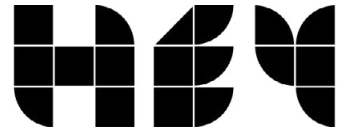




August 2022

# SFF Regional Innovation Valleys



## Representatives of SFF Regional Innovation Valleys

**It is a great pleasure to welcome you on board into the fast growing Start For Future community. Start For Future is an international initiative of 22 universities, incubators, ecosystems towards systemic innovation and fostering economic and societal growth in Europe.**

**The Vision** behind Start For Future is to create a sustainable international Alliance of ecosystems governed by principles of systemic innovation where universities, incubators, politics, civil society, startups and governmental organisations actively co-create on delivering socio-economic and environmental impact in Europe.

**Our Mission** is to actively enable all members in creating positive impact by becoming more entrepreneurial and innovative through active regional innovation activities and connecting them internationally under auspices of New Deal of Innovation in Europe. Following pillars encompass main activities of SFF:

**1. Start For Future Academy** provides education programmes, new concepts, and insights for universities and their academic and non-academic staff with a two fold objective: i) building a knowledge community that focuses on increasing entrepreneurial and innovation competencies, fostering co-creation approaches, and building entrepreneurial ecosystems ii) supporting on how best to utilize the resources and formats in Start For Future incubation programme to bring values and knowledge to their core target groups: students and startups.

### **2. Open Incubation Programme**

A cross university, three stage programme (LEARN, MATCH & START, DEVELOP & CO-CREATE) for talents and startups which is taking their ideas from conception to venture





creation and growth. The open programme aims at 1. driving the project ideas at international, domain specific cross-university courses towards impact creation 2. taking the most promising ideas and teams towards startup concepts creation and 3. bringing the well-rounded business concepts in incubators across partner network and supporting co-creation with industry, GOs, etc.

**3. The Open incubator** aims to exploit synergies between the incubators of the SFF Alliance partners by promoting joint activities, joint mentoring of start-ups and active exchange between start-ups and mentors. Besides the active virtual co-supervision, it includes free mobility and exchange of startups and incubator consultants between ecosystems. The startups in exchange have full access to services and facilities as well as the whole SFF assets and resources. Similar approach is taken for incubator consultants, where they can visit a partner incubator and work with its regional startups.

**4. Start For Future Regional Innovation Valleys** This programme helps the SFF partners to initiate, activate and further develop their existing ecosystem initiative with a deep tech focus and transform them to a more sustainable innovation, including legal and financial framework. The programme provides a template on

how to engage your ecosystem stakeholders and connect them also with hubs/valleys across Europe, Finally, the programme offers a digital outlet for communication within hub and between hubs on Start For Future community platform.

The connected SFF Regional Innovation Valleys are gathering most entrepreneurial and innovative actors in Europe coming from EU Commission, governmental regional and national organisations, universities, companies, startups. By entering in any of the four key pillars of Start For Future initiative, you are granted access to remaining three, to our community platform, and our yearly 2-days-Co-Creation-Summit, and all other community events.

Throughout the next slides, you are provided a step by step manual on how to activate your ecosystem and run a eleven-months-programme for entrepreneurship, innovation and co-creation in your regional innovation valley.



**Stay tuned, and start your impact journey with us together.**

# FOCUS

The core pillars of our holistic alliance  
**We have your future in mind**

## SFF Academy

The SFF universities establish strategic activities, such as teach-the-teacher programs, expert and mentors integration, applying smart specialization of their HEI and valley, which allows the open incubation program to scale.

## SFF Open Incubator

The associated incubators of the partners are open to all SFF startups. They offer their own services as well as joint formats, and they provide access to market insights, partners and finances.



## SFF Open Incubation Programme

The fast growing cross-university program with three phases enables synergies between the partners combining and materializing the knowledge, creativity and assets to promote systemic innovation. It closes the gap between Academy and Business Creation, enabling creation of startups – from zero to hero.

## SFF Regional Innovation Valleys

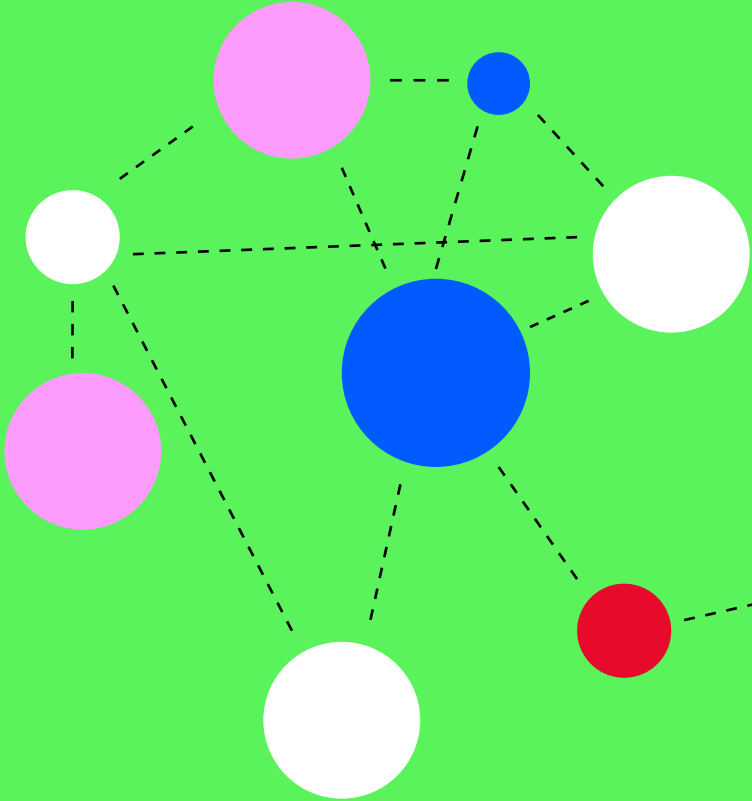
We support regional innovation valleys by bringing deep tech focus in, setting up a holistic regional entrepreneurship programs and connecting the valleys across Europe.

# CONNECT

## Important factors in building and maintaining a Regional Innovation Valley

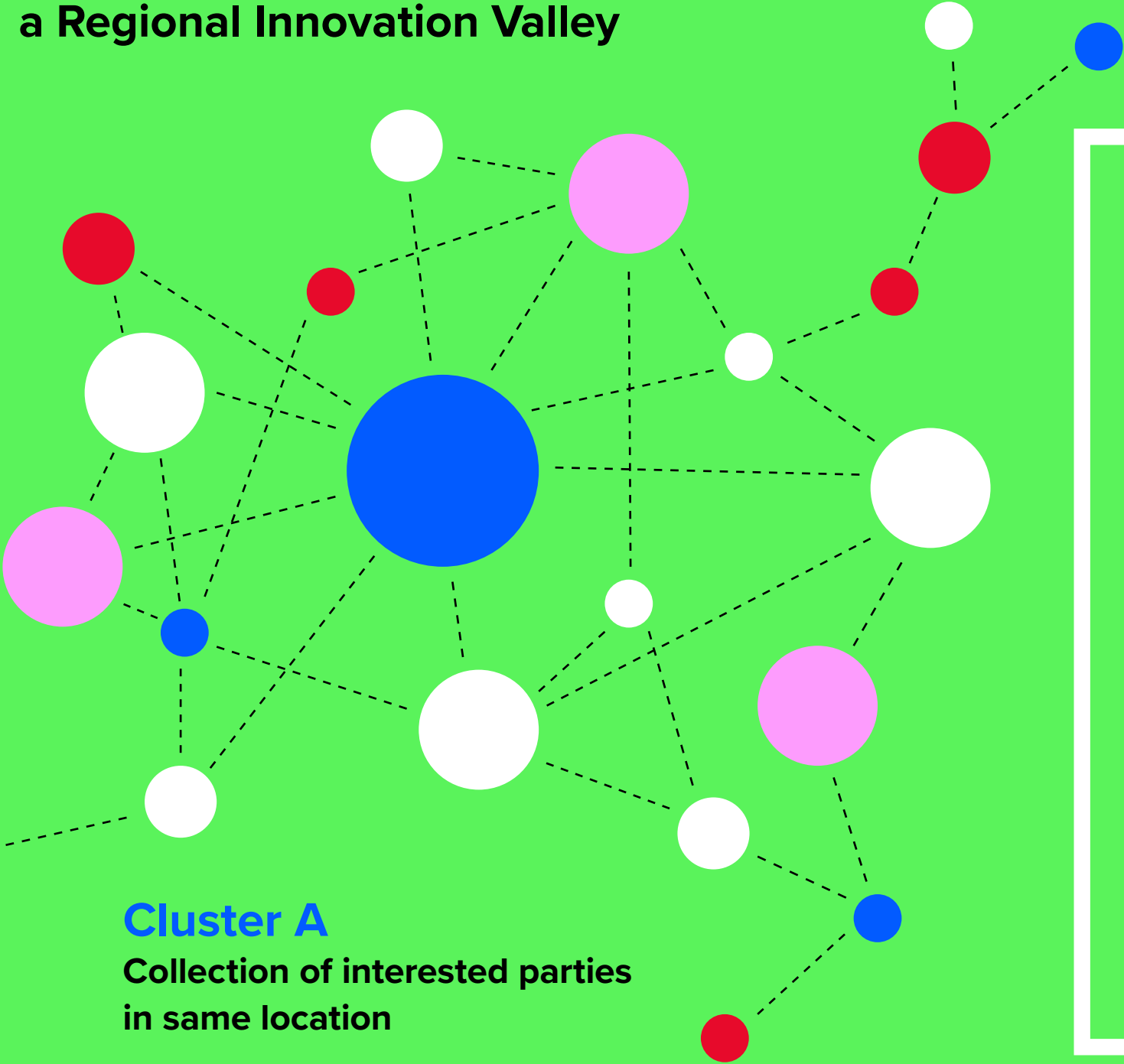
### Cluster B

Could be in a different city or country but still have common interests



### Cluster A

Collection of interested parties in same location



### Prerequisites

- 1. Commitment of Key Stakeholders
- 2. Shared Vision
- 3. Knowledge about Smart Specialisation
- 4. Societal Challenges
- 5. Resilience

### The Regional Innovation Valley

- 1. Active Support of Partners (Dots)
- 2. System Integrator (Enabler - Connections)
- 3. Strategic Guidance
- 4. Process & Tools
- 5. Community Platform
- 6. Marketing & Communication
- 7. Governance

# DEVELOPMENT

in 2021–2022

**In 2021, with the support of EIT Urban Mobility and Regional Innovation Scheme, Start For Future initiated four regional innovation valleys with deep tech focus.**

**All four valleys** were and still are driven by representatives of universities and organisations: Athens University of Economics and Business, University of Aveiro, Edge Ltd, and JJ. Strossmayer University of Osijek.

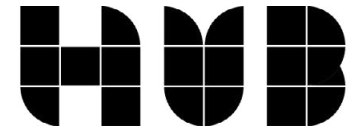
In 2021, the drivers of the valleys, organized several workshops and gathered innovation actors from their communities to work on identifying key challenges for their communities. The challenges varied from mobility issues, infrastructure issues, quality of life, air pollution, brain drain and many others. In 2021, after the challenges were identified, the drivers set a non-formal agreement to continue working on them in 2022 and ran a first co-creation SPRINT prototype.

In May 2022, after issuing an open call to gather other relevant actors (startups and companies) the co-creation SPRINT was initiated. All the drivers of regional innovation valleys and their ecosystem stakeholders organised an international kick off where ecosystem stakeholders presented their offers. In subsequent months, the offers were matched towards identifying

the first potential pilot projects that can support the community challenges towards resolvment. After matching the offers and solutions, further consulting has taken the place, provided by both SCE and valley drivers. All results from co-creation SPRINT are to be presented on 15.09.2022 together with a plan on how the activities and collaboration of the valleys will continue in 2022/23. The successful pilot projects will also be provided incubation and further support after September 2022, as to ensure their successful realization in the communities. Beyond implementing Co-Creation SPRINT, the drivers continued working on legal and financial sustainability as well as further activation of other ecosystem stakeholders.

**In the following pages, the process of activation and co-creation SPRINT is presented, which we encourage new valleys to follow.**





## Start For Future Regional Innovation Valleys

### Stages & Elements

**The Start For Future Regional Innovation Valleys concept provides a framework of dynamic ecosystem building starting from defining the most urgent challenges around which ecosystem stakeholders gather.**

The core valley representatives include those of academia, industry, civil society, governmental organisations. The objective of an SFF innovation hub is to serve as an enabler to co-create scalable innovation that strives toward societal impact. It fosters innovative thinking and acting through continuous co-creation of innovation players towards joint pilot projects and business models that can innovate the region and generate impact.

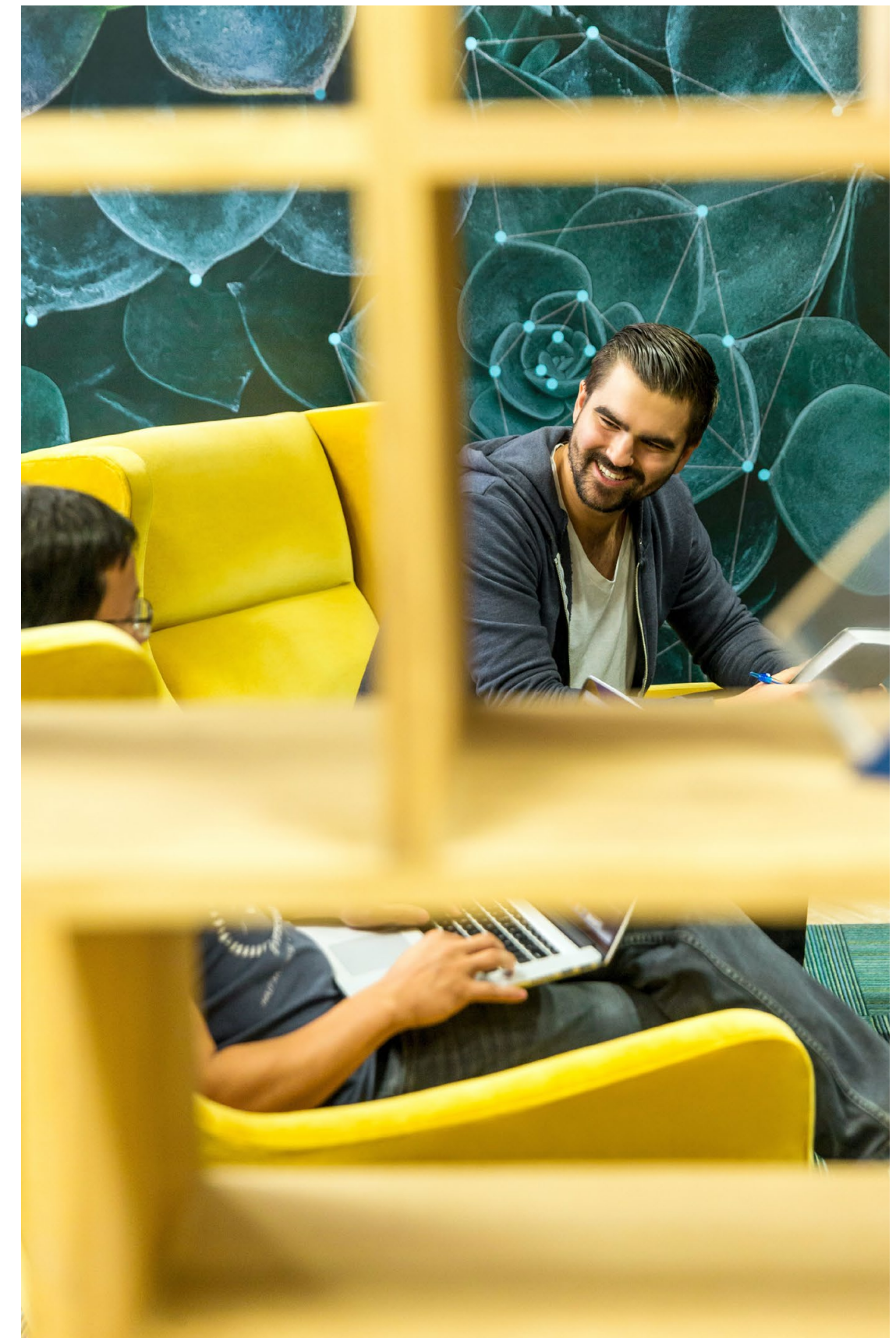
Beyond activation of regional ecosystem, the open Start For Future Alliance ensures collaboration internationally; through bringing the regional hubs together to exchange **i)** good practices, **ii)** participating from smart specialisation of the regions **iii)** learnings and **iv)** bring stakeholders together to extend co-creation outside region.

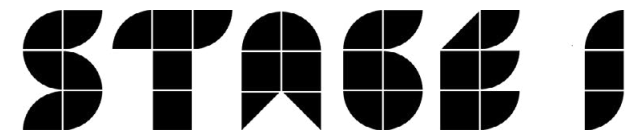
This is accomplished through several connecting points in offline and online modes.

#### The stages consist of:

- 1** — Activation, which includes onboarding valley stakeholders and setting up a digital regional community, as well as ensuring a commitment to strategy development and active engagement of core stakeholders
- 2** — Provision of a Sprint Framework to start and develop innovation projects, as well as to foster co-creation
- 3** — Cross-linking international SFF valleys, and active involvement in the joint digital community, and Co-Creation Summits
- 4** — Securing sustainability and setting up government structures and a legal a framework

Beyond the three linear stages, the innovation hubs are encouraged to define further services and events which can foster their collaboration and co-creation in a systemic way towards sustainable business models and impact generation in the regional community.





## Activation of community stakeholders & concept development (ca. 3 months)

**To start the SFF Regional Innovation Valley program off, it is important to identify key stakeholders for the initiation of a valley.**

The stakeholders should include but not be limited to: University, Research and Development Institutes, Incubators, Companies (Corporates and SMEs), Governmental Organisation such as Regional Governments, City Council, Mayer Offices, CSOs, startups etc.

The activation of the SFF Regional Innovation Valley is conducted in three connected workshops following the diamond approach. The result of the workshops should be signing a commitment letter towards: Development of a Valley Strategy including its legal and financial sustainability, Implementation of Co-Creation Sprint, and active participation in SFF digital community. Although the upcoming activities focus more on co-creation between stakeholders, we recommend that activities from stage I continue towards inclusion of other relevant stakeholders – continuously.

### Step 1 Preparation

- 1 – Activation of ecosystem stakeholders
- 2 – Defining goals, and USPs of SFF Valleys
- 3 – Clarifying the roles of the stakeholders
- 4 – Getting aware of smart specialisation and societal challenges
- 5 – Commitment of stakeholders for setting up a SFF Valley
- 6 – Preparation tasks gain input about expectation, needs, and USPs (involvement of all stakeholders as well as HEIs)

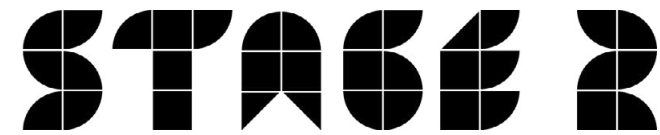
### Step 2 Synthesis

- 1 – Derivation of key topics of smart specialisation and key challenges of the ecosystem
- 2 – Development of a Shared Vision and Mission, as well as a pool of key challenges
- 3 – Clarifying concepts of Hubs and individual needs of the own ecosystem
- 4 – Preparation tasks: available resources, legal structures, commitment of stakeholders, ...)

### Step 3 Activation

- 1 – Joint commitment to a hub concept (including legal framework and sustainability concept)
- 2 – Signing Memorandum of Understanding
- 3 – Definition of responsible co-drivers
- 4 – Definition of the challenges and the start and roadmap for the first Sprint
- 5 – Roadmap towards creation of legal framework
- 6 – Preparation tasks: Prepare call for projects, activate coaches, define agenda, setup legal entity





## Operative sprint framework of the SFF Regional Innovation Valley

**After defining the key challenges of the Regional Innovation Valley, it's key stakeholders and modus of collaboration for upcoming period, the focus should be engaging in co-creation.**

Co-Creation in SFF Valleys is a collaborative approach undertaken by ecosystem stakeholders, understanding more proximity, in collaboration between governmental organisations, HEIs, entrepreneurship centers, incubators, industry partners towards building a dynamic space for innovation and implementation of results of such approach.

**Under co-creation within 'programme'** we understand collaboration of actors, primarily institutions, industry and startups towards new joint and improved products, services and business models reflected in form of pilot projects implemented in the regional innovation valleys and/or its vicinity.

Taking into consideration that the regional innovation valleys are embedded into Start For Future Open Incubation Programme, core drivers of valleys are responsible for attracting both national and international talents and startups which with the support of ecosystem can engage in co-creation projects.

**In program we differentiate two types of co-creation processes.**

**A — co-creation between international/regional startups with focus on startup service development with support of regional domain and industry experts and**

**B — co-creation between startups, industry and GOs towards joint pilot projects. The differentiator between the two is maturity of startups and tangibility of their innovation projects.**



### Target Groups

Industry and Domain experts from regional ecosystem, Industry partners interested in co-creation and collaboration with startups, governmental organisations and public institutions, HEIs, early stage startups (pre-entity, pre-revenue or up to 10.000 EUR)



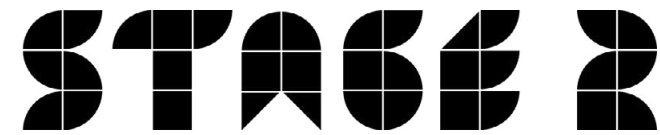
### Duration of the programme

12 weeks with continuation of co-creation project under support of regional university linked incubator or ecosystem partner incubator.



### Anticipated results

Support of at least 3 startups from the region and ensuring 1 co-creation project/pilot project between GOs, NGOs, Startups and Companies.



## Sprint framework overview co-creation-sprint (3 months) + open incubator (6 months)

### Open Call

#### Open call for talents,

projects and start-ups, and established companies to participate in the sprint programme for defined social challenges.

### Co-Creation SPRINT – 2 times/year

#### Sessions

**International Kick-off Event** & Introduction of all participants and introduction to Co-Creation. (International) 12:00 – 15:30 CET, by SCE.

**Valley Initiation Workshop** – Presenting co-creation offers from stakeholders and calls to action & exchange between stakeholders.

**Individual coaching of startups and established companies** – preparing for matching (coaching) & work with co-creation partners on the needs and offers presented on the valley initiation workshop.

**International Joint Event** – Presenting success stories of co-creation in other valleys and Opening Spaces for Co-Creation between them, AUEB-SCE.

**Stakeholders feedback Event** – Local co-creation projects presentation on a valley level between stakeholders/applicants.

**Final pitch preparation session** – to prepare for final presentation.

### Final Meet up

#### Presentation

of the Co-Creation Projects in an international setting and networking between international innovation valleys.

### Open Incubation

#### Incubation

All startups are further supported by incubation programmes at valley core partners – HEI/Entrepreneurship Centers and/or could apply for Open Incubator at SFF.

- All valley stakeholders and SPRINT participants are invited to the SFF community platform and dedicated communities ([startforfuture.eu](http://startforfuture.eu))
  - Startups and co-creation partners are supported locally by regional valley team, and international SFF team
    - SFF offers regularly training programmes for the different target groups

# ONLINE

## Start For Future Online Platform & Co-Creation-Summit

To support the communication between ecosystem stakeholders of the valley and foster synergies between valleys, Start For Future offers also a digital community platform: [www.startforfuture.eu](http://www.startforfuture.eu) and a yearly Co-Creation-Summit.

The SFF Platform is organised in communities: each regional innovation valley is encouraged to set its own community on the platform (open or closed) and are invited into the entire international one where all ecosystem stakeholders of all SFF valleys are present.

In order to set its own community, we advise contacting SCE community manager which can support the project manager of the valley in creating a desirable infrastructure of its community.

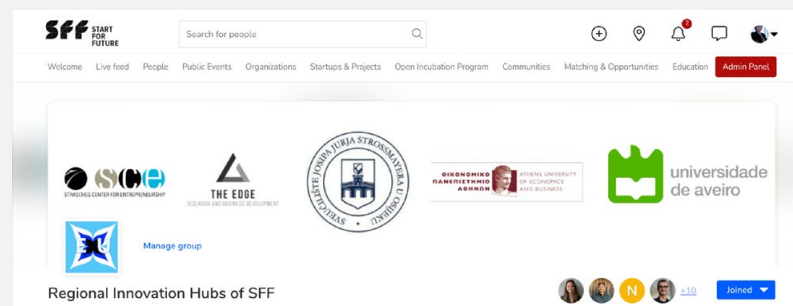


[www.startforfuture.eu](http://www.startforfuture.eu)

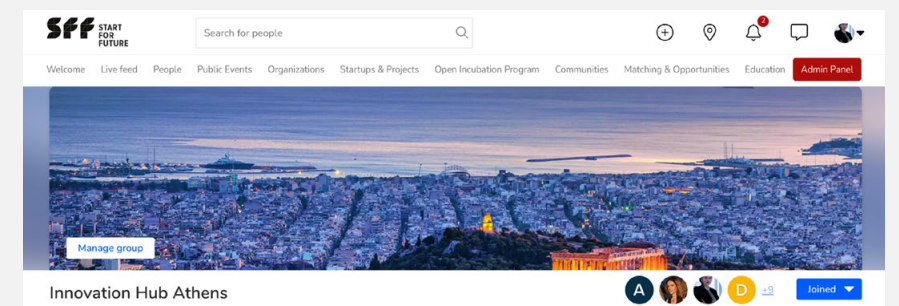


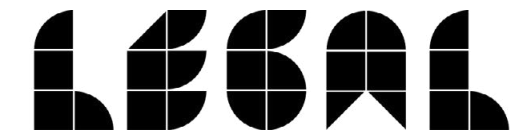
Global Level of Start For Future

Community Level:  
Joint Group of all Regional Innovation Valleys



Community Level:  
Separate Hub Community eg. Athens





## Suggestions for Legal Roadmap

**Upon successfully finalising 1. Activation part of the programme,** we suggest setting a cooperation agreement between all key stakeholders involved, and/or those that are necessary for successfully implementing succeeding parts of the programme. The cooperation agreement should outline what each valley stakeholder is bringing into the collaboration towards which anticipated outputs. Lastly, the cooperation agreement should set the common objective and principles towards implementation of the Regional Innovation Valley with a deep tech focus.



Once the strategy and implementation plan is set, possible legal forms of Innovation Hubs can be:

– **Limited Company**  
(e.g. MUST GmbH)

– **Association or Non-Governmental Organisation**  
An organization of people with a common purpose and a formal structure; eg. Football club

– **Co-operative society**  
A co-operative is "an autonomous association of

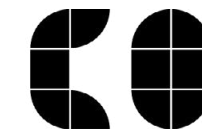
persons united voluntarily to meet their common economic, social, and cultural needs and aspirations through a jointly-owned enterprise". Cooperatives are democratically owned by their members, with each member having one vote in electing the board of directors.

The recommended legal form from SFF is the cooperative society which would follow the same legal structure of Start For Future and would allow easier participation in the same in terms of gains, profit and services offered by the European cooperative society. Parallel to establishing a legal structure, the partner are to work actively on setting a business model which can ensure sustainability. The business model can draw inspiration from: service oriented valley, equity and/or revenue share from startup creation, co-creation projects, sponsors and other forms of fundraising (national and international funds) etc.

The overall objective by setting the Regional Innovation Valley with a deep tech focus is ensuring that innovation activities and its results organized regionally and internationally with other Innovation Hubs, create a positive society-economic and environmental impact on the community and its citizens.

**Welcome  
to the 2022 Start For Future  
Co-Creation Event!**





## About the Co-Creation Summit in Munich

**The Co-Creation Summit is a 2-day event on November 23rd  
and November 24th, 2022.**

It will gather representatives of universities, incubators, industry partners and representatives of regional innovation valleys across Europe, including governmental organizations and regional governments.

On the first day, we will actively work with regional valleys on the strategy for their legislative and financial sustainability, to involve new regional ecosystems and to foster collaboration in the growing European one, driven by Start For Future.

On the 24th, the focus will be to spotlight success stories and co-creation opportunities between startups, industry partners, and GO's.

All regional innovation valleys and their representatives are invited to Co-Creation Summit to meet the most innovative actors across Europe towards a joint goal – setting a New Innovation Deal for Europe.

Further details on Co-Creation Summit will be available on  
[www.startforfuture.eu](http://www.startforfuture.eu) in September 2022.



**START  
FOR  
FUTURE**

## **Additional Reference Slides for New Valleys**

**1.**

**Resources for Setting the Regional Innovation  
Valleys with deep tech focus**

**2.**

**Example of a Regional Innovation  
Valley – MUST GmbH**

**3.**

**Start For Future – Overview of all partners**

**4.**

**Benefits for different stakeholder groups**

# RESOURCES

## Stage II: programme for co-creation resources needed for implementation

Resources needed for implementation of 11 months programme:

1.) Activation 2.) Co-Creation and 3.) Incubation

### Activation

16 weeks

- 1 – Project Manager (20 % WT) organizing at least three workshops with regional valley stakeholders and providing minutes to partners
- 2 – Facilities and refreshments for workshop implementation
- 3 – Project Manager (5 % WT) setting up, with support of SCE, a digital community on [www.Startforfuture.eu](http://www.Startforfuture.eu) for ecosystem stakeholders.

### Co-Creation

12 weeks

- 1 – Project Manager (25% WT) organizing and coordinating activities regionally and communicating it with other valleys
- 2 – 1-2 business consultants (20 % WT) working with startups and facilitating co-creation processes.

### Incubation

24 weeks

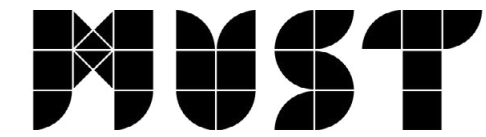
- 1 – 1 business consultant (10 % WT) in supporting co-creation project meeting the anticipated result.

### Overall

Continuous

- 1 – Project Manager (15 % ) continuous selection and onboarding of new ecosystem stakeholders
- 2 – Project Manager (10 %) working on defining strategy for legal and financial sustainability of the valley with ecosystem stakeholders





## MUST – An Example of a Regional Innovation Valley, it's Partners and Activities

**The MUC SUMMIT GmbH** – Munich Innovation Ecosystem initiated by UnternehmerTUM GmbH, Strascheg Center for Entrepreneurship GmbH, and German Entrepreneurship GmbH in 2015, has established itself as the Munich ecosystem's main partner and facilitator of high-level networking opportunities by hosting events and workshops such as MUST – The Munich Summit and MUST Satellites: MUST 3D Printing and MUST Healthcare.

**The vision behind MUST:** Munich's innovative, open-minded, and diverse community brings together international young talent, startups, and established companies. Together, they co-create scalable innovation that strives toward the Sustainable Development Goals. This unique blend of academia, industry and startups with stakeholders from government, science and society offers a unique high-tech ecosystem in one of the world's most livable cities.

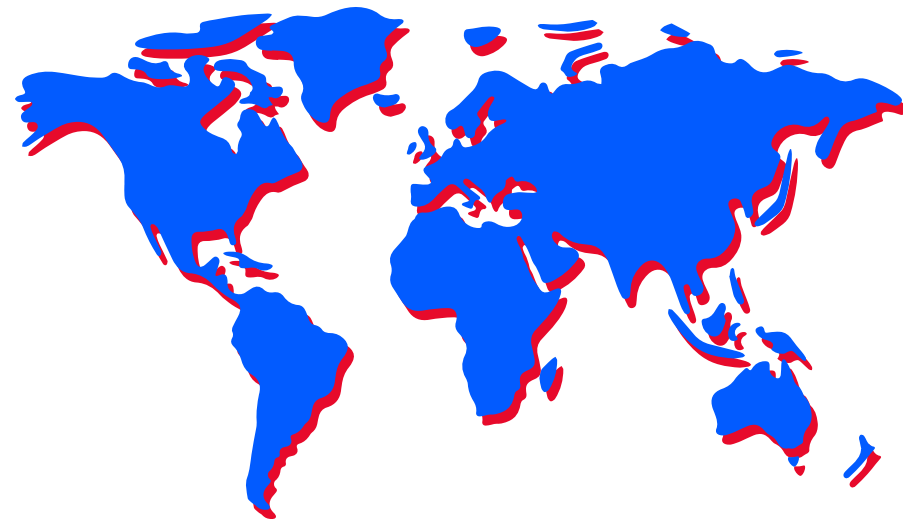
**Partner of MUST include:** City of Munich: Department of Labor and Economic Development, BMW Group, Munich Airport, Innosabi, Inveox, Invest in Bavaria, Wayra, PWC, Werk 1, Blickfeld, Bay Startup Data Lab Munich, Intel Ignite, Messe Munich, Bitz & Pretzels, Google, Fraunhofer

Venture and founding partners: SCE, Unternehmer TUM and German Entrepreneurship GMBH.

The key services and programmes offered by MUST are: National and International Networking and Delegations, Access to Decision Makers and Talent, Business Development, Matchmaking with relevant players, Crowdfunding initiatives, Exclusive and Public Events, and programmes such as AI + Munich and Munich Global Impact Hub.

### STRATEGY 2020+

By addressing future topics apart from existing structures, we want Munich to increasingly become a leading innovation ecosystem nationally and internationally. With partners from the Bavarian region we ensured that different perspectives were represented across different stakeholder groups. In 15 additional working groups we narrowed down specific topics of the strategy process by focusing on sub sectors like “The Vision and Mission of Munich's entrepreneurial ecosystem”, “Munich: a B2B hub”, “How to Market the Ecosystem” and “The Internationalization of the Munich Innovation Ecosystem”.



**Start For Future**

**NETWORK**

**Start For Future is a network of international universities and university-linked incubators and entrepreneurship centres located in world wide startup hotpots. Here are presented some partner universities.**

#### **PARTNERS IN EUROPE**

##### **Athens University of Economics and Business**

Katerina Pramadari, k.pramadari@uni.fund and Stratos Baloutsos, acein@aueb.gr

##### **Czech Technical University in Prague**

Petr Samanek, petr.samanek@cvut.cz

##### **Danish Foundation for Entrepreneurship**

Kåre Moberg, Kaare@ffefonden.dk

##### **Dundalk Institute of Technology**

Colette Henry, colette.henry@dkit.ie

##### **FH Campus Wien**

Petra Pendl, petra.pendl@fh-campuswien.ac.at

##### **Ghent University**

Andreas Wauters, Andreas.Wauters@ugent.be

##### **HM Hochschule München University of Applied Sciences**

Pavlina Vujovic, pavlina.vujovic@sce.de

##### **International Burch University**

Malcolm Duerod, malcolm.duerod@ibu.edu.ba

##### **Junior Achievement Sofia, Bulgaria**

Milena Stoycheva, milena.stoycheva@jabulgaria.org

##### **Napier University**

Nicholas Fannin, n.fannin@napier.ac.uk

##### **Strossmayer University of Osijek**

Slavica Singer, singer@efos.hr

##### **TecnoCampus, Barcelona**

Ester Bernado, ebernado@tecnocampus.cat

##### **University of Aveiro**

Barbara Gabriel Coelho, barbara.gabriel@ua.pt and João Veloso, vr.cooperacao@ua.pt

##### **University of Economics Varna, Bulgaria**

Valentina Makni, valentina.makni@ue-varna.bg

##### **University of Pisa**

Alessio Cavicchi, a.cavicchi@unimc.it

#### **PARTNERS WORLDWIDE**

##### **USA, Canada, Australia and Nepal**

##### **California Polytechnic State University**

Thomas Katona, tkatona@calpoly.edu

##### **King's College Nepal**

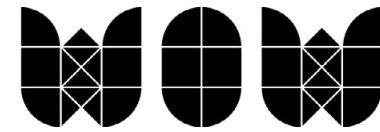
Udgum Khadka, udgum.khadka@kingscollege.edu.np

##### **La Trobe University**

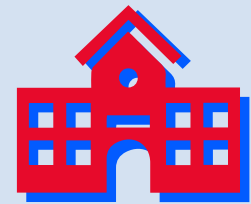
Eddie Custovic, e.custovic@latrobe.edu.au

##### **Ryerson University**

Steven Gedeon, sgedeon@ryerson.ca and Camila Londono, clondono@ryerson.ca



## Benefits for partners & target groups



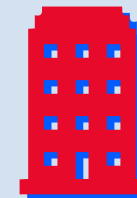
### Universities

Transform from a regional actor to an internationally interconnected driver of systemic change. Become a member of SFF Academy and change how entrepreneurship is taught and acted upon.



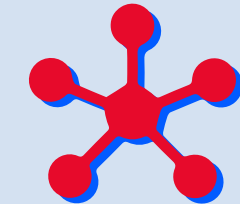
### Students & startups

Transform the mindset to grow systemically and create an impact on society.  
Grow professionally within a company or develop your own startup idea from zero-to-hero.



### Companies

Disrupt the innovation process today and define with us how it will look like in the future.  
Join us as an industry expert, co-creation partner, sponsor or even a strategic partner of the Start For Future.



### Regional Innovation Valleys

Become an interconnected regional innovation valley with deep tech focus attracting international talents, startups and investments to your community.



Contact

[info@startforfuture.eu](mailto:info@startforfuture.eu)



[startforfuture.eu](http://startforfuture.eu)

**SFF**