between project partners (e.g. through joint documentation and dissemination, video storytelling, other outputs).

Additional specific local and transborder activities will be carried out according to local pilot action plan.

D.3 Expected outcomes and desired effects

Expected outcomes include:

- Increased awareness of the value of creativity and soft skills in tech-oriented innovation processes,
- Strengthened networks between industrial SMEs, creatives, and support actors,
- New partnerships, collaborations, and pilot-tested formats transferable to other regions

Long term impacts:

- Incorporation of lessons learned into relevant strategies - RIS3, regional development strategy, education strategy,
- Pilot blueprint development for future Living Labs in similar contexts,
- Transnational recommendations on fostering soft skills through creative-technical cooperation.
- Continuous identification of needs and collection of feedback from meeting participants

D.4 Key activities

Testzone Austria: Creative Collab Talks (CREARE)

- Identification of creative professionals and project partners (companies, etc.)
- Organization of a flagship event in September 2025 in Gmunden, featuring live talks where creative duos (creative + client) present real projects and processes
- Curation of inspiring content that highlights soft skills as enablers of transformation (e.g. cooperation, adaptability, communication, creativity)
- Implementation of a matchmaking session (e.g. speed networking) to foster new connections between stakeholders
- Post-event communication, including videos, articles and best-practice summaries
- Simple feedback loops with participants to assess needs, impressions and potentials
- 05 - 08/25 - preparation, 09/25 implementation, 10-11/25 - Post-event communication

Testzone Germany: Ground Zero (Creative Chemnitz)

- Building meaningful bridges between local industry and the creative maker scene
- The events (evenings) will take place in different Maker Hubs (for instance Löbnitz, Plauen and Augustusburg).
- Each evening will start with a short guided tour through the local Maker Hub, followed by three lectures (1x industry representative, 1x creative entrepreneur, 1x makerspace team member) and then an open exchange of ideas, informal networking.
- 04 - 08/25 - preparation, planning, 11-12/25 implementation, execution, 12/25-01/26 - post-event communication, evaluation

Testzone Belgium: Cross-innovation days (STEBO)

- A one-day inspirational Co-Working event



- Meeting of different actors (entrepreneurs, BSO, research) in key regional sectors (bike industry+mobility, glass industry, fashion, food or repair+circularity), work side-by-side in a shared workspace.
- Stimulate interdisciplinary encounters: Encourage creative and technical profiles to connect outside their usual contexts and explore each other's methods.
- Generate new ideas and collaborations: Shared workspaces lead to spontaneous conversations and connections that spark innovation.
- Support professional development: Structured feedback and networking enhance participants' skills and entrepreneurial mindset.
- 08 - 12/25 - preparation, 01-03/26 implementation, 04-06/26 - post-event communication

Testzone Czechia: Small Business Expo (KHKKK)

- Identification and engagement of small businesses across sectors
- Organization of an expo with exhibitor booths, networking sessions, and workshops
- Delivery of a thematic workshop focused on sharing real-life business experiences, lessons learned, and success stories (empathy, adaptability, cooperation)
- Implementation of matchmaking and speed-networking formats to connect entrepreneurs with peers and stakeholders
- Post-event communication (photo gallery, articles, short videos)
- Participant feedback collection and impact assessment
- 05 - 08/25 - preparation, 09/25 implementation, 10-11/25 - Post-event communication

Collaborative activities at the transnational level (examples):

- Sharing knowledge and formats between project partners (e.g. through joint documentation and dissemination, joint video storytelling and sharing in partner regions)
- Joint concept, joint monitoring and information exchange, joint plan
- bringing together facilitators of the 4 formats for exchanging - both in the run-up and in the follow-up.

D.5 Roadmap

Timing	Pilot team / single PP	Joint / local key activities
Preparation phase (Mar - Jun 2025)		
Feb 25	Pilot team	<i>Gathering information and documents</i>
Mar 25	Pilot team	<i>Joint concept development in 2nd partner meeting Czechia</i>
Jun 25	Pilot team	<i>Detailed elaboration of activities and timetable of the concept</i>
Implementation phase (Jun 2025 - Apr 2026)		
July 25	JS	<i>Approval of the pilot zone concept</i>
July-Aug 25	All PPs	<i>Preparation of Local Live Lab Formats</i>
Sept-Nov 25	Partner 2, 3, 10	<i>Implementation of Local Living Lab Formats</i>
Oct-Nov 25	Partner 2, 3, 10	<i>Post-event communication (videos, articles)</i>
Nov 25	Pilot team	<i>Jointly monitoring of ongoing pilot implementation in 3rd partner meeting Slovenia</i>
Jan 26	Pilot team	<i>Reflections & contributions to x-Inno pilot evaluation</i>
Jan-Mar 26	Partner 8	<i>Implementation of Local Living Lab Formats</i>



Assessment and reporting phase (Apr - May 2026)		
Mar / Apr 26	Pilot team	Jointly assessing pilot implementation in 4 th partner meeting Germany
Apr- May 26	Partner 8	Post-event communication (videos, articles)
Until May 26	Pilot team	Jointly elaborating pilot implementation report
Roll-out phase (Jun - Nov 2026)		
By Sep 2026	PP2, 3, 8, 10	Locally defining future action planning based on pilot results
By Oct 2026	Pilot team	Jointly elaborating pilot blueprint

Disclaimer

This publication has been developed within the x-Inno Radar project, supported by the Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE Programme with co-financing from the European Union. Its content is the sole responsibility of the authors and the project partnership and does not necessarily reflect the views or positions of the Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE Programme, its programme bodies or the European Union. Neither the programme authorities nor the European Union can be held responsible for any use that may be made of the information contained herein.