



RELOS3

Interreg Europe



European Union
European Regional
Development Fund

RELOS3: The Malta Experience

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MALTAENTERPRISE

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MALTAENTERPRISE

Malta Enterprise is the country's economic development agency, tasked with attracting new foreign direct investment as well as facilitating the growth of existing operations.

Why did we participate in RELOS3?

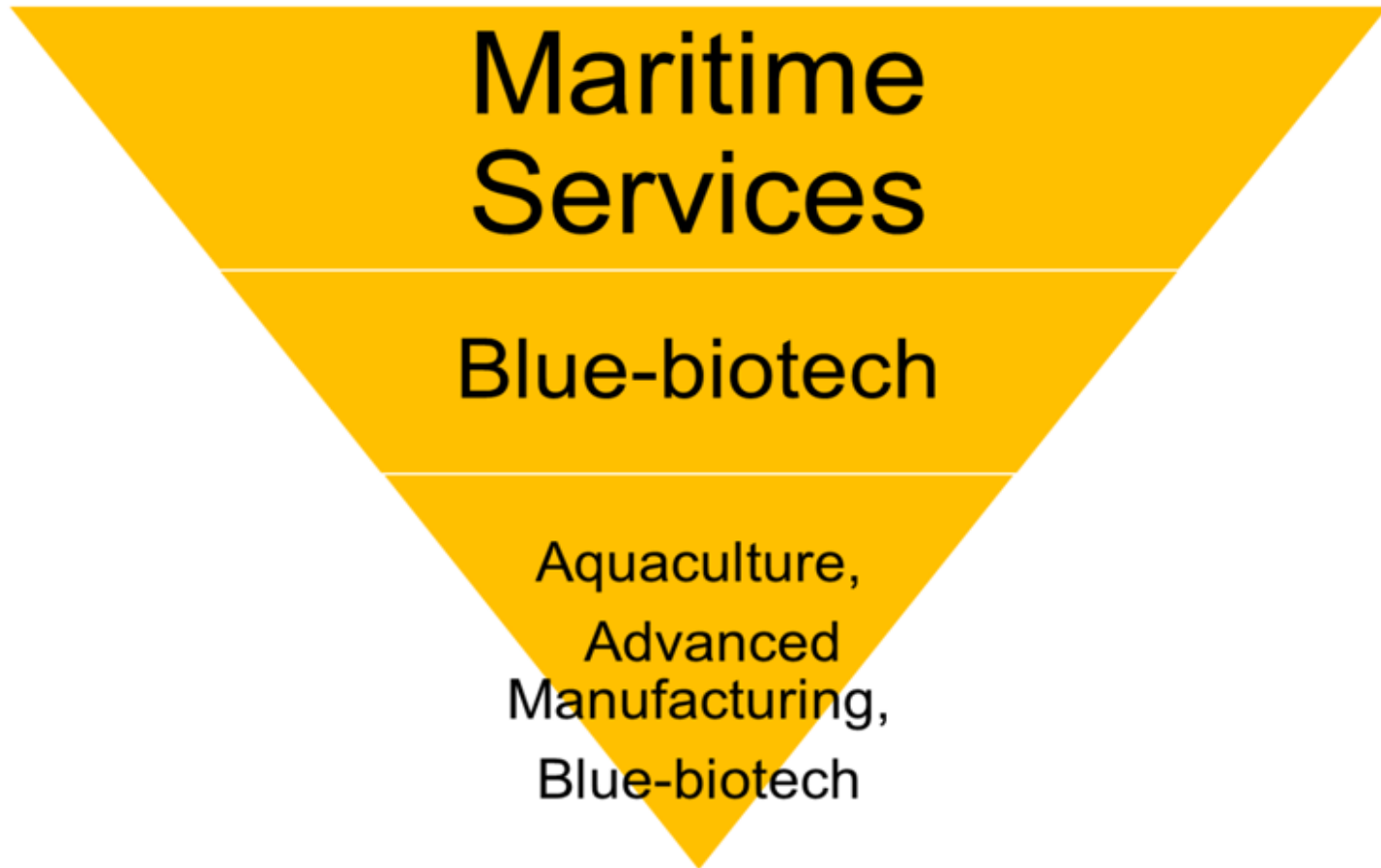
1. Address Malta R&I's system key challenges

- Limited public capacity in terms of infrastructure to undertake research activities hence limited research and innovation culture
- Limited collaboration between private and public sectors
- Limitation of research infrastructural facilities and lack of physical space and expertise requiring a multidisciplinary approach.

2. Encourage structural changes, stimulate smart specialisation, as well as new developments

3. The partnership, expertise available and opportunity to learn

Development of Malta Local Action Plan



Startup – Academia collaboration

Local Action Plan

Action Plan focussed on industry (particularly startups) – academia collaboration.

Action Plan success indicator: number of new projects developed.

Four actions proposed:

Action 1: Improvement R&D industry support scheme.

Action 2: Development of a Centre of Excellence for Advanced Manufacturing.

Action 3: Formal collaboration between ME and UoM to support academic spin-offs.

Action 4: Periodic Industry – Academia workshops.

Achievements

ACTION 1: Improvement R&D industry support scheme

Achieved. New R&D 2020 scheme was launched in November 2020 which includes changes specifically to allow startups to benefit. Also other relevant schemes were updated where necessary.

Under this scheme ME approved 3 projects for a total of Euro 598K since it was launched. In 2021 Q1 one project was approved with a total allocation of Euro 292K. In addition in Q4 2020, Euro 3,456K was approved in favour of 5 projects to conduct COVID-19 related research (four of these projects are university led).

Further more, to address COVID difficulties, Malta Enterprise launched the innovation for SMEs scheme and the business re-engineering scheme.

In addition, Malta Enterprise and the Malta Council for Science and Technology addressed the Covid pandemic by designing and launching together a national fund entitled the “COVID-19 R&D Fund”.

ACTION 2: Development of terms and parameters for a Centre of Excellence for Advanced Manufacturing

Work in progress. Due to the Covid19 pandemic this has been challenging.

ACTION 3: Generation of new industry-academia projects by the creation of a formal collaboration between ME and UoM to support academic spin-offs

Achieved. Agreement was signed between ME and Centre for Entrepreneurship and Business Incubation (CEBI) at the UoM in April 2021, to support start ups, including academic spin-offs, together. Over 10 entrepreneurs have registered for support as part of the MOU.

Further more, ME has signed two other MOUs with Universita di Salerno and McGill University to, respectively, collaborate in a joint business incubator to be set up in Malta as well as lifesciences research.

Finally, ME is currently in discussions with the UoM technology transfer office on supporting the spinning out of 2 business and in 2020 we have collaborated with UoM on 6 research projects for a value of 3.5M (4 of these projects were related to COVID-19).

ACTION 4: Generation of new industry-academia projects by community driven Industry – Academia workshops

Work in progress. Due to the Covid19 pandemic this has been challenging.

However, ME has been facilitating links between University with industry. This is working quite well in the area of ICT where we are linking students to enterprises which are developing innovative products on a global level.

Challenges / Opportunities

Malta is a special case for smart specialization.

Initially some challenges with the action plan because the gap identified was not adequate to be addressed through our project.

A process of refocusing the best way forward, eventually arriving at a challenge (or opportunity?) to address, which would positively impact various gaps identified, various areas/sectors and benefit various stakeholder groups.

With regards implementation: No critical issues to report, other than the Covid pandemic which has affected the 'business as usual' for ME and our stakeholders, hence implementation of actions have been slower than initially projected.

The project timeline coincided with preparations for Malta's Research and Innovation Smart Specialisation Strategy 2021-2027



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Thank you!

Questions welcome