

ACTION PLAN TEMPLATE

Part I – General information

Project: ELISE

Partner organisation: Cassovia Life Sciences

Other partner organisations involved (if relevant): Košice Self-governing region

Country: Slovakia

NUTS2 region: Východné Slovensko

Contact person: Martin Haranta

- email address: martin.haranta@cassovialifesciences.eu
- phone number: +421917858838

Part II – Policy context

The Action Plan aims to impact:

- Investment for Growth and Jobs programme
- European Territorial Cooperation programme
- Other regional development policy instrument

Name of the policy instrument addressed: **Operational programme Research and Innovation & RIS3 for Košice region**

Further details on the policy context and the way the action plan should contribute to improve the policy instruments:

The Operational Programme Research and Innovation (OP R&I) represents a joint programme document of the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sports of the Slovak Republic (MoESRS SR) and the Ministry of Economy of the Slovak Republic (MoE SR) for the granting of support from European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) during the programming period 2014–2020 in the area aimed to create a stable innovation-friendly environment for all relevant entities and to promote the efficiency and performance of the system of research, development and innovations as a basic pillar for reinforcing competitiveness, sustainable economic growth and employment.

The OP R&I is based on the priorities of the Europe 2020 strategy and on the main recommendations of the Small Business Act and the Entrepreneurship 2020 Action Plan.

OP R&I is derived from RIS3 of Slovakia, where is stated that: “In order to achieve synergy in innovative and economic activities with positive effects on economic growth and employment it will be necessary to create mechanisms for the support of cooperation in clusters and cluster organisations and involve research institution in their activities.” This kind of mechanism have not been existing until recently and ELISE contributed to this change by creating knowledge base for new calls for clusters.

Slovakia lacks coherent funding of innovation support organisations such as clusters, thus lacking subjects that can create links between stakeholders of the region/state. One of the main focuses of this action plan is to support development calls for funding of such initiatives according to practices from the partner countries of ELISE.

We would like to use knowledge obtained by the project also to support policy implementation in Slovakia namely by the Slovak Innovation and Energetic Agency – develop better methodologies for improvement of the innovation performance of the companies – within the scope of national project Improvement of innovation performance of Slovak economy. Good practices namely SPARK can be utilized as methodology for innovation workshops that are being currently provided.

The second part of the action plan is dedicated to the regional strategy and competence development in the creation of the structures and activities of the region towards improved innovation ecosystem. Košice region is lagging behind in innovation performance although there is strong presence of academic presence with low number of companies. Stakeholders of the region do not cooperate (with some exceptions) and there is lack of knowledge in management of innovation value chain. By creating new policy and tools regional government will provide new opportunities for innovation stakeholders. RIS3 of Košice region lacks focus on specific fields and do not possess any part on innovation support, thus creating for us opportunity to implement knowledge gathered by the ELISE and improve RIS3 which is currently being reworked as current version of RIS3 is for years 2013-2020. In current version of the RIS3 clusters are just described there is no mention of how to develop and utilize them. The aim of the action in this plan is to change it and work into the RIS3 coherent strategy for cluster/ecosystem development.

Part III – Details of the actions envisaged

ACTION 1

TITLE OF ACTION: Supporting clusters via OP calls for proposals

1. Relevance to the project

Slovakia lacks coherent support of R&I environment. Stakeholders are atomised and there is lack of cooperation and communication between them, which leads to low innovation activity and results such as patents and high level publications. As demonstrated in the project ELISE development/improvement of innovation oriented clusters can remove obstacles in cooperation and provide platform, skills and knowledge to develop successful innovation of both products and services.

ELISE project was significant inspiration for the development of new call for the clusters within the scope of OP R&I specifically:

- This action is derived from the GP produced by partner Biocon Cluster BioCon Valley - Moderator and catalyst - where development of cluster is described as a success story – why was it created, how was it created and what is the added value. This serves as theoretical basis, how innovation driven cluster should look like in long term, also with description of funding. (Call is not officially issued, once it will be we will add specific details to connection with GP)
- The main inspiration comes from the meeting and study visits organised by the partners namely ART-ER and LSN. During study visits, sessions with policy makers focused on clusters were organised. We were able to find out how their clusters work from technical perspectives such as financing and internal management. Also on both meetings policy makers were present, who detail demonstrated their position on development of clusters and ecosystems. We were able to ask policymakers for their strategies and policy documents in order to intermediate knowledge towards Slovak policy maker namely Ministry of Economics. We asked for additional information on how do they finance clusters and how to make them sustainable. We provided this knowledge to the Ministry of economics of Slovakia, which used the information to develop specific call for the clusters from operational programme of research and innovation. This is the first call from ERDF focused on clusters in the history of Slovakia. We would like to establish public support for the clusters and their development according to already functioning models from Italy and Germany.

Our approach is to take what we have seen and adapt it in Slovak environment in both administrative (how clusters are financed and managed) and content (what is their function and aim) approach.

2. Nature of the action

Main content of the action is to create call from Slovak ERDF focused on the clusters. Our role in the process is to provide knowledge on clusters, how they operate in general, how they operate abroad and what are possible ways of funding them. The second part of our role was to create policy strategy for the cluster development of the Slovakia according to the examples derived from ELISE project

Our activities that are done/being done/will be done in chronological order:

1. Finding of policy maker willing to cooperate – firstly we started with Ministry of Education (representative attended meeting in Bologna), but after the political shift we were forced to abandon foreseen cooperation (derived from letter of intent). Later we started to cooperate with Ministry of economics, which is also responsible for OP R&I, but from the perspective of industry.
2. After 2 meetings, where we were discussing aims of ELISE and how it can be utilized we came into understanding that proper call issued under OP R&I focusing on cluster development will be needed.
3. We agreed on steps and attended number of meetings and workshops focused on needs and development of clusters – what is their added value, what is proper function of the cluster, what should be goal, how to set up entry fees, etc.
4. We created plan on what will be needed by the ministry – they lack certain knowledge on proper functions of cluster, how to overcome state-aid, what should be budget of the project under new call, etc.
5. During ELISE meetings and study visits we have collected requested information, worked it into unified document as analytical desk work (we have received questions of Ministry prior our work) and sent to the policy maker.
6. We have agreed with Ministry of Economics to develop strategy for cluster development based on ELISE experience in long term – not only on one specific call, but to ensure stable long-term development of the cluster environment.
7. Policy maker has included our work into the process of creation of the call under the OP R&I
8. Call is indicatively planned on September 2019 with the budget of 5 million € under the name support of networking of companies. Call has no deadline and will be opened until all of the funds allocated are not spent. Call is not opened yet, but it is expected to be opened soon. (once it will be we will provide addition wording to this AP)

Phase 2:

1. After the lunch of the calls we will cooperate with Ministry on monitoring of number of project proposals, their focus and funds allocated that will be funded with upper mentioned call.
2. We will monitor winning proposals by two means – via managing organ and direct communication with beneficiaries of the projects – questionnaire will be developed for them focusing on budget, timeframe, activities, deliverables and feedback on the call.
3. At the end of 2021 and 2022 questionnaire regarding improving call (what obstacles derived from call, what was set up well, etc.) will be send to the funded beneficiaries in order to find out their opinion on call and how can it be improved in future in order to address needs of the cluster organisations in the Slovakia.

Potential risks: In February 2020 we will have major parliamentary elections and it is very likely that employees at the ministry will be moved or changed. If for some reason call is not opened yet it may happen that after change it will not be opened at all. If call is opened and employees of ministry are changed it may happen that they will not cooperate with us on monitoring. Our possibilities to limit these risks are limited bordering none.

3. Stakeholders involved

- Ministry of Economics – public body the manages operational programme research and innovation – creator of the call
- Ministry of Education – public body responsible for whole operational programme research and innovation
- Clusters in Slovakia – beneficiaries of the call - can apply for funding
- SMEs - beneficiaries of the call - can apply for funding

4. Timeframe

Start of the cooperation with Ministry of Economics – early 2018

- Indicative time for the issue of the call – September 2019 – although call is not opened yet but we expect it to be no later than end of 2019 – opening of the call is the main milestone of the activity
- Call will be open until whole allocation is spent

- We expect that whole allocation will be spent in next 2 years, which correlates with monitoring period of ELISE

5. Costs

- Most of the action have already been implemented, so further cost will be mainly in monitoring.

6. Funding sources

ERDF – operational programme research and innovation – allocation for the call 5 million €.

ACTION 2

TITLE OF ACTION: Improving tools for innovation in companies

1. Relevance to the project

Companies in Slovakia have very low innovation performance thus Ministry of Economics of Slovakia decided through its implementation organisation Slovak Innovation and Energy Agency (SIEA) to create workshops for the companies that will improve their performance. This activity is performed under project funded from OP R&I called national project – Increase of Innovation Performance of Slovak Economics. We would like to use methodologies presented in ELISE namely SPARK to improve how they access and work with companies and how they would like to increase their performance. Our main goal is to provide new methodologies for improvement of innovation potential of Slovak companies.

Slovak companies are lagging behind European average for innovation performance. For this reason, national project – Increase of Innovation Performance of Slovak Economics was created within the scope OP R&I. Part of this activity is focused on development of workshops that are offered for free to Slovak companies. They have developed methodology and are actively seeking on other methodologies that can be utilized on their workshop. This is where SPARK GP comes to play - SPARK is a tool aimed at fostering the dialogue between Enterprise and Research by empowering researchers to think about research results from a market point of view on the basis of the Business Model Canvas (BMC) so to improve the marketability of research based products and services. It aims to create a context where researchers can measure real feasibility of research activities with a marketable perspective. SPARK is the acronym of: SCAN, PLAN, ACT. R and K stand for Revolutionary Kit: participants gain a toolkit and a new network of potential partners.

SCAN, PLAN, ACT is a process:

SCAN - innovators select the elements of the project to be discussed during the interactive workshop.

PLAN: Researchers are trained by the coach on how to hold an effective pitch to present their ideas.

ACT-interactive workshop where teams work to fill in the BMC. 2 or more teams work simultaneously. Once one BMC box has been completed, teams are splitted up and the members of one team leave their table to go and listen to the results achieved by another team. They can pose questions to the researchers, provide comments and suggestions in order to help them to rethink the process. A zoom in/zoom out mechanism helps to see things from different views. and they can go back to the BMC and review it.

Idea for innovation is far from tangible product, service or organisational improvement thus making understanding of innovation value chain important, which can be accessed through SPARK. For this action we have utilized not only SPARK GP itself but also study visit in Bologna, where it was described in detail.

Good practice has to be modified for the needs of companies that mainly use expertise of employees from other departments rather than stakeholders from different organisations; significantly shorten time delays between SPARK steps and other minor changes, but core of the GP will be utilized during the workshops. Our idea is together with Slovak Innovation and Energy Agency to pilot SPARK in the company and then implement it to SIEA portfolio of services.

2. Nature of the action

Main content of the action is to adjust SPARK methodology to the needs of company based workshops that will be organised under the umbrella of SIEA. Our activities that are done/being done/will be done in chronological order:

1. Getting familiar with SPARK GP – identifying pros and cons
2. Initiating communication with SIEA about utilization of ELISE for their needs (early 2019)
3. Attending study visit in Bologna – gaining deeper understanding of SPARK initiative (early 2019)
4. 3 meetings and workshops, where we discussed, which parts of the ELISE can be utilized – SPARK was the conclusion

5. Adjusting SPARK method – analytical work in house CLS – currently in progress – focusing on making the method one day event through all of its steps, how many people will be included, what other tools than BMC can be used such as strategic optional development analysis.
6. Future steps – creating pilot with SIEA on specific company, testing adjusted SPARK methodology
7. Assessment of the pilot action and planning steps for its implementation to the curriculum of workshop
8. Implementing SPARK methodology to future workshops organised by SIEA

Potential risks: There is number of risks that endanger successful completion of this activity namely:

- Change in the leadership of SIEA – general elections are coming in February 2020 and with it possible changes in leadership, which is usually bound with stopping of projects in Slovakia – our possibilities to limit this risks are not existent
- Not successful pilot – both piloted company and SIEA will not like results – we can overcome this risks by creating high quality content

3. Stakeholders involved

- Ministry of Economics – public body the manages operational programme research and innovation
- Slovak Innovation and Energy Agency – policy implementation organisation created by Ministry of Economics – implementer of SPARK method during workshops
- SMEs – beneficiary of workshops and outcomes of methodology

4. Timeframe

- Adjusted SPARK methodology created – October 2019
- The first joint pilot Cassovia Life Sciences (partner of ELISE project) + SIEA – November 2019
- Implementation to the stable workshop curriculum – February 2020
- Utilization of the methodology – until December 2023 (end of the project that started 2019)
- Monitoring period of two years will be used to access, how many companies took workshop and their reflection via questionnaire

5. Costs

100 man/hour to adjust methodology

- 10 man/hour to prepare for pilot workshop
- 500€ per workshop for organisation and salaries of the coach. Number of workshops is not set.

6. Funding sources

Project is financed via ERDF – Operational programme research and innovation

ACTION 3

TITLE OF ACTION: Improving RIS3 of Košice region

1. Relevance to the project

Current RIS3 strategy of Košice region lacks any details regarding clusters and research and innovation support. It is simplified only to the list of clusters and broad general statements about support. Currently RIS3 strategy is being reworked by University of Žilina for the next period 2021-2027 within the scope of project financed by OP ERDF of Slovakia. We would like to use concepts developed by ELISE to improve RIS3 namely by:

- GP Cluster BioCon Valley - Moderator and catalyst which summarise how to develop cluster, why, what should be its goals and mainly role of the regional government in it ; the ministry of economics of the state of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern decided at a very early stage to establish a cluster organisation to strategically support the development of the state as outstanding destination in the field of life sciences and health economy. For more than fifteen years now BioCon Valley® is concentrating Mecklenburg-Vorpommern's forces in these fields. It was and is the task of BioCon Valley® to support and sustainably develop the key advantages (sticking out clinical and research infrastructures and determined entrepreneurs) alongside with the State. The goals define the tasks of BioCon Valley®:Information, networking, initiation, marketing. We would like to promote the same approach in renewed RIS3 strategy for cluster development. GP will be adapted to the form of cluster in general not life science based in order to affect all of the clusters in the Košice region.
- SPARK is a tool aimed at fostering the dialogue between Enterprise and Research by empowering researchers to think about research results from a market point of view on the basis of the Business Model Canvas (BMC) so to improve the marketability of research based products and services.It aims to create a context where researchers can measure real

feasibility of research activities with a marketable perspective. SPARK is the acronym of: SCAN, PLAN, ACT. R and K stand for Revolutionary Kit: participants gain a toolkit and a new network of potential partners.

SCAN, PLAN, ACT is a process:

- **SCAN** - innovators select the elements of the project to be discussed during the interactive workshop.
- **PLAN**: Researchers are trained by the coach on how to hold an effective pitch to present their ideas.
- **ACT**-interactive workshop where teams work to fill in the BMC. 2 or more teams work simultaneously. Once one BMC box has been completed, teams are splitted up and the members of one team leave their table to go and listen to the results achieved by another team. They can pose questions to the researchers, provide comments and suggestions in order to help them to rethink the process. A zoom in/zoom out mechanism helps to see things from different views. and they can go back to the BMC and review it.

We would like initiatives such as SPARK to be implemented in RIS3 strategy to promote innovation support from the position of regional policy maker in order to foster and improve innovation environment within the innovation ecosystem of the Košice region. Good practice will be fully transferred as it was proposed by the Italian partner ART-ER through partner of ELISE project Košice self-governing region.

The third source of inspiration of the activity were 2 study visits organised in Bologna and Hamburg, where policies of their regions regarding cluster and research support were discussed into depth and also strategical materials were shared with us. We would like to implement them to the RIS3 itself in order to increase its pressure on support of innovation ecosystem. Materials were focused on how innovation is supported and what tools are used to foster implementation of value chain approach.

2. Nature of the action

Main content of this action is focused on improvement suggested RIS3 strategy, which is currently under the preparation by University of Žilina. Our activities that are done/being done/will be done in chronological order:

- 1. Finding people responsible for the upgrade of RIS3 strategy – University of Žilina**

2. Regular meetings on their needs and our views of RIS3 with particular focus on clusters (their creation and development) and innovation support (tools, capacities and competencies – how to build them and what should they focus upon) – Košice region is specific with low number of SMEs, but strong academic research – better connection between academia and industry is crucial, by the organisations and individuals, who can foster knowledge and technology transfer.
3. Study visits in Germany and Italy – particular focus on innovation and cluster policies that could be transferred to the RIS3
4. Agreement on analytical plan and issues that will be included to the RIS3 – cluster policy and role of regional government, innovation policies to support economic growth, tools for fostering innovation.
5. Analytical work jointly between Cassovia Life Sciences, Košice self-governing region and University of Žilina (currently in progress) – that will feed to the suggestions for improvement of RIS3 of Košice region
6. Implementation of the changes to the RIS3 (in the future)

Potential risks:

- Although University of Žilina is responsible for creation of RIS3, the final version is dependent on decision of committee from Košice region. Our way of limitation of risk that our changes will be removed is partner of ELISE Košice-self-governing region that can influence committee and explain our inputs.

3. Stakeholders involved

- University of Žilina – author of upgrades for RIS3
- Košice Self-governing region – public body responsible for implementation of RIS3

4. Timeframe

- Gather all of the required data from ELISE project (September 2019)
- Analyse data and create input for the RIS3 (November 2019)
- Implement changes to the RIS3 suggestion (March 2019)
- Propose RIS3 to the committee for evaluation (The second half of 2020)
- During 2021 we can monitor which part of RIS3 were influenced by ELISE project in the document itself

5. Costs

- 150 man/hour for analyses and implementation of suggestions

6. Funding sources

RIS3 is strategic document without specific costs. Actions derived from RIS3 will have costs, but there is no way we can assess them now.

ACTION 4

TITLE OF ACTION: Improvement of strategic document - Programme of Economic and Social Development of Kosice Self-Governing Region (PESD)

1. Relevance to the project

Current PESD strategy of Košice region lacks well developed strategy for innovation and innovation environment (clusters). Until recently innovation was not in the focus of local government, but recently region would like to become active stakeholder and develop correct attitude towards problems of innovation ecosystems. We would like to use concepts developed by ELISE to improve RIS3 namely by:

- GP Cluster BioCon Valley - Moderator and catalyst which summarise how to develop cluster, why, what should be its goals and mainly role of the regional government in it ; the ministry of economics of the state of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern decided at a very early stage to establish a cluster organisation to strategically support the development of the state as outstanding destination in the field of life sciences and health economy. For more than fifteen years now BioCon Valley® is concentrating Mecklenburg-Vorpommern's forces in these fields. It was and is the task of BioCon Valley® to support and sustainably develop the key advantages (sticking out clinical and research infrastructures and determined entrepreneurs) alongside with the State. The goals define the tasks of BioCon Valley®: Information, networking, initiation, marketing. We would like to promote the same approach in renewed RIS3 strategy for cluster development. GP will be adapted to the form of cluster in general not life science based in order to affect all of the clusters in the Košice region.
- SPARK is a tool aimed at fostering the dialogue between Enterprise and Research by empowering researchers to think about research results from a market point of view on the basis of the Business Model Canvas (BMC) so to improve the marketability of research based products and services. It aims to create a context where researchers can measure real feasibility of research activities with a marketable perspective. SPARK is the acronym of:

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Good practice will be fully transferred as it was proposed by the Italian partner ART-ER through partner of ELISE project Košice self-governing region.

The third source of inspiration of the activity were most of study visits (namely Bologna and Hamburg) together with project meetings (mainly Poland and Germany), where policies of their regions regarding cluster and research support were discussed into depth and also strategical materials were shared with us. We would like to initiate strategy building based on their example also in Košice region. Very usable model is coming from Poland, where region and city formed alliance to support innovation that can be transferred to Slovakia.

2. Nature of the action

Main content of this action is focused on improvement suggested for the PESD strategy, which is being regularly updated and it is currently under revision. Our work will be focused on 3 main topics:

- Creating support for development of innovation ecosystems & clusters – possible active involvement, funding and cooperation.
- Supporting tools for improvement of regional innovation ecosystem – 2 good practices - SPARK and Business engagement officer

Our activities that are done/being done/will be done in chronological order:

1. Identifying transferable knowledge in ELISE with regards to the structure of strategy of Košice region.
2. Discussions to the depth during study visits and projects meetings focused on key issues identified for the innovation strategy of Košice region
3. Internal discussion at KSR what knowledge could and should be transferred
4. Selection of explicit knowledge for the strategy (in progress)
5. Preparation of the document for the evaluation by advisory boards and leadership of the region
6. After approval of leadership of region, can strategy come to power

Monitoring phase 2:

1. What from ELISE was specifically implemented in the strategy – review of strategy wording – to show, what explicitly was transferred
2. What from strategy was implemented:
 - Workshops organised or methodology transferred
 - Funding and active contribution of region targeted at clusters
 - Number of cooperation established

Potential risks:

- Risks are extremely low, the main risk is that the strategy will be refused by the leadership of the region. We will limit it by prior discussion with the leadership on their point of view on the topic of innovation environment.

3. Stakeholders involved

- Košice Self-governing region – public body responsible for implementation of PESD
- Clusters of Košice region
- Stakeholders of innovation environment mainly academia and companies

4. Timeframe

- Selection of explicit knowledge for strategy (December 2019)
- Preparation of strategy document (April 2020)
- Evaluation of strategy document (September 2020)
- Monitoring (October 2020 – December 2021) – monitoring of KPI established – number of workshops, cooperation and active contributions to clusters and innovation ecosystem

5. Costs

- 200 man/hour for analyses and implementation of suggestions

6. Funding sources

PESD is a strategical document without specific costs. Actions that will be derived from strategy will have costs, but they are outside of ELISE project.

Date:

Name of the organisation(s):

Signature:

Stamp of the organisation (if available):
