



## Action Plan for Normandy Region: promoting acceleration models

*By AD Normandie*

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## Introduction

Strengthening the European economic structure requires that their SMEs are competitive. On the path to their sustainable growth, EU SMEs still meet too many obstacles to get full access to the business opportunities available in their ecosystem.

In 2016, AD Normandie proposed to foster the influence of its Norman accelerator at the international level and was interested in improving its model abroad with several objectives:

- Encouraging the application of foreign companies to FFWD Normandie
- Welcoming foreign companies to the territory to allow job creation
- Identify foreign investors in Europe to raise capital funds with local companies
- Exchange good operating practices with foreign accelerators and duplicate the Norman model
- Promote the internationalization of companies in project partners' countries

Having these objectives in mind, the focus during phase I of the project has been put on finding ways of improving the acceleration model, access to finance and support to internationalization that AD Normandie is offering to improve SMEs competitiveness in the region.

Throughout the first three years of the project, we have had the occasion to share regional practices with project partners. This first phase of FFWD Europe has been a very fruitful learning opportunity for all partners and, we are convinced, has given us relevant knowledge and interregional connections to improve the design and funding of measures aiming at facilitating the access to finance for SMEs and start-ups, at reinforcing the regional support for the internationalisation of SMEs and setting a favorable framework to design acceleration programmes. All of these objectives have been set as working priorities to learn best practices from other partners throughout the first phase of the project. They also refer, to the FFWD Europe partnership, to the biggest challenges SMEs of our respective ecosystems are facing. The very aim of the project is to enable SMEs to participate in public-supported accelerator models in order to significantly enhance their competitiveness through access to private funding and equity, international markets opportunities and a reinforced business network all over Europe. To a certain extent, meeting these expectations is one of the results we hope to gain throughout the implementation of our hereafter presented Action Plan.

As this great interregional learning experience is now evolving towards the implementation phase, AD Normandie looks forward to put the learning into practice.

Having identified the main features of the economic background for SMEs in Normandy as well as the political framework into which they are developing their business, it was aimed, at the time of the

project application, to improve the Regional Operating Programme to a certain extent to favor the economic development of SMEs in Normandy. Indeed, it is interesting to note that only 5% of companies are SMEs in Normandy and very few are of intermediate size (1%). However, SMEs are the main employers with 29% of the regional workforce<sup>1</sup>. These data say a lot about the importance of having organized support for SMEs; notably to maintain jobs in the region.

Therefore, the background work during the learning phase of the project was, for AD Normandie, to find ways to answer the following problematic: *how to improve the support offered to SMEs through the regional acceleration programme? How to facilitate the access to funding for SMEs that need support to internationalization?*

These two interrogations are at the core of the reflection AD Normandie has had with the main parties involved to design its Action Plan to be implemented in the second phase of FFWD Europe project.

Following the work done during phase I, one action has been collectively designed to be implemented by the concerned stakeholders. This action falls under the scope of the policy instrument initially identified in the application form for the project as it targets an acceleration programme and favors internationalization for SMEs. However, the policy instrument – as a source of funding – that will directly support the implementation of the action is AD Normandie’s budget for its acceleration programme:

**Action: Designing and implementing an acceleration programme dedicated to companies of the agro-food sector**

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<sup>1</sup> Sources: Insee, Clap 2015 – Lifi 2015 – statistiques annuelles d’entreprises 2015, <https://www.insee.fr/fr/statistiques/4129565#consulter>

## Policy instrument addressed: FFWD Normandie's budget allocated by AD Normandie

The Regional Operational Programme (ROP) 2014/2020 for Lower-Normandie (*Basse-Normandie*, before the reform on the French regions from 2016) aims at strengthening the coherence between investment and the structural reforms priorities. It focuses on the promotion of growth and employment to reach Europe 2020 strategy objectives. Its “Strategic Objective 1.3.4: Increase the size of the small and medium enterprises through innovation and internationalization projects”, designed by the Managing Authority in cooperation with Normandy Development Agency, has four specific targets:

1. Development of equity and quasi-equity for SMEs;
2. Development of strategy for innovation, internationalization, skills development, detection of needs from idea to Commercialization;
3. Support of operations for the exploration and development of international companies;
4. SMEs size increase through innovation and internationalization projects.

Normandy Region disposes of two ROPs, one for Lower Normandy and one for Upper Normandy, which correspond to the former territorial division of Normandy. It is important to note that, for the next EU Programme Horizon Europe 2021-2027, there will only be one ROP for Normandy as a new region (reform from 2016).

The implementation of the action designed falls under the scope of the current Regional Operational Program. AD Normandie's budget is partly funded by ERDF allocated by the Managing Authority – which is the Regional Council of Normandy Region – and so is Normandie Participations' budget. The prerogatives of AD Normandie, a satellite entity of the Regional Council in charge of the economic development of the region, directly fall under the scope of the aforementioned strategic objectives. The FFWD Normandie acceleration programme has initially been designed in accordance to the enforcement of these strategic objectives within the economic and development policy of Normandy Region. The action “Designing and implementing an acceleration programme dedicated to companies of the agro-food sector” will be funded on FFWD Normandie's budget which is directly supported by AD Normandie's budget for most of the activities of the programme.

The policy instrument under the scope of which fall the design and the implementation of the action is AD Normandie's budget which – for the part that concerns the development of local companies and support to acceleration programme - will be modified to that end and mobilized accordingly to allow FFWD Normandie to expand the scope of their activities.

## Action designed for Normandy Region

Phase 1 of the project saw very intensive activities in sharing knowledge and exchanging experiences between the partners. In total, 33 good practices have been identified by project partners in all three sections of the project.

AD Normandie has participated in all Interregional learning events of the project and has also organized two staff exchanges during semester 5 and took part in one staff exchange in Germany in June 2019.

In the course of these past three years, the focus has been directed towards the good practice 'NSeed', developed at NBank in Lower Saxony and which aims at offering investment solutions. In the end, regarding the needs expressed by the stakeholders involved in the various discussions and learning activities, the focus was put onto another action that is to be implemented during phase II of the project. This action has been identified by serendipity while discussing opportunities with project partners.

## Action: Designing an acceleration programme dedicated to companies of the agro-food sector

### Background information

Numerous acceleration programmes are being developed in Normandy. Some are focused on start-up creators, such as Normandie Incubation. Other programmes focus on the acceleration of promising SMEs (FFWD Normandie) and on helping them in going international (Xport Accelerator). Their success allows the region to attract entrepreneurs and investors, which in the end benefits the local economy as a whole and favor the creation of jobs. There is more potential to be exploited in these programmes: with proper funding and support from the public authorities, SMEs and start-ups could see their acceleration taken to the next level. AD Normandie and its stakeholders of the local ecosystem need to cooperate in order to strengthen the support to these structures.

During Phase 1, several good practices have been submitted onto the Policy Learning Platform. AD Normandie chose to focus on the German good practice "Funding of start-up centers", by PP2 NBank in Lower Saxony. This region develops its territory by enhancing the success rates of technology-orientated start-ups and their successful introduction and sustainable establishment onto the market. This enhancement is made through the funding for setting up Start-up Centers. It takes the form of a grant of a maximum of 50% of the cost (max 100.000€ per action) for the Start-up Center, and it can be

funded for a maximum of two years. The grant can be used to finance the facilities of the Start-up Center or personnel cost for staff members to intensively accompany and support start-up in seed and pre-seed phase as well as set-up of an individual coaching and mentoring process. This financial support allowed the development of many Start-up centers in Lower Saxony and participated in their success by providing them with the funding they need to carry out their activities. This good practice inspired AD Normandie to deepen its knowledge on the functioning of Start-up centers in Lower Saxony. This was the rationale for joining the staff exchange in Hanover to then reflect on the functioning of FFWD Normandie, the regional accelerator for Start-ups and SMEs.



Led by the Regional Agency for Economic Development in Normandie (AD Normandie), with the support of the Normandy Regional Council and in close collaboration with the regional investment fund Normandie Participations, Fast Forward (FFWD) Normandie is the business accelerator of the Normandie Region.

FFWD Normandie aims at developing the Norman economy, contributing to the attractiveness of the region and ensuring the long-term establishment of companies from outside of Normandy. It combines funding and intensive tailor-made support. FFWD Normandie is dedicated to companies with high growth potential, SMEs and start-ups. It currently offers:

- An initial capital investment of up to €150,000
- A co-working space for group sessions available to selected companies during the acceleration
- Operational support on strategic goals identified through a panoramic diagnostic (financial structuring, commercial development, marketing, management and recruitment, etc.)
- Individual and group coaching
- Technical partnerships and privileged commercial collaborations with flagship regional companies
- Access to a qualified network of regional and national experts, mentors and investors

Throughout FFWD Europe project, solutions to develop and improve the programme offered to local SMEs and, potentially, to broaden the scope of the targeted companies have been sought. Therefore, the managing team of the Regional Accelerator, as well as the managing team of Normandie Participations – the regional Investment Fund – dedicated their participations within the first phase of the project to work on the development and the tailoring of the acceleration programme. The rationale

for encouraging the development of FFWD Normandie is to meet the challenges of the local industry while addressing the needs expressed by the companies willing to accelerate their businesses.

To that end, the implication of the stakeholders, FFWD Normandie team and Normandie Participations management team, throughout the project has mostly been oriented towards the research for good practices in the field of acceleration models, on how to design and finance these accelerations programmes.

## Where does the idea come from?

The learning process has been very fruitful for our stakeholders, FFWD Normandie and Normandie Participations. With the initial idea in mind to deepen the knowledge on the good practice *Funding of start-ups centers*, developed at NBank, a representative from FFWD Normandie and AD Normandie went to Hanover on the 13<sup>th</sup> of June 2019 in the frame of the staff exchanges.

At the occasion of this staff exchange in Lower-Saxony, we were offered the opportunity to discover the functioning of Start-ups Centers in Lower-Saxony and learn more about the organization of the acceleration programmes, their sources of funding as well as their governance.

The stakeholder from FFWD Normandie learnt that the organization of the programme was similar to the one they offer to companies but that the main difference between the Start-up Centers in Lower Saxony and the regional Accelerator FFWD Normandie is the sectorisation of their Start-ups Centers. Indeed, in Lower-Saxony, the acceleration programmes are called 'Start-Up centers' and are organized according to different economic sectors of interest and relevance for the territory. There are 7 start-up centers funded by the local government of Lower-Saxony. After visiting and learning more about one of them, Venture Villa, a meeting was organized with Normandie Participations and FFWD Normandie management teams to debrief the practices we had the opportunity to discover in Hanover.

The idea of focusing a programme of acceleration for SMEs on a given economic sector of interest for the region came out of this first meeting.

To make the most of the learning process and to create as many opportunities for inspiration from a good practice as possible, François Guisset – Director of Normandie Participations – came to Hanover in September 2019 at the occasion of the Interregional Learning Event. Most of the thinking and the designing for this action was done thanks to the experiences shared in Hanover, both in June and in September 2019.

Thanks to NBank, FFWD Normandie managed to identify a Start-Up center that is specialized in agro-food (SeedHouse) and FFWD Normandie team has been in contact with Tim Siebert since then, the



manager of this Start-Up center, SeedHouse<sup>2</sup>. A meeting with François Guisset and Tim Siebert was set-up during the Interregional Learning Event to discuss a potential partnership with the Start-up Center and the future FFWD Normandie Agro food programme. The ideas behind the collaboration with SeedHouse would be to:

- Share qualified information on their respective ecosystems and markets,
- Provide assistance in discovering the Norman / Lower Saxon market for startups interested in the French/German markets. FFWD Normandie has a turnkey offer (3 to 5 days) developed by AD Normandie invest department that can be made available to SeedHouse companies (Soft Landing Package),
- Encourage cross-mentoring / sharing experience between startups in our programs
- Offer the possibility of privileged contact with their respective industrial partners as well as an access to an extended scope of experimentation and expertise,
- Make possible for SeedHouse's former or current startups to apply to FFWD Normandie programme for agro-food companies and to benefit from the support and financing offered by Normandie Participations and its co-investors.

FFWD Normandie received encouraging feedback from SeedHouse and the collaboration is likely to start for the first season of the acceleration programme for agro-food companies. The terms and conditions of the collaboration will evolve as the programme is designed and implemented. The idea is also to allow European SMEs to have access to the Norman market and also to offer Norman SMEs the opportunity to learn about a European market and hence, facilitate the internationalization of their business.

FFWD Normandie and Normandie Participations have already worked on the establishment of an indicative framework for the design and the implementation of this new offer of the Regional accelerator.

## Why specialise the acceleration programme?



In the reflection towards a redesigning of the acceleration programme, several criteria were looked at:

- Is there a predominant sector in Normandy that could be interesting in a tailor-made acceleration programme?
- To which sector(s) are the current applying companies to FFWD Normandie related to?

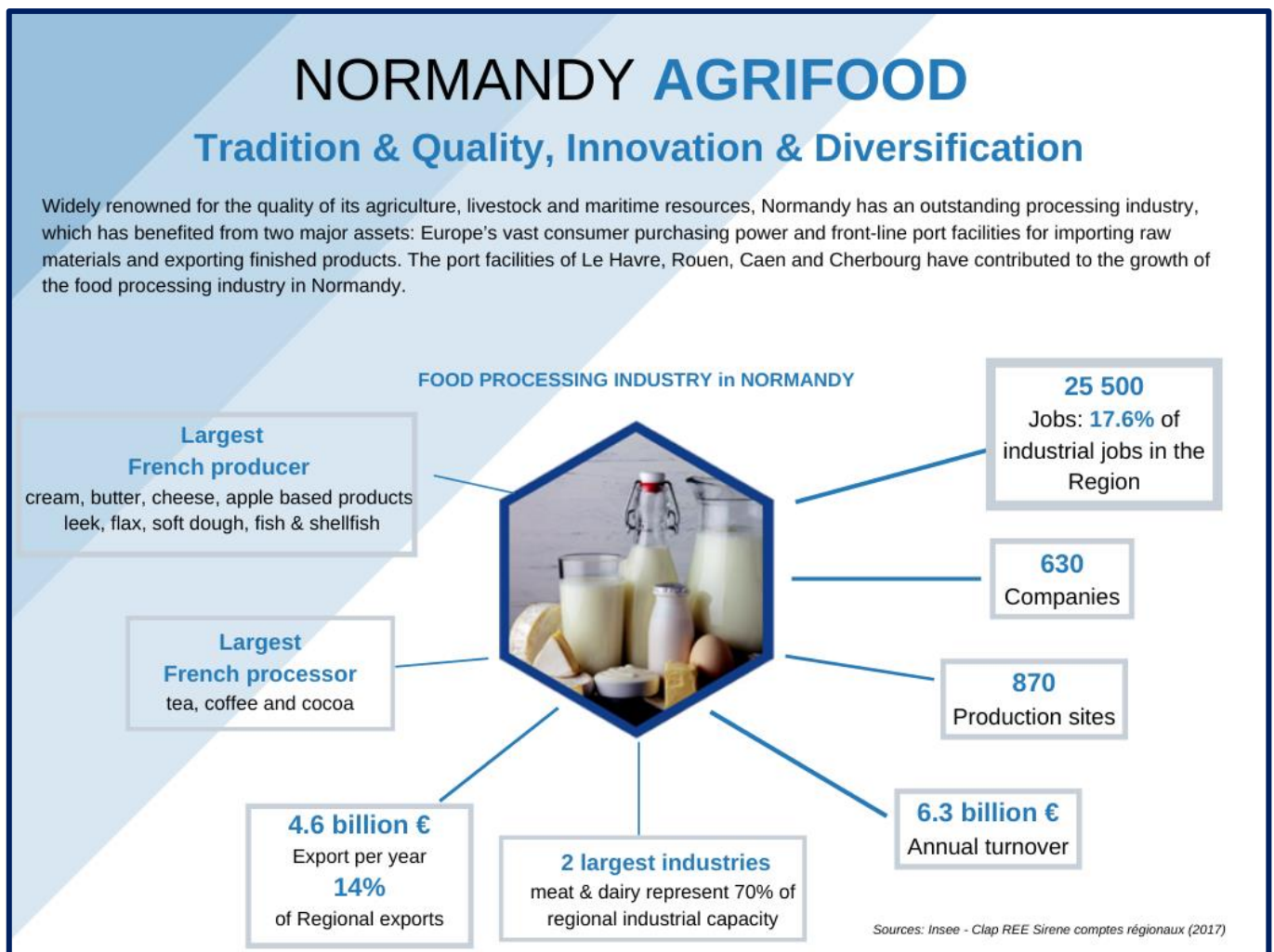
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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.seedhouse.de/>

- Is the representativeness of the applicants to the programme respected in the current cohorts?

As most of the answers to these questions are *'the agro-food sector'* and *'there is not a dedicated acceleration programme yet in Normandy'*, our colleagues from FFWD Normandie and Normandie Participations decided that it was worth focusing on designing a new offer for companies from the agro-food sector.

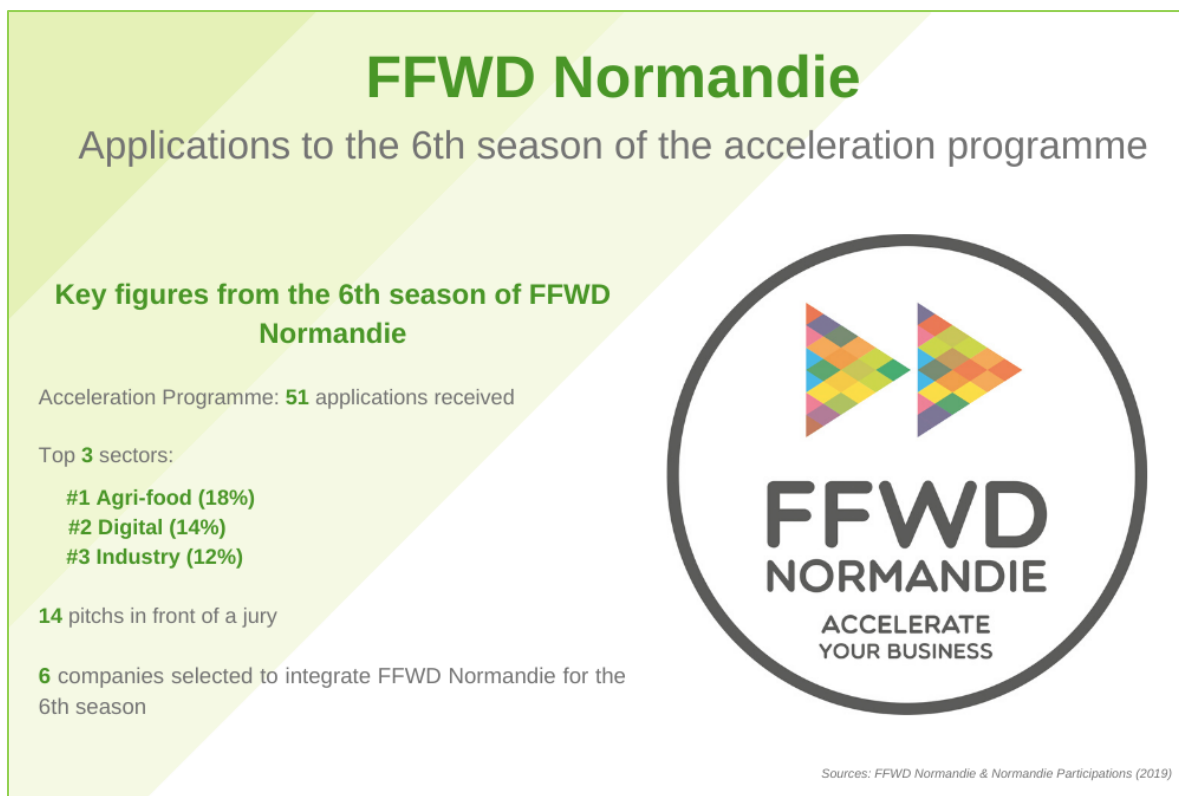
To be more specific about the importance of the agro-food sector in Normandy, the hereafter data are illustrating of the importance of agro-food industry in the region.



In light of these elements, strong arguments in favor of the development of a new programme to be offered by FFWD Normandie to companies from the agro-food sector have been put forward. They would address the needs expressed by the concerned companies as well as they would improve the competitiveness of the SMEs from the agro-food sector.

Therefore, the rationales for creating an acceleration programme dedicated to companies from the agro-food sector in Normandy are:

- Improving the expertise, the support with *ad hoc* experts and targeted coaching to:
  - increase the impact of acceleration tenfold
  - reconciling business acceleration and technological/technical growth
- Gaining visibility at national and international level stand out in a dense "competitive" environment
- Allowing close collaboration with the strategic actors of the Norman territory: remarkable regional companies, sectors, competitiveness clusters, laboratories and schools....
  - enhance the strengths of the territory
  - continue to be a factor for attractiveness



The above data were collected by FFWD Normandie team in November 2019, at the end of the selection procedure for the 6<sup>th</sup> season of the acceleration programme which will start in January 2020. They do reinforce the idea that regional companies from the agro-food sector also express a large interest in the acceleration programme offered by the Region as companies from the agro-food sector do represent the largest part of companies that applied to join FFWD Normandy. There is therefore a clear relevance for developing a targeted programme for companies from this economic sector.

## Implementation process for the action

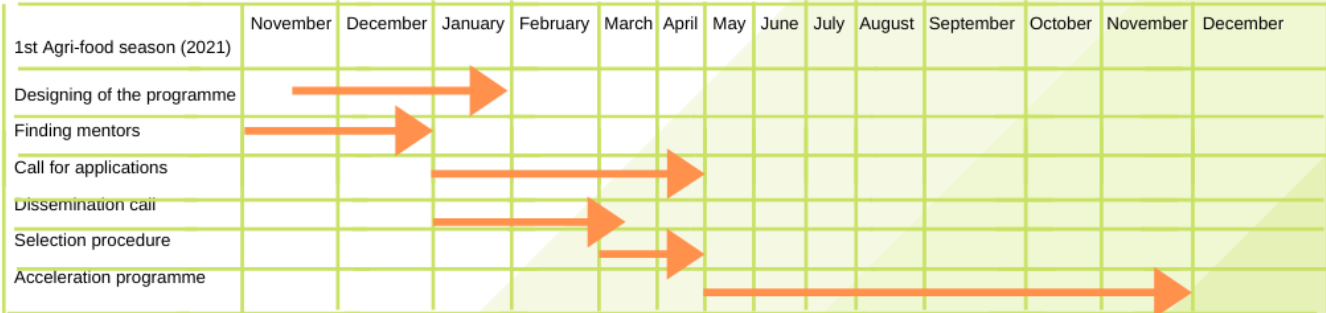
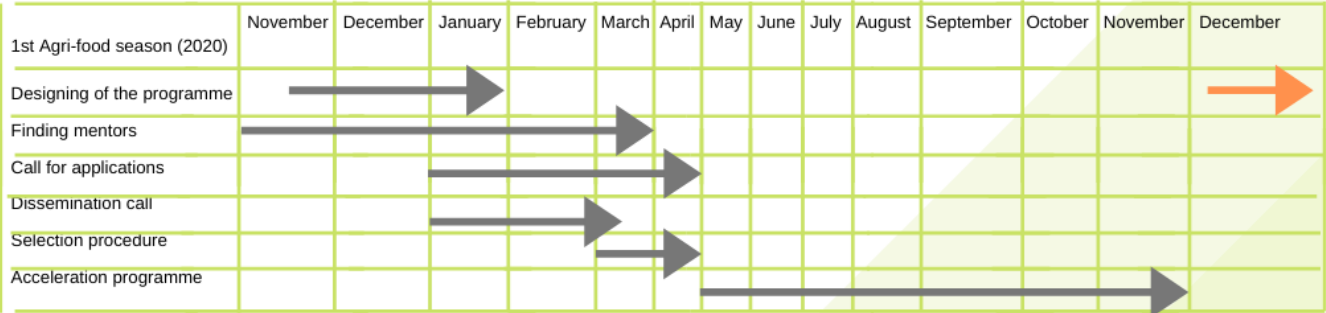
During phase II of FFWD Europe project, this action will be implemented by FFWD Normandie and Normandie Participations Management teams. They would have the opportunity, launch two selection procedures, one in 2020 to try the new programme and another in 2021 to adjust the programme according to the feedback received from the first season. If feasible, FFWD Normandie hopes to welcome start-ups from SeedHouse and SeedHouse is also willing to organize study visits for companies from the FFWD Normandie acceleration programme to learn about another European market: agro-food sector in Lower-Saxony.



### FFWD Normandie



#### Implementation of the new acceleration programme 2020 - 2021



Sources: FFWD Normandie & Normandie Participations (2019)



## Nature and relevance of the action

The main purpose of the action is to design and implement an acceleration programme targeted at companies from the agro-food sector to meet the economic challenges of the territory. The program will be also more open to internationalization. This action aims at encouraging SMEs from the agro-food sector to grow their business while offering them the opportunity to do it locally and internationally. The idea is also to maintain the financial support provided by the Region of Normandy through Normandie Participations.

## Link to the policy instrument

The strategic objective 1.3.4 from the Regional Operational Programme aims at ‘strengthening the competitiveness of small and medium-sized enterprises [...] and increase the size of VSEs/SMEs through innovation and internationalization projects’. By creating additional solutions for Start-ups and SMEs to grow their business in a supportive environment, this action to be implemented in Normandy is directly drawn inspired from this specific objective. As AD Normandie’s strategies are defined in accordance with the Regional Operational Programme, for the objectives that concern the economic development of the region, AD Normandie’s budget is defined and structured to mirror the implementation of the regional public policies for economic development and therefore, to achieve the strategic objectives that have been set in the ROP.

The modification of FFWD Normandie’s budget to include the funding of the development of the new Agro-food acceleration programme is, by extension, linked to the modification of the policy instrument. The rationale behind financing the future FFWD Normandie Agro-food acceleration programme by restructuring FFWD Normandie’s current budget is to make sure the programme will continue even if the aforementioned strategic objectives are to be modified in the next ROPs.

## Stakeholders in charge of the implementation of the action

As FFWD Normandie accelerated companies are financially supported by Normandie Participations, these two regional organizations will be closely working together to implement this action. We can identify :

- Laure Leclercq, Manager of FFWD Normandie
- Rose-Marie Tostivint, Project Officer at FFWD Normandie
- François Guisset, Managing Director of Normandie Participations

## Timeframe

In order to monitor the changes made over the implementation phase of the project, it is forecasted that two seasons of the new FFWD Normandie acceleration programme for agro-food companies will be launched. The timeframe for the implementation of the action is the following:

### **November 2019 – January 2020**

Designing of the call for applications & building a network of regional partners (bank, companies, consulting...) to support the programme with funding opportunities, mentoring offers, tailor-made training...

Designing of the communication package for a timely dissemination in accordance to the publication of the call for applications

### **January 2020 – March 2020**

Dissemination of the call for proposal among the regional network of agro-food companies and the related cluster

### **March 2020 – April 2020**

Analysis and selection of laureates companies among the application received

### **End of April 2020**

Beginning of the first season of this specialized acceleration programme

### **April 2020 – November 2020**

Processing feedback from the first season, analyzing the needs expressed by the companies, developing the partnership with SeedHouse to offer opportunities on the European market

### **September 2020 – December 2020**

Designing of the second season of the acceleration programme based on the first experience

### **December 2020 – February 2021**

Launch of the second call for applications

### **February 2021 – March 2021**

Analysis and selection of laureates companies among the application received

### **April 2021**

Launch of the second phase of the acceleration programme focused on agro-food

**April 2021 – November 2021**

Second season of the programme

**December 2021**

Assessment of the first two seasons of the programme to improve the design of the next ones and envisaged a specialization in other sectors of relevance for the regional ecosystem (digital and industry).



## Indicative costs

Currently, the whole budget for the functioning of FFWD Normandie (i.e. office and administration costs, salaries, facilities, communication material...) is allocated by AD Normandie. The total budget allocated for the current acceleration programme is 60K€, forecasted for the acceleration and follow-up of 10 companies. Currently, in the past seasons of the programme, no more than 6 companies have been selected to enter the regional accelerator.

Each company benefiting from the programme has to pay 1000€ per month to cover office and administration costs as well as the coaching. This income aims at completing the total budget allocated by AD Normandie to FFWD Normandie.

Each company selected to join the acceleration programme as the possibility to receive an optional initial capital investment (convertible bonds). Indeed, up to €150,000 is offered by the regional investment fund Normandie Participations and its co-investor.

The costs that might be generated by the creation of the new acceleration programme are mostly related to:

- Communication material (flyers, development of the website, brochures to present the programme...)
- Covering the costs of the coaching
- Shared services (accounting, legal, commercial, internship, monitoring, etc.)
- Provision of software tools (CRM / financial monitoring tools...)
- Development of training offer (in support of schools), in person and/or e-learning
- Organization of learning expeditions abroad (Germany first, in collaboration with SeedHouse?)
- Start-up hosting / facilities
- Organisation of "internships" for foreign companies
- Reception of foreign delegations
- Organization of company visits

The idea with creating this new acceleration programme is also to capitalize on the already available expertise at FFWD Normandie to avoid generating additional costs that might not be covered in the long term. Therefore, most of the above-mentioned costs will be covered by the budget annually allocated by AD Normandie to FFWD Normandie. This would also allow FFWD Normandie to sustain the implementation of the new agro-food acceleration programme and to offer this programme permanently to companies. To that end, the repartition of FFWD Normandie's budget has been revised to include the possibility for 4 companies to join the agro-food acceleration programme per year. Since



the annual budget is forecasted for 10 companies – after a thorough assessment of the participation within the programme and the current welcoming capacities (facilities, office spaces, staff available...), it has been decided that the maximum of companies able to join any FFWD Normandie acceleration programme would be 10: 6 companies for the regular acceleration programme and 4 for the agro-food programme. Companies are also participating to the costs of the programme, mainly to cover office and administration costs. This also encourage accelerated companies to be involved in and to actively participate in the programme as they are require to invest money in addition to their time.

## Indicative funding sources

As for today, the funding sources are:

- AD Normandie for the functioning of FFWD Normandie (staff costs, office and administration costs...)
- Normandie Participations for 100k€ of the 150k€ offered as an optional initial capital investment in convertible bonds.
- Crédit Agricole Normandie, regional bank in partnership with FFWD Normandie for the facilities and the financial support for accelerated companies, is bringing the complementary 50k€ to the optional capital investment. Crédit Agricole has been, historically, involved in the agro business. They value their participation to the agro-food acceleration programme as it matches their core values.
- The accelerated companies to contribute to the functioning of the programme: the acceleration program requires a financial participation of 2 500€ by the company, payable once at the beginning of the program if the company does not benefit from the initial seed investment by Normandie Participations.

If the company accepts the offer of Normandie Participations, the fees will be of 1 000€ HT per month, so 6 000€ (before tax) for the six-month program and 12 000€ (before tax) for the twelve-month program. These fees cover a part of the mentoring and coaching sessions, the offices and the furniture provided to the companies and the staff costs of FFWD Normandie.

The below table explains how the budget for the agro-food acceleration programme is distributed.

Annual provisional budget for the agro-food acceleration programme - for 4 companies (Without tax)

Budget lines	AD Normandie	Village by Crédit Agricole (CA)	Normandie Participations (NP)	Revenues : companies contributions (to be deducted from ADN's contribution)	Total (for 4 companies)
Staff costs *	220days	45days	220days		
Office rents		3000€			3 000€
Event organisation	3 000€	1 700€			4 700 €
Participation to fairs					
Consulting fees	20 000€	1 000€			21 000€
Communication	5 500€	300€			5 800€
Catering costs	400€				400€
Travel and accommodation costs	2 000€				2 000€
Sponsoring		5 000€			5 000€
Techfood membership		500€			500€
<b>Total fixed costs</b>	<b>30 900€</b>	<b>11 500€</b>			<b>42 400€</b>
For companies that do not take the 150k€ convertible bonds				2500€ for the whole programme/company	
Optional participation (convertible bonds / company)		50 000€	100 000€	1 000€/month (6-months programme)	

\* Staff costs are incurred in the annual HR budget of AD Normandie and Village by Crédit Agricole as developing and managing the programme is part of the staff full time job.

Since AD Normandie and Normandie Participations are currently 100% funded by the budget Normandy Region (Managing authority) is allocating to economic development, the idea would be to include the new acceleration programme offered by FFWD Normandie in the already existing budget lines that are covered by the budget allocated to enforce the economic development and meet the strategic Objective 1.3.4: Increase the size of the small and medium enterprises through innovation and internationalization projects.

## Interregional character

The design of this action has been clearly inspired from the functioning of the Start-Up center in Lower Saxony, a good practice that has been put forward by our partners from NBank.

Moreover, it seems important to FFWD Normandie and Normandie Participations to reinforce this interregional character through the design and the implementation of the new acceleration programme. Therefore, it is the very reason why they are currently discussing collaboration opportunities with the Agro-food Start-up center SeedHouse in order to both benefit from an international experience and network as well as offering Start-Ups from SeedHouse the opportunity to have a facilitated access to the Norman market and, by extension, to the French market.

This interregional character and the established link to the policy instrument above mentioned also put the emphasis on the link to SME competitiveness the implementation of this action has.

## Risks identified & mitigation

With the implementation of this new project come several risks that might impact the initial timeframe set and the expected results to be obtained. For every risks identified, FFWD Normandie and Normandie Participations have thought about ways to mitigate these risks.

- Having delays in the implementation process

*Contingency plan: securing the steps that are the most demanding time wise and making sure everyone is on board before the launch of the call for applications*

- Not managing to reach the targeted audience for the call for applications

*Establishing, in the early stage of the designing of the programme, a stakeholders map at the regional and national level to elaborate a relevant diffusion list for the communication activity. To do so, the biggest companies and companies from the agro-food sector as well as the regional cluster will be contacted in the beginning of 2020 to have all the information necessary for the dissemination phase.*

- Motivating selected companies to remain involved through the whole acceleration programme

*Based on the practices seen abroad and on the experience from the previous FFWD Normandie seasons, it has been thought to offer the companies the opportunity to meet with investors at the end of the acceleration programme. The idea is to set up incentives for the company to get involved and benefit entirely from the opportunity.*

- Managing to reach companies from other regions and countries

*The idea is to build a large network among groups from the sector and clusters which have good connections with their counterparts from other French regions. With the relations we have created thanks to FFWD Europe project and notably with SeedHouse, FFWD Normandie will also have a facilitated access to networks from other European markets.*

- Reaching mentors and experts from the agro-food sector to offer trainings and coaching

*The already build network of experts thanks to the partnership with the bank credit Agricole Normandie and the renowned results from the previous FFWD Normandie seasons have allowed the constitution of a panel of experts willing to collaborate on diverse projects. In order to mitigate this risk, the constitution of the panel of experts and potential mentors will be secured before the launch of the call for applications and the agenda for the acceleration programme will be communicated to them early enough so that we can maximize the participation rate of these experts. To mitigate the eventual unavailability of one of the experts, FFWD Normandie team will be elaborating the content of the training as well as the training materials in close collaboration to the panel of experts to be able to moderate a workshop when necessary.*

## Monitoring process

The monitoring process of the implementation of the action described will be organized jointly with FFWD Normandie and Normandie Participations. We collectively agreed upon the organization of regular follow-up meetings to debrief after every milestone identify for the implementation of the action.

## Indicators

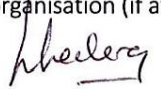
To be able to follow-up the progresses made towards the design and the implementation of the acceleration programme for agro-food companies, measurable indicators have been set:

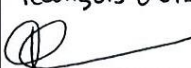
- Numbers of applications received for the first season
- Proportion of Start-Ups and SMEs among the applicants
- Number of companies selected to pitch their business in front of the selection committee
- Ability of the accelerated companies to raise money from investors
- Number of company missions organized abroad
- Number of foreign companies welcomed in Normandy in the frame of a company mission or soft landing package or to beneficiate from the acceleration programme
- Turnout of the companies before the beginning of the acceleration programme, at the end of the programme, 6months and 1 year after the end of the programme


On the modification of the policy instrument, and more on the long term:

- Number of people hired thanks to the creation of this new programme
- Proportion of the budget allocated to FFWD Normandie

## Endorsement by the parties involved in the implementation of the action

Date	12/05/2020
Name and position	Laure LECLERCQ – Manager Fast Forward Normandie
Signature	Stamp of the organisation (if available) 

Date	12 10 31 2020
Name and position	François Gossel / General Manager  Normandie Participation
Signature	Stamp of the organisation (if available)

Date	26/05/2020
Name and position	Erwan SALAÏN - manager ADP
Signature	Stamp of the organisation (if available) 

## Acknowledgements

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- CEEIM, Murcia Business Innovation Center (BIC Murcia)
- IFKA Public Benefit NonProfit Ltd. For the Development of the Industry
- Metropolitan City of Turin
- Kaunas Science and Technology Park
- Podlaska Regional Development Foundation

Thank you also to FFWD Normandie and Normandie Participations for having shown a sincere interest in the activities of the project since the beginning of the learning phase. It is always rewarding to see results emerging from the work done throughout the project, especially when the will to do more and implement change at the regional level to improve SMEs competitiveness is taken over by other regional actors.

Finally, thank you to our project and financial officers at Interreg Europe who have provided us with useful support and guidance to go through phase 1 of the project. As lead partner, it has been very helpful to have clear milestones to go from the learning activities of the project to the designing of regional action plans.

All the FFWD Europe partnership looks forward to the next phase of the project.





# FFWD EUROPE

Interreg Europe

FFWD EUROPE encourages SMEs to participate in public supported accelerator models in order to enhance their competitiveness through access to private funding and international market opportunities.

[www.interregeurope.eu/ffwdeurope](http://www.interregeurope.eu/ffwdeurope)

An interregional cooperation project for improving SME competitiveness policies.

**Project Partners**

**Normandy Development Agency (FR)**  
Investment and Business Development Bank Lower Saxony - NBank (DE)  
Business Development Centre North Denmark (DK)  
Murcia Business Innovation Center (BIC Murcia) (ES)  
IFKA Public Benefit NonProfit Ltd. for the Development of the Industry (HU)  
Metropolitan City of Turin (IT)  
Kaunas Science and Technology Park (LT)  
Podlaska Regional Development Foundation (PL)

