Good Practice template

* All Good Practices identified by an Interreg Europe project and reported in the progress reports have to be submitted to the Programme.
* In order to submit a practice, you will have to register in the Interreg Europe website. Online submission will be available the first semester of 2017.
* NB: in orange: 2 optional fields. All other fields are compulsory.

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| 1. **General information** | |
| **Title of the practice** | The Ludgate Hub (Enterprise/ Innovation Centre) |
| **Does this practice come from an Interreg Europe Project** | No |

In case ‘yes’ is selected, the following sections appear:

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| **Please select the project acronym** | Ludgate |

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| **Specific objective** | The Ludgate Hub aims to facilitate rural economic and jobs growth via digital technology. | |
| **Main institution involved** | The Ludgate Hub Board works on a pro-bono basis. | |
| **Location of the practice** | Country | Ireland |
| NUTS 1 | Drop-down list |
| NUTS 2 | South West Ireland |
| NUTS 3 | Drop-down list |

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| 1. **Detailed description** | |
| **Detailed information on the practice** | The Ludgate Hub is a not-for profit initiative. It is a co-working space and entrepreneurship incubator in Skibbereen, West Cork, Ireland. Skibbereen is a rural town in West Cork which, as with most rural locations, is been challenged by skills retention, economic development and jobs growth. The Ludgate Hub aims to reverse this by creating a sustainable economic ecosystem via digital entrepreneurship. The Ludgate Hub aims to facilitate up to 75 people in a creative co-working environment with an overall long-term objective to facilitate 500 direct jobs and 1000 indirect jobs via creating a viable digital economy. The Ludgate Hub attracted the service provider SIRO to choose Skibbereen as pilot rural town for the provision of the 1Gb broadband connectivity. Skibbereen is Ireland’s first and only 1Gb rural town now having the same broadband speed as Singapore.  TheLudgate Hub initiative was developed by a steering group consisting of a group of local entrepreneurs, digital ambassadors and business owners of local enterprises. The community at large are the main beneficiaries as The Ludgate Hub has proven higely successful in creating a local ecosystem enabling rural economic growth and sustainable communities. |
| **Resources needed** | Financial: 84% was private funding (board members); 13% was private funding via corporate sponsorship; 3% was public money from a local authority funding grant.  Personnel: 2 x full time staff members, and 11 board members.  Annual budget: Approx. €120,000.00 |
| **Timescale (start/end date)** | July 2015 to present |
| **Evidence of success (results achieved)** | Key successes: - 15 new members permanently located to West Cork with their families; 11 rural retailers now trading online; up to 25 co-working companies engaged per year. - The Ludgate Hub National Digital Week attracts approx. 1600 attendees annually to the region. - More than 250 people attend the hub / month. - The rural area is now more attractive to people and businesses. |
| **Difficulties encountered/ lessons learned** | A number of the main challenges: Lack of skills locally to meet the needs of tech start-ups. The lack of government funding. Match funding was not provided by the Local Authority/ Government. This was the first of its kind in Ireland so there was no format/ template to work from. |
| **Potential for learning or transfer** | The Ludgate Hub is reversing the rural migration trend. The Hub is enabling the survival and growth of this rural community and the surrounding region. It is enabling the return of emigrants and the inward migration of professionals to the area. The initiation of this innovation centres coupled with the provision of the 1Gb of broadband connectivity has grown exponentially the potential of this region to grow and flourish creatively. Skibbereen is now hugely attractive to digitally enabled businesses which need this high-level connectivity (e.g. web developers, designers, fintech, online services, video production).  As housing and living costs in the main urban centres continue to rise, the initiation of such rural projects are essential in alleviating the housing pressure and congestion on these urban centres. Rural innovation hubs can become focal points across a region enabling secondary/ flexible working, fresh synergies and entrepreneur projects to gain momentum in rural areas. Such a facility attracts skills and retains skills to a region. |
| **Further information** | https://www.ludgate.ie/ |
| **Contact details** [Technical: the contact details will be visible only to “Policy Learning Platforms registered members” | |
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| **Expert opinion** | [500 characters] [**Technical: to be filled in by the Policy Learning Platforms experts**] |