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# Action Plan

Supporting cross-sectoral cooperation and cocreation with SMEs in the regional health innovation ecosystem through effective Living Labs

North Denmark Region

22-03-2022



NORTH DENMARK REGION

## Part I – Introduction

Project: ACcelerating SmE innovation capacities with a Living Lab approach (ACSELL)

Partner organisation: North Denmark Region – Idélinikken (Ideas Clinic)

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## 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: *Regional Strategy for Healthcare Research and Innovation*

The research and innovation strategy is to be renewed in 2023, and we aim to integrate a better foundation for clinical cocreation and collaboration with SMEs and knowledge institutions into the strategy to strengthen a cohesive net of test beds and living labs in the region as central facilities in the health innovation infrastructure. The Policy instrument is developed and adopted by the North Denmark Region.

Within healthcare, the North Denmark Region has four strategic goals. 1) Respect for the patient's time 2) individualised, coherent, and local treatment 3) patient-centric services (on the patient's terms) and 4) Security and quality for the patient.

The new Regional Strategy for Healthcare Research and Innovation will support these goals. Patients and relatives must be involved in the development of the future healthcare system and through the living lab approach, all relevant stakeholders can be part of an innovative collaboration where the patient is in the centre of the development.

A key aspect of the policy instrument improvement is to strengthen the interactions in the ecosystem.

- The development and running of Living Labs in relevant business areas as an efficient tool for growth and development. The activities must focus on cocreation, innovation, and the creation of business companies.

- Innovation activities which support projects that can develop new concepts for products or test concepts at the relevant target groups.

This has been implemented in the shape of Public-Private Innovation (PPI) collaborations in the fields of health- and welfare technology that includes all regional stakeholders.

One function of the Living Labs is to initiate and develop different arenas for innovation. In the healthcare sector the interaction with hospital staff and patients is essential. However, the potentials for developing new solutions, support entrepreneurs and innovation in SMEs have not been fully exploited.

Improvements to the current policy should focus on removing barriers. These include a drop in the number of successful PPIs and that it is notoriously hard for SMEs to go from development to sale in the health- or welfare tech market.

### Part III – Actions

The North Denmark Region identified four challenges in close collaboration with local stakeholders using the Online Self-Assessment Tool (OSAT). The challenges were 1) Cluster to strengthen the ecosystem 2) Implementation and scaling of health innovation 3) Business case evaluation of new solutions and 4) Road Map to increase knowledge sharing and provide an overview of facilities, projects, and stakeholders.

Several are addressed through other initiatives in the Region or can be resolved as a positive effect of the actions in the action plan. All challenges from the OSAT are addressed on different levels.

One collaboration to strengthen the ecosystem was addressed in 2021, where the North Denmark Region established a regional Platform for Health Innovation as a partnership between the regional health authority, hospitals municipalities, Aalborg University, University College North Denmark and the Vocational education and Training College. To further strengthen the impact of this collaboration, a more committed partnership is crucial which calls for an effective organisation of the ecosystem.

The implementation and scaling of health innovation is a general challenge in Denmark, this will be addressed through methods and processes that brings in the right stakeholders, e.g., procurement, earlier in the innovation process.

Business case evaluation of new solutions are currently addressed ad-hoc and often not coupled with procurement. National actions are taken to facilitate procurement.

Road Map to increase knowledge sharing and provide an overview of facilities, projects, and stakeholders, will be addressed through collaboration with Danish Life Science Cluster.

The individual actions in this action plan intend to extend some of the goals from the existing research strategy by showing that it is favourable to do so through increased innovation and living lab approach, thereby encouraging the decision makers to incorporate this into the new regional research and innovation strategy.

## ACTION 1

### **Background**

On April 29, 2021, we participated in an online twinning session hosted by Baden-Württemberg on Excellent Cluster Management to Support Health Innovation, where one of their stakeholders, Medical Mountains, presented how they manage their cluster organisation. Here several interesting and inspiring good practices were presented regarding network, of which especially their approach to visibility, and coordination was very interesting and applicable to networks in Denmark. Moreover, they are acting as a bridge between clinicians and all key players in the medical technology sector.

The innovation strategy of Baden-Württemberg was mentioned in relation to other projects<sup>1</sup>. As noted in these projects, health innovation is most effective when all relevant actors (Government Bodies, Health and Care providers, industry, academia, and civil society) are brought together in a coherent partnership or ecosystem.

Therefore, this action aims to further strengthen the structure and dynamics of the health care ecosystem in the North Denmark Region.

### **Link to Policy Instrument:**

Enhancing and strengthening the regional innovation ecosystem in the North Denmark Region in the fields of health- and welfare technology that increases the innovation cooperation with all regional stakeholders

### **Link to OSAT:**

Cluster to strengthen the ecosystem

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.interregeurope.eu/ithaca/>

<p><b>Action</b></p> <p>FRAMEWORK DEVELOPMENT</p> <p><u>Strengthen the structure and dynamics of the health care innovation ecosystem in the North Denmark Region by</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establishing committed partnerships between the actors in the ecosystem with focus on close and continuous dialogue</li> <li>• Creating overview, coordinate and prioritize major initiatives</li> <li>• Setting up events for knowledge sharing, networking and match making to achieve high visibility for clinicians, SMEs, and citizen with innovative ideas</li> </ul> <p>This action is necessary for dealing with the lack of knowledge among SME's about how to identify and access relevant living labs and services.</p> <p><b>This action is a Type 3 action: Change in the strategic focus of the policy instrument (structural change) since the previous strategies have not encompassed actions towards the broader ecosystem.</b></p>	<p><b>Players involved</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The North Denmark Region is developing and adopting the policy instrument.</li> <li>• On the strategic level, municipalities, and hospitals, as well as research and education actors collaborate on the Health Innovation Platform to secure support for partnerships and concrete initiatives.</li> <li>• Idéklubben with the Health Hub founded by Spar Nord Foundation, support SMEs and clinicians at the hospital level and establishes functions needed for collaboration and co-creation in a Living Lab environment at the hospitals in the North Denmark Region.</li> <li>• The national cluster Danish Life Science Cluster who drives innovation and facilitates networking and bridges enterprises, knowledge institutions and organisations within life science and welfare technology.</li> </ul> <p>Accelerators and other hubs, such as Health Tech Hub Copenhagen, who brings together actors and partners of the health tech and healthcare sector and Accelerace, a start-up accelerator and pre-seed investor to support business development.</p>	<p><b>Timeframe</b></p> <p>May'22 - Oct '22 BACKGROUND MATERIAL:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consulting internal and external stakeholders</li> <li>• Developing background materials through analyses and surveys</li> <li>• Developing presentations</li> <li>• Workshops</li> </ul> <p>Oct'22 - May'23 STRATEGY PROCESS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promoting the actions to be part of the agenda</li> <li>• Ensuring relevant ownership</li> </ul> <p>Mar'23 - Sep'23 STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establishing organisational support</li> <li>• Securing relevant budget consequences</li> </ul>
<p><b>Costs/funding sources</b></p> <p>The costs associated with the implementation of this action is covered by the regular budget of the North Denmark Region.</p> <p>Estimated EUR 20.000.</p>		

## ACTION 2

### **Background**

On January 27, 2022, the ACSELL partners participated in an interregional exchange (online twinning event), where different regional stakeholders gave their take on three challenges. During this event, LiCalab presented how they include their own user panel to validate ideas and inventions moreover, how to transfer the digital development to the clinic. Let alone their Interreg Europe enrolled Good Practice – Flanders.health Innovative Business Network, with focus on strengthening the Living Lab through interdisciplinary collaboration – both professional and sectorial and finally pitch and match sessions to evaluate innovation and relevancy. Therefore, this action aims to accelerate the process from idea to health innovation.

### **Link to Policy Instrument:**

Initiate and develop different arenas for innovation

### **Link to OSAT:**

Implementation and scaling of health innovation

Business case evaluation of new solutions

<p><b>Action</b></p> <p>PROCESS DEVELOPMENT</p> <p><u>Accelerate development and implementation of new solutions from idea to health innovation by</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bringing in the right stakeholders in the ecosystem early in the innovation process for test and evaluation of ideas from the clinic and SMEs</li> <li>• Contribute to the establishment of a national innovation lighthouse for evaluation and adoption of new solutions in a cost-effective way. The lighthouse is envisaged to establish a PPI knowledge base, pilot projects as well as large-scale project engaging both citizens, clinical staff, knowledge institutions and SME's.</li> </ul> <p>This action is needed to accelerate the process of driving new health care solution from idea to market.</p> <p><b>This action is a Type 3 action: Change in the strategic focus of the policy instrument (structural change) since the previous strategies only to a small degree have encompassed public-private innovation.</b></p>	<p><b>Players involved</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The North Denmark Region is developing and adopting the policy instrument.</li> <li>• On the strategic level, municipalities, and hospitals, as well as research and education actors collaborate on the Health Innovation Platform to secure support for partnerships and concrete initiatives.</li> <li>• Idéklinikken with the Health Hub founded by Spar Nord Foundation, support SMEs and clinicians at the hospital level and establishes functions needed for collaboration and co-creation in a Living Lab environment at the hospitals in the North Denmark Region.</li> <li>• The national cluster Danish Life Science Cluster who drives innovation and facilitates networking and bridges enterprises, knowledge institutions and organisations within life science and welfare technology.</li> <li>• Municipalities and hospitals establish peer-boards with patients and citizen to e.g., screen for usability.</li> <li>• Research organisations to develop evaluation models to be used by regional and national authorities, e.g., the Danish health Technology Council.</li> <li>• Business Intelligence and the department of procurement evaluates early in the process the sustainability of new innovative ideas or inventions.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Timeframe</b></p> <p>May'22 - Oct '22</p> <p><b>BACKGROUND MATERIAL:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consulting internal and external stakeholders</li> <li>• Developing background materials through analyses and surveys</li> <li>• Developing presentations</li> <li>• Establishing partnerships for regional lighthouse</li> </ul> <p>Oct'22 - May'23 <b>STRATEGY PROCESS:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promoting the actions to be part of the agenda</li> <li>• Ensuring relevant ownership</li> </ul> <p>Mar'23 - Sep'23 <b>STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establishing organisational support</li> </ul> <p>Securing relevant budget consequences</p>
<p><b>Costs/funding sources</b></p> <p>The costs associated with the implementation of this action is covered by the regular budget of the North Denmark Region.</p>		

Estimated EUR 20.000.

### Action 3

#### **Background**

Regions are increasingly realizing the value of effective multi-stakeholder and specifically user centred approaches, as well as strategies to match different kinds of organization, such as SMEs with academic institutions, to expand their reach and foster their growth within open innovation ecosystems and networks.

The living lab approach allows 1) a better understanding of the actual demands and needs of end users, 2) a better match of demand and supply and 3) an increase in efficiency and effectiveness of the innovation process. This approach will not only inspire policy makers to apply a similar collaborative approach in developing policy, but also help them better understand the innovation process as such. In this way, policy decision-makers will be able to provide better framework conditions inter alia to SMEs. Within the ACSELL project, several partners are considering integrating the development of a living lab in their policy instrument.

With this joint action we want to boost the Living Lab approach within the area of healthcare by building and enhancing the competencies of the people who are to run the Living Labs. In essence, the pilot action was the perfect preparation for this joint action to where the direct knowledge gained by two partners in a smaller scale will be shared with and transferred to the other regions. For setting up a living lab or an open innovation ecosystem, it is on the one hand essential to have access to a trusted network of stakeholders, and on the other hand have a profound expertise of living lab methods and methodologies.

While both requirements will be initiated through this action, the ACSELL partnership would like to see this exchange continue beyond the lifespan of the project.

#### **Link to Policy Instrument actions:**

Internationalisation and knowledge sharing.



**Link to OSAT:**

Cluster to strengthen the ecosystem

Implementation and scaling of health innovation

<b>Action</b>	<b>Players involved</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
<p>Setup of a trans-regional learning community on how to set up a living lab</p> <p><b>Activities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Workshop on establishing a learning community at the ENOLL OLLD and sharing pilot action experience (20-23 September 2022, Turino IT) (M2)</li><li>• 2-day workshop on operationalising pilot action results paper on how to set up a LL / each ACSELL partner will conduct landscaping &amp; next steps to set up LL will be defined. (November 2022) (M4)</li><li>• Identification of additional contributors / benefactors from, e.g., NWE.CHANCE Interreg project and Vitalize project (<a href="https://vitalise-project.eu">https://vitalise-project.eu</a>) (October-December 2022) (M3-M6)</li><li>• 1-day workshop on successes and challenges in the implementation and defining a continued frame for learning, network mode of operation (B2B with the</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• ACSELL partners</li><li>• DHI</li><li>• ENOLL</li><li>• ...</li></ul>	<p>August 2022 – July 2023</p>

<p>final high – profile dissemination event + final partner meeting in Brussels) (May 2022, Brussels) (M10)</p> <p><b>This is a Type 2 action: Improved governance. User and partner participation in the regional innovation activities are central to our action 1 and 2. The knowledge sharing of how this is managed in the ACSELL partners ecosystem will inform the strategy work and make it more effective. Also, the joint action can provide methods and competencies for those in charge of the realisation of the strategy.</b></p>		
<p><b>Costs/funding sources</b></p> <p>Travel Costs of approx. 1000 Euro / person (transport &amp; hotel) / event will be carried by each attending organisation</p>		

Date: 2/6 -22

Signature: 

Stamp of the organisation (if available): \_\_\_\_\_