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Prepared by Plattform e.V.

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Local Action Plan Package

Region	*Thuringia, Germany*
Regional ISIHUB Lead	*Plattform e.V.*
Prepared by	*Plattform e.V.*
Version / Date	*August 2026 – August 2031*

Purpose of this template

The Local Action Plan Package (LAPP) translates the Joint Strategy Agenda (JSA) into region-specific action. It captures action lines, cooperation arrangements and continuation pathways at whatever level of maturity they have reached. Some elements may already be confirmed; others may still be under discussion or potential opportunities.

The LAPP is developed for a five-year period and reviewed annually.

1. Strategic Positioning

1.1 Regional rationale

Thuringia's context is shaped by demographic decline, population ageing, rurality and a predominantly SME-based economy with strong industrial and technological capabilities. While the region has a relatively well-developed entrepreneurship support ecosystem, including ThEx, universities and network organisations, access is not equally distributed. Migrants, international students, women and young people may face barriers related to professional networks, language, unfamiliarity with support structures and administrative complexity. Inclusive entrepreneurship remains comparatively underdeveloped as a distinct focus. The LAPP therefore seeks to connect Thuringia's economic and innovation potential with more inclusive pathways into entrepreneurship and economic participation, while strengthening collaboration among existing support stakeholders.

1.2 JSA priorities advanced

The LAPP primarily advances three JSA priorities. P1 – Lower the financial and administrative threshold is addressed through free and accessible support, practical guidance and flexible participation formats. P2 – Build skills and capabilities through low-threshold learning is advanced through practical, modular entrepreneurship training, mentoring, coaching and peer exchange. P3 – Make support systems navigable through ISIHUB intermediaries is addressed by connecting participants with existing entrepreneurship support structures and creating visible, trusted entry points.

1.3 Implementation logic

The implementation logic builds on the German pilot and translates these priorities into three mutually reinforcing action lines: A1 – Continued Startup Preschools, providing an accessible entry point into entrepreneurship; A2 – Networking events with other support structures, connecting participants with peers, entrepreneurs and support organisations; and A3 – Programming around finding funding, strengthening awareness of and access to financial opportunities. The ISIHUB function provides the connecting layer across all three action lines. Pilot experience demonstrated the importance of trusted local intermediaries, practical learning and flexible access. Further Preschool and networking activities are already planned, while the longer-term institutionalisation of the ISIHUB role and funding-related programming remain under development. The planned Preschools will take place in 2026, with possibility of extension into 2027. The institutionalization of the ISIHUB will take place over the next five years with various organizational and administrative partners.

2. Action Lines

2.1 Overview

ID	Action line title	Target group	JSA priority	Status	Pilot evidence?
A1	*Continued Startup Preschools*	*Migrants (young, students)*	*P2, P4*	*Confirmed, 2026-2027*	*Yes - the format of a weekend-long startup preschool held in English was tested and found very effective in the pilot*
A2	*Networking Events with other support structures*	*Migrants, young people*	*P3*	*Under discussion, to begin in 2027*	*Yes - networking events with other organisations were very popular and opened doors to other support options*
A3	*Programming around finding funding*	*Migrants*	*P1*	*Under discussion, begin by 2028*	*Yes - funding is frequently named as the biggest barrier to starting a business*

2.2 Action lines — details

Action Line — A1	
Title and JSA link	**Title:** *Continued Startup Preschools* **Primarily advances:** *P2 — Build skills and capabilities through low-threshold learning. Also contributes to: P4 - the Preschools are held in English, which is important for participation of migrants*
Rationale and pilot evidence	*This action line addresses barrier 3 (skills and capabilities gap) as well as barrier 5 (particularly practical constraints). The Preschools provide succinct, relevant skills training to migrant students who are interested in starting businesses. The training runs through the basics of building a business, including business model, marketing, and customer base. There is also a particular focus on the legalities of starting a business in Germany and what that can mean for different visa situations. One Preschool was held during the pilot phase, at the end of the Business Skills Programme*

	and was well received by participants. Preschools are held in English, which is important for the participation of international students.
Main activities and target groups	*Two in-person Startup Preschools will be held in November of 2026, in cooperation with Startup Migrants. They will be held on weekends (Friday - Sunday) in Erfurt and Weimar, both cities with large international student populations. Each Preschool is expected to have about 40 participants.* *The main target group for the Startup Preschools is international students. The Preschool held during the pilot phase was also mainly attended by international students. The weekend format works well for them as it does not conflict with class schedules and allows for a lot of information to be given in a short amount of time. The expected 40 participants per Preschool is based on the Preschool held during the pilot phase as well as others led by Startup Migrants.*
Key actors	**Lead / coordinator:** *CGE Erfurt e.V., Startup Migratns* **Other actors:** *Plattform e.V. (confirmed), University Startup Services (confirmed), ThEx (in discussion)*
Expected contribution and possible policy/funding links	**Expected contribution:** *The Startup Preschools are expected to provide a solid knowledge base for migrant students wishing to start businesses in Germany. They are compact and contain specific modules for the target group, answering questions about legalities and visa issues.* **Possible policy/funding links:** *This round of Startup Preschools is funded by the German Postcode Lottery. Plattform e.V. has partnered with Startup Migrants to successfully apply for this funding in the past. This time CGE Erfurt e.V. is the official partner. This funding source is expected to continue being an option for hosting Preschools in Thuringia. Current funding is for 2026, and there is the expectation of continuing in 2027, with 2-3 Preschools taking place each year.*

Action Line — A2	
Title and JSA link	**Title:** *Networking Events with other support structures* **Primarily advances:** *P3 — Make support systems navigable through ISIHUB intermediaries.*
Rationale and pilot evidence	*This action addresses the institutional fragmentation and navigation barrier. First-time founders, particularly international ones, are often unsure where they can turn for help to start their businesses. There are offers from other organisations and institutions, however, many of them are offered or advertised only in German. Hosting networking events with other support organisations proved very successful during the pilot, and opened the doors for migrant founders to engage with these structures.*

Main activities and target groups	*Plattform e.V. is currently in talks with several other organisations to host a series of in-person networking events. Plattform has been working in the area of entrepreneurship support for a long time and is well connected to other organisations as well as many migrant founders. Based on this experience, there are plans for 2-3 large networking events per year. There is also a new partnership with the City of Erfurt, which will allocate budget to startup support.* *This action benefits both migrant founders and other support organisations. Founders have the benefit of coming into contact with structures they might not otherwise know about, while organisations gain access to a new target group with international founders.*
Key actors	**Lead / coordinator:** *Plattform e.V.* **Other actors:** *MigraNetz, ThEx, City of Erfurt (under discussion)*
Expected contribution and possible policy/funding links	**Expected contribution:** *This action is expected to open doors and build bridges between migrant founders and the support structures in Thuringia. It will benefit both founders and organisations who will meet a new target group.* **Possible policy/funding links:** *There is interest on the organizational side in funding these events. Plattform e.V. can partner with other organisations to share costs. Proposals to other funding sources are in the works. The City of Erfurt has also allocated a new budget item for startup support and will work with Plattform e.V. to determine what this will look like. First events are expected to take place in 2027 and grow in frequency over the next five years.*

Action Line — A3	
Title and JSA link	**Title:** *Programming around finding funding* **Primarily advances:** *P1 — Lower the financial and administrative threshold.*
Rationale and pilot evidence	*This action addresses the finance and risk exposure barrier. Many new founders struggle to find financing, both because it is limited and because they are not always aware of the administrative and bureaucratic work necessary to access it. This was a recurring issue during the pilot programming, and many founders mentioned this as their largest hurdle.*
Main activities and target groups	*Plattform e.V. is planning a project to address this barrier. In partnership with FINU, an organisation founded by international entrepreneurs in Thuringia with the mission of helping other founders get started, Plattform is mapping out a project with the explicit goal of matching founders to appropriate funding sources. Likely this will happen through a combination of matchmaking events, networking activities and workshops (both on- and offline). FINU has contacts to investors and will help bridge this gap.* *This action is for founders with advanced ideas, whose last remaining barrier is funding. They will go through a selection process. As funding*

	sources are always competitive, this action is for a smaller number of selected entrepreneurs.
Key actors	**Lead / coordinator:** *Plattform e.V.* **Other actors:** *FINU (in discussion)*
Expected contribution and possible policy/funding links	**Expected contribution:** *This action item will hopefully contribute to an environment where start-uppers are more aware of where they can find funding and connect them directly to investors.* **Possible policy/funding links:** *The City of Erfurt has expressed interest in this project and is allocating funding to startup support. It is in the city's interest to keep new businesses local, and a goal of this project is to find investments for startups to stay in the region. There are several funding avenues for the project being considered and pursued. As several institutions are involved, these activities are expected to start in 2028 and grow through 2031.*

3. Local Coordination

3.1 Coordination model

Role	Organisation	Contribution	Status
Regional ISIHUB Lead	*Plattform e.V.*	Local coordination; main contact point for entrepreneurs; ecosystem facilitation.	*Confirmed*
Regional ISIHUB Co-Lead	*CGE Erfurt e.V.*	*Coordination; Secondary contact point for entrepreneurs; ecosystem facilitation*	*Confirmed*
Operational partner	*Startup Migrants*	*Provide trainings for Startup Preschools*	*Confirmed*
Administrative partner	*City of Erfurt*	*Anchoring entrepreneurship support at city level*	*In discussion*
Network Partner	*MigraNetz*	*Partnership to reach migrant communities in Thuringia*	*Pending*

Role	Organisation	Contribution	Status
Network Partner	*FINU*	*Networking to find mentorship and funding opportunities for start-uppers*	*Pending*

3.2 Stakeholder engagement

Plattform e.V. and CGE Erfurt e.V. will continue to work together to promote inclusive entrepreneurship in the region. CGE has already confirmed a continuing partnership with Startup Migrants – two additional Startup Preschools will take place in November. As Plattform has partnered with Startup Migrants on these workshops in the past as well, the outlook for further opportunities beyond this year is good. Bilateral exchanges are already underway between Plattform and other potential partners such as MigraNetz and FINU, who can provide access to new communities within the main target group of migrant entrepreneurs and open doors to funding opportunities. The City of Erfurt is prepared to get involved and allocate budget to this matter. Project proposals are in the works to formalize these cooperations for several years to come. In the meantime, bilateral exchanges and informal cooperations will continue with these and other actors, such as ThEx and Universities.

4. Monitoring and Learning

4.1 Common indicators

Indicator	Type	Action line	Possible data source
Number of participants involved in entrepreneurship support activities	Output	*A1, A2*	Attendance lists, programme records
Target: 60% of participants have migrant background	Output	*A1, A2*	Registration forms
Target: 60% of participants are women	Output	*A1, A2*	Registration forms
Target: 70% of participants are 35 or younger	Output	*A1, A1*	Registration forms
Number of business ideas developed or supported	Output / Result	*A3*	Programme reports, follow-up surveys
Number of organisations involved in ISIHUB or LAPP implementation	Output	*A2, A3*	ISIHUB records, programme records
Number of start-uppers who find external funding	Output / Result	*A3*	Programme records, follow-up surveys

4.2 Feedback mechanisms

Participant surveys and debrief sessions after each workshop or programme have proved helpful in the past and will be continuously used. Surveys sent out to potential participants before the beginning of programmes have also provided food information on what workshops participants would be interested in. This can help with retention. ISIHUB coordination meetings will be held regularly to get feedback on programming from stakeholders and gather any input for improvement. Follow-up interviews with participants have not been used as much in the past but will be implemented in future programme iterations as it is important especially to see if funding has been found and whether businesses have been established.

Possible mechanisms:

Mechanism	What it captures	Frequency
Pre-programme surveys	Levels of interest in different workshop topics	Before each programme
Participant satisfaction surveys	Relevance, format quality, perceived usefulness	After each activity
Debrief sessions	What worked / didn't, suggestions from participants and trainers	After each cohort
ISIHUB coordination meetings	Implementation issues, ecosystem signals, corrective decisions	Quarterly
Follow-up interviews with participants	Whether participants progressed (business idea, registration, employment)	6–12 months after activity

5. Sustainability Perspectives

5.1 Continuation of action lines

Action line A1 — Continued Startup Preschools.

The Startup Preschool format can be continued as a low-threshold entry point into entrepreneurship, particularly for international students and young people. Its modular and practical approach allows content to be adapted to participants' needs and levels of entrepreneurial readiness. Continuation is already confirmed through a further Preschool at Hochschule Schmalkalden and another planned in cooperation with Bauhaus University Weimar. University start-up services and other regional entrepreneurship support organisations can provide a suitable institutional setting for further delivery. The action line is therefore at a confirmed stage for the immediate follow-up, with potential for continuation each year.

Action line A2 — Networking events with other support structures.

Networking and matchmaking proved particularly effective in the pilot, including the Team Matchmaking Event and the networking event connecting participants with Thuringian creative-sector actors and regional support organisations. The approach can be continued through recurring events linked to existing university, entrepreneurship and community programmes, bringing participants together with entrepreneurs, mentors and support

structures. Further integration of networking and matchmaking is already envisaged in the planned follow-up activities, while a more systematic regional format remains under development. The goal is for first events to take place in 2027.

Action line A3 — Programming around finding funding.

Access to finance was identified as an important barrier, and funding opportunities were already addressed within the entrepreneurship training. Future activities could strengthen this element through dedicated sessions on funding opportunities, financial planning, investment readiness and connections to relevant funding and finance providers. This action line is currently under development as part of the emerging follow-up initiative, which explicitly aims to improve young people's access to financial and investment opportunities. Further formats and responsible partners will be defined as the initiative develops over the next five years.

5.2 Funding and institutional anchoring

Continuation can build on existing regional and national entrepreneurship support structures and partnerships. One continuous source of funding available to Plattform e.V. is the UP KOMPASS Programme, a nationwide programme providing individual consultations to solo entrepreneurs. Plattform e.V. is currently one of its consultation points, providing an established basis for integrating further entrepreneurship support activities. In addition, funding for two further Startup Preschools in 2026 has already been secured by CGE Erfurt e.V. . As the partnership with Startup Migrants is ongoing, further funding for additional Preschools is considered realistic. The Social Impulse Hub is also in exchange with Drosos Stiftung, a foundation regarding the emerging follow-up initiative, building on previous successful project cooperation, while additional co-financing is currently being sought. In the longer term, ESF+ and ERDF programmes and other regional or national funding opportunities could provide further support, subject to eligibility and future calls. In-kind contributions from partner organisations, such as staff time, mentoring, venues and networking support, could complement project-based funding.

5.3 Anchoring in S3/S4+

The three action lines provide practical delivery mechanisms for the JSA priorities selected for Thuringia. A1 primarily advances P2 – Build skills and capabilities through low-threshold

learning through accessible and practical entrepreneurship training. A2 contributes to P2 and P3 – Make support systems navigable through ISIHUB intermediaries by connecting participants with entrepreneurs, peers and existing support structures. A3 contributes primarily to P1 – Lower the financial and administrative threshold by improving awareness of funding opportunities and access to financial resources, while also strengthening participants' business capabilities.

Within the Thuringian RIS 2021–2027, inclusive entrepreneurship is not defined as a separate strategic priority. However, the strategy follows a broad understanding of innovation that includes social innovation and identifies ICT, innovative and production-related services as a cross-cutting field. The action lines can therefore be positioned as practical mechanisms for strengthening innovation and entrepreneurship within relevant S3 fields, rather than as a separate social policy track. At regional level, this policy positioning is already being complemented by emerging municipal engagement. In October 2025, Plattform e.V. initiated discussions with the head of the Department of Economic Development of the City of Erfurt on the potential benefits of entrepreneurship support and the role the city could realistically play. Following further discussions, the city is now allocating a new budget line to entrepreneurship support, with Plattform e.V. invited to contribute to its development. This creates a concrete opportunity to further embed inclusive entrepreneurship in local economic development and to involve the city in future projects and initiatives. Further integration at regional S3/S4+ level remains a longer-term opportunity, particularly through future strategy development and revision processes.