

POWER2INNO



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E-CATALOGUE OF PEER-LEARNING ACTIVITIES

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INTRODUCTION

This publication was created within the POWER2INNO project, dealing with peer learning activities between three innovation agencies with the aim to enhance the empowerment of small and micro companies for innovative entrepreneurship. The project was led by the [RDA Green Karst Ltd.](#) (Slovenia) and involved two more organisations: [Tecnopolis](#) from Italy and [BIC Euronova](#) from Spain. It was co-financed by the European Commission, within the [Horizon 2020 programme](#).

We started our peer learning activities with the assumption that there is a significant difference in supporting small and micro companies as opposed to medium-sized companies. This realization was based on previous experiences of all three participating organisations as well as on some global projects and studies we researched while preparing for the project. Based on this, our main goal was to upgrade the existing practices of innovation support agencies in this field of interest and to overcome the gap in the existing support programmes for specific problems of micro and small companies.

From February to October 2016, we explored several cases and good practices in all three countries (Slovenia, Italy and Spain), which currently address the needs of small and micro companies or even present examples of successfully growing small and micro businesses that have had experience with some kind of support services. This process proved to be extremely valuable as it gave the three participating partners an opportunity to learn about new practices and to exchange their knowledge of the matter discussed. Furthermore, we discovered that engagement in that kind of process stimulates the acknowledgement of the latent knowledge we might have already had and have not yet managed to form into a comprehensive idea. From this point of view, the learning process not only provided new information, but also supported the strengthening of our competence, e.g. developing our current activities.

Our intention is to share at least a part of this experience with other innovation agencies as well. This publication presents our learning process and some of the cases we researched. We offer you our view on the series of discussions we performed and the lessons we have learned within the process. Based on this, we will prepare the Design Options Paper with a detailed model for encouraging innovation entrepreneurship of small and micro companies, which will be available in spring 2017.

Last but not least, we invite you to share your opinions with us, let us know what you think of our work!

Contact us at info@rra-zk.si - info@bic.es - parco@tno.it

Sincerely,

Team POWER2INNO

POWER2INNO



Partners



SLOVENIA

General Description of Best Practice

1. Name of best practice

The Park of Military History - museum and tourist centre



2. Partner responsible for the visit/meeting

RDA Green Karst, Ltd.

3. Precise theme and objectives

Seeking examples of successful tourism stories that have been built in abandoned areas.

4. Description of the practice

The Park of Military History is a museum and tourist centre, located in the old Pivka barracks complex. The barracks were built by the Kingdom of Italy around 1930 in order to defend the Rapallo border, and from 1945 to 1991, they were home to the Yugoslav People's Army.

Due to the Slovenian declaration of independence, the complex of barracks has been abandoned and heavily damaged. Since 2004, the Park of Military History has been developing within the complex, becoming the largest museum complex in the Republic of Slovenia as well as one of the largest military-historical complexes in this part of Europe.

In addition, the museum has expanded its offer by engaging local and regional tourist service providers, creating networks of cooperation and also creating additional activities for both tourists and locals (annual events, trekking paths, culinary experience, motorhome stopover sites etc.).

5. Reasons for which it is considered best practice

The Park of Military History was established in an abandoned area, left in a bad state by the Yugoslav People's Army. With the support of the Municipality of Pivka, the team of five people has created a major tourist attraction, which is becoming increasingly popular and is currently reaching up to 42.000 visitors.

The innovativeness of the Park is also in the content of its offer: while primarily directed to the display of military exhibits, the Park is also a reminder of the role that the army had in the creation of regional characteristics in the past, a reminder of the consequences of wars and of other functions carried out by the military (assistance in the event of natural disasters, regional logistics etc.). e Park presents best practice in cooperation with other regional tourism providers, thus creating the possibilities for development even outside its organisation.



Transferability of the Practice

1. Key factors associated with the regional context

The Primorsko-notranjska region is a south-western Slovenian region, one of the least developed in the country. The region has created the Green Karst regional brand, which is managed by the Regional Destination Organization (RDO) Postojna Cave-Green Karst, offering a platform for joint activities and promotion of regional tourism. The majority of providers of tourist services and products are small and micro companies depending on the tourist flow to major regional attractions (the Postojna Cave, the Predjama Castle, Lake Cerknica). The average stay of tourists in the region is 2 days, and one of the regional goals is to increase this number.

2. Other key factors for the success

The Park serves as a tourist centre and is actively involved in the regional promotional activities (cooperation within the RDO Postojna Cave-Green Karst). In this way, it supports other tourist providers in the region, specifically providers of accommodation, activities and other tourist attractions.

Transferability of the Practice

1. Key factors associated with the regional context

Secondary schools in Slovenia are typically funded by the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport and are usually involved only in regular educational activities, directed by the Ministry.

Any extra funding comes from the EU projects, usually smaller ones, such as the Erasmus+.

The case of the Secondary School for Forestry and Wood Technology Postojna has exceeded this kind of mentality and has built a range of different activities, which are valuable for its educational programmes and wider.

2. Other key factors for the success

The EU education policy is currently very much inclined to schools which are ready to engage in more challenges, especially those pertaining to the entrepreneurship and innovation. That kind of activities are also supported by many programmes offering funding for the development of such initiatives.

It is crucial to engage open-minded individuals in such developmental projects, potentially the ones who are fully or partially also engaged in the decision-making on the organisational level. In addition, it is important to present at least a medium-term developmental strategy of the organisation and to set clear goals for what the organisation wants to achieve.

3. Factors that might hamper the transfer of best practice

Some countries might have a restricted legislation in terms of the possibilities into which schools and similar institutions can engage. This has to be verified before planning the initiative.

4. Identified qualities of best practice

The design of entrepreneurial activities, their embeddedness in the curriculum, but also the potential for the development of other stakeholders in the region.

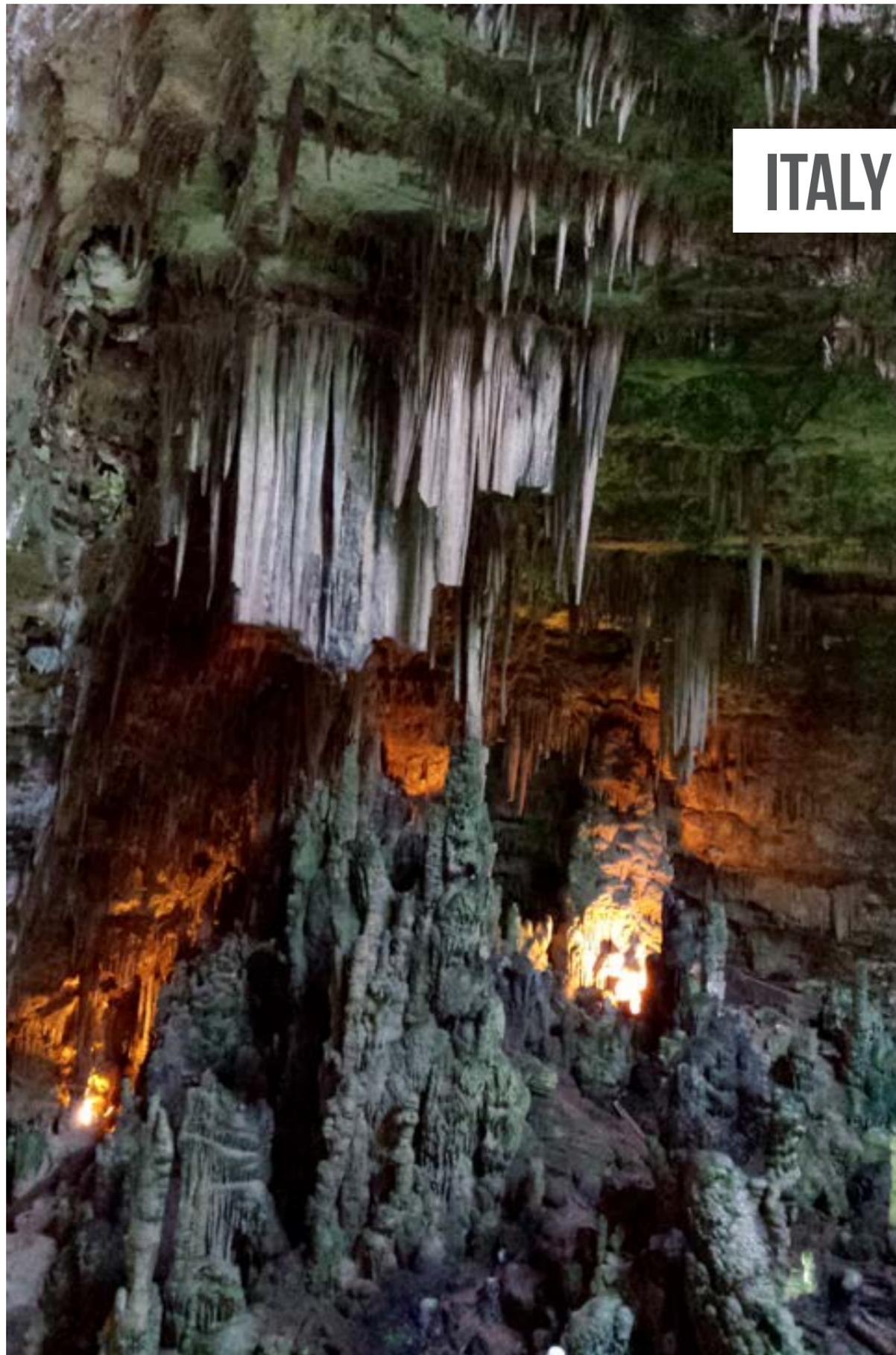
5. Identified gaps in the competences (SMEs' and partner's)

The key gap with stakeholders is understanding the potential of such organisations. It is crucial to raise awareness of the possibilities, in terms of creating new services and products as well as in terms of utilising the available (EU) funds.

6. Issues that need to be emphasized in the context of transferring best practice to different contexts

The best practice exchange might be the best approach when starting this kind of processes. It provides an idea on what can be done and personal experience that can be easily transferred by organising a few meetings.





General Description of Best Practice



1. Name of best practice

Castellana Caves - Hell in the Cave show

2. Partner responsible for the visit/meeting

TECNOPOLIS Science and Technology Park

3. Precise theme and objectives

- Visit of the Castellana Caves
- Meeting with the Mayor of the Municipality Castellana Grotte and the Tourism Assessor

4. Description of the practice

The Castellana Caves are one of the most important attractions of the Puglia region and a natural heritage of inestimable value to Italy. Located at the entrance of the Itria Valley, a few kilometres from the charming villages of Alberobello, Cisternino, Polignano a Mare, the Castellana Caves began to form about 90 million years ago.

The beauty of the Castellana Caves attracts tourists from all over the world and since the day of their opening, they have dazzled more than 15 million visitors. The tour winds along a distance of 3 km; it is a unique guided tour of the caves to more than 60 meters deep, in an amazing scenery composed of stalactites, stalagmites, concretions, incredible shapes, fossils, canyons and caves with fantastic names.

Calcifications from conformations and amazing colours solicit the imagination of children and adults.

During the exploration, at a constant temperature of around 16°-18°, visitors are astonished by the great show of nature; in hundreds of millions of years, nature has shaped the rock into fantastic speleothems in which people of all ages like to recognise something or someone.

The Castellana Caves provide a good opportunity to enjoy one of the most amazing natural wonders of the wonderful Puglia region.

Hell in the Cave:

Dealing with the most celebrated opera of Italian literature is an exciting challenge.

And the audience has the opportunity to experience it inside a karst complex with a "round hole" far above them, through which they can "see the stars", and from where it is simply impossible to escape. This is the gist of Hell in the Cave, a multimedia show addressing the first canticle of Dante Alighieri's Divine Comedy, with desire to make it accessible to the general public. The public has to live with the infernal figures with which it interacts, share their feelings and feel oppressed. The element of originality, proposed as best practice, is the possibility of organising theatrical presentations inside the caves, without a stage and with the interaction of the public and actors. In Italy, selecting the drama was made easier by choosing a poem of the most important author of Italian literature and the father of the Italian language, Dante Alighieri, and particularly the part entitled Inferno (Hell), dedicated to the human being and to his sins, and in the imagination of the author taking place underground.

This can be generally replicated by choosing the renowned dramas of famous authors and taking advantage of a particular scenery, like the one of the caves.

5. Reasons for which it is considered best practice

Hell in the Cave is a show that combines dance, voices, sound and light in the natural setting of the Castellana Caves. A show of macroscopic dimensions, a large and important multimedia exhibition, capable of embracing the entire natural environment as a scenic space where the innovative theatrical dynamics will capture the audience and lead them into an extraordinary adventure of Dante's Inferno.

Due to a clever marketing action prepared by the Castellana Caves, the Hell in the Cave show was able to increase the number of visitors and include an increasing number of tourists from outside the region.

This is not experiential tourism, but the format of a show combining architecture, art, natural landscape, etc.



Transferability of the Practice

1. Key factors associated with the regional context

The Puglia region is a tourist destination showing increasingly important results each year. The Castellana Caves have always been a pole of attraction for tourists from all over the world. However, unless new discoveries are made, caves are a "static" attractor pole, which is why the theatrical form was added, contributing to their uniqueness.

2. Other key factors for the success

This practice is an example of experiential tourism, which adds value to the otherwise ordinary tourist offering: a spectator feels involved due to the direct connection with the presentation. The show helps the local tourism industry also at night (restaurants, accommodations etc.), attracting tourists to the area, encouraging them to spend some time outside the cave as well, enjoy the local cuisine, stay overnight, etc.

3. Factors that might hamper the transfer of best practice

There are no noticeable obstacles for the transfer of this best practice to other areas.

4. Identified qualities of best practice

The show, very simple and with low costs (the natural theatrical set of the caves), is one of a kind and easily replicable.

5. Identified gaps in the competences (SMEs' and partner's)

The eventual gaps could arise from the lack of pieces of literature, art and other forms of expression that are widely known by the locals and foreigners; in this case we could suggest to choose among the classics of global literature, e.g. The Little Prince, 20,000 Leagues Under the Sea, etc.

6. Issues that need to be emphasized in the context of transferring best practice to different contexts

It may be challenging to select literary masterpieces and turn them into a theatre scene at the location of a tourist attraction, practically in the same way as the concept of the theatre was understood in ancient Greece: an open-air construction. Other forms of art can also be used.



General Description of Best Practice

1. Name of best practice

The Pino Pascali Foundation in Polignano a Mare was founded in 2010, at the site of the town's former slaughterhouse, located in the southern area of the town and overlooking the sea. It was officially opened on 1 June 2012, following an important artistic celebration referred to as the "Ouverture".

The Puglia region and the Municipality of Polignano a Mare both have shares in the Foundation, which allows them to benefit from the management and state funds.

The Pino Pascali Foundation is the only permanent museum of contemporary art in the Puglia region.

In addition to its permanent collection, it also hosts temporary exhibitions and the Pino Pascali Prize.

2. Partner responsible for the visit/meeting

TECNOPOLIS Science and Technology Park

3. Precise theme and objectives

To examine and critically analyse an example of both restoration and re-use of an abandoned building: where to present a local personality (in this case an artist), the place and the occasions for the exhibition and didactic activities, the latter mainly addressed to schools.

4. Description of the practice

In the past, the building was used as a slaughterhouse situated at the periphery of a small town near Bari (about 25 km), Polignano a Mare.

This small town used to be known only for its beaches and restaurants. Today, the museum is recognized as its best and most famous attraction. During our visit we met: Rosalba Branà, Director of the museum, Susanna Torres, Executive Assistant, and Marilena Abbatepaolo, a representative of the Ministry of Culture of the Municipality of Polignano a Mare.

The evolution of this initiative was described on the basis of the life of the artist to whom the museum is dedicated (Pino Pascali):

- Involvement of other artists of global reputation
- Creation of an international award dedicated to young artists
- Attracting groups of students from many countries (China included)
- Realisation of workshops, book presentations, concerts, didactic exhibitions
- Adding the activities of other sectors, e.g. traditional and artistic costumes, which will further expand the content of exhibitions and events.

The final result of these initiatives is the involvement of a larger community than the artistic one in the museum's activities and the approach to arts by people of different age groups, education backgrounds, nationalities, etc.

An unexpected consequence of this installation is the extension of tourist season as Polignano is now able to recall groups of subjects interested in arts outside the summer season, which positively influences also the visit of other events (like the Fair of Books).

Another interesting fact is that the museum is partially self-sustaining as the progressive substantial reduction of public funding for museums and arts in general is forcing the strategy of private sponsorship together with the capacity of designing and presenting successful projects to the EU.

Among other initiatives, the museum plans to open a bar/restaurant on the roof garden as a new source of income, and, at the same time, as an alternative for the city centre by reducing the traffic and congestion during the summer season; the aspect of opening of a new bar on the roof is important both for increasing the museum revenues and for drawing people out from the city centre.

During the summer, the centre is intensely crowded with tourists, which is why it has become necessary to create other points of attraction, situated outside the city centre.

5. Reasons for which it is considered best practice

The museum is an evident example of how a place devoted to arts can play a larger role as an attractor of additional subjects and, at the same time, how it is possible to generate opportunities of income from an old building "selling" culture and entertainment or to generate a positive effect on the extra-seasonal tourist flows.





Transferability of the Practice

1. Key factors associated with the regional context

- Importance of ancient small towns (in Italian "BORGHI") in the new tourism and searching for alternative strategies as points of attraction for extra seasonal tourism flows.
- Possibility of re-using old buildings, not only for artistic or social activities but also to stimulate local economic development on the basis of small initiatives and events of different kinds.
- Opportunity for the internationalisation of tourist services of a place through the testimonies of subjects invited and involved in the activities.
- Strategy for obtaining a wide social impact by creating an interest in arts and culture of large segments of population.

2. Other key factors for the success

- Strong interaction between institutions (referring to the local, regional, national institutions).
- Availability of managerial capabilities and skills.
- Involvement of private sponsors.
- Efficient communication and publicity channels.
- Membership in large international networks.

3. Factors that might hamper the transfer of best practice

- Different legislation regulating the access to public places and heritage.
- Lack of public strategies including the restoration of public buildings to be dedicated to art and culture.
- Poor communication related to the tourist promotion of the area.

4. Identified qualities of best practice

- Stimulating the extra-seasonal tourism and completing/integrating the seasonal one.
- Gradually implementable.
The concept of gradualness refers to the possibility, also according to the available financing, of adding new organised spaces (like in the case of the restaurant) and consequently implementing opportunities for new initiatives and occasions of animation.



5. Identified gaps in the competences (SMEs' and partner's)

The adoption of best practice could benefit from the activities of Puglia Promozione together with the possibilities to encourage private donors and sponsors.
The concept of "experiential" refers to enabling the tourists to be part of an exhibition (e.g. in a museum) or helping them in learning specific techniques (e.g. in a cooking show).
Generally speaking, tourists can experience something adjusted to their specific expectations.

6. Issues that need to be emphasized in the context of transferring best practice to different contexts

- Increasing demand for experiential tourism, offered by the museum (for example, we experienced a painting exhibition into which we entered blindfolded and used the audio guide that led each visitor to touch the paintings and their carvings).
- Combination of domestic and foreign tourist flows aggregated by common areas of interest.
- Demand for a yearly calendar of different events covering as many interest areas as possible.
- Exigency of including the disadvantaged categories of people in the fruition of arts and culture. It refers to the strategic and social priority of reducing the barriers for disadvantaged people, in particular with regard to the possibility of the fruition of art and culture.
- Necessity of involving population of all ages, amusing them and at the same time stimulating their personal growth.

General Description of Best Practice

1. Name of best practice

Puglia Promozione
Puglia Tourism promotion services agency

2. Partner responsible for the visit/meeting
TECNOPOLIS Science and Technology Park

3. Precise theme and objectives

- Presentation of the Destination Management System.
- Illustration of the Tourism Strategic Plan of the Puglia Region.

4. Description of the practice

On the 26 May 2016, the POWER2INNO partners met Aldo Patrino, Director of Tourism, Economy of Culture and Development of the Area, at the Puglia Promozione head office at Fiera del Levante of Bari.
With the founding of the Puglia Promozione Agency, the Puglia region gained an operational actor for the implementation of its promotional and local marketing strategies.

The Agency underwent a clear mission and an equally clear vision:

MISSION: Implementing the Puglia region policies in the unitary image promotion for tourism purposes.

VISION: Managing and promoting the tourist destination of Puglia as an integrated and flexible complex of tangible and intangible values and performing different activities directed into a balanced and sustainable tourism development.

The specific tasks required by the Law and regulations can be grouped into the following main categories of the Puglia Promozione activities:

- Marketing, strategic action planning and coordination of stakeholders
- Managing the observatory activities and supporting the destination audit through:
- Promotion of the Puglia destination
- Management of the Puglia destination

5. Reasons for which it is considered best practice

- Interaction between different tourism stakeholders and policy makers.
- Model for reinforcing the regional brand also abroad.





Transferability of the Practice

1. Key factors associated with the regional context

- Promotion of the intermediate markets with the aim of encouraging the emergence of a unified image of the Puglia region and consolidating the penetration of the destination management on domestic and international markets.
- Promotion of the regional tourism products destined to the creation and enhancement of the Puglia region brand by strengthening the channels of information, interaction and a new kind of tourism, the so-called "do it yourself".
- Enhancement and strengthening of regional tourism by promoting a coordinated and integrated vision of excellence and the peculiarities of the territory.
- Monitoring the application and regional tourism services to make public and private operators understand the changes, opportunities and problems of regional tourism and to have elements that provide more detailed information and more thorough and updated knowledge of the application.

2. Other key factors for the success

An efficient and streamlined system providing information on tourism and thus enabling to adapt the activities on the basis of the received information.

3. Factors that might hamper the transfer of best practice

- Lack of communication between regional agencies and local tourism actors.
- No clear definition of regional policies with regard to small tourism realities.

4. Identified qualities of best practice

- High visibility of the regional brand in tourism sector
- Promotion of local products in terms of food and manufacture

5. Identified gaps in the competences (SMEs' and partner's)

The success of similar best practice is strictly related to the existence of a public strategy of economic development that is strongly based on tourism, together with the possibility of creating a public body in charge of the main actions of public interest concerning the tourist promotion.

6. Issues that need to be emphasized in the context of transferring best practice to different contexts

- Promoting and qualifying the local tourist services, encouraging competitiveness in domestic and international markets and supporting the cooperation between the public and the private actors as part of action in the field.
- Promoting the contact between the regional local suppliers and brokers of international tourism flows.
- Promoting the development of sustainable tourism, food and wine, culture, youth, social and religious, as well as all "of tourism", active and experiential services.
- Developing and coordinating a tourism action for the use and integrated promotion of the territorial level of cultural heritage, the natural protected areas and cultural activities.
- Framework of the productive potential of the entire region.
- Implementing the initiatives, demonstrations and events for the promotion of territorial excellence, both tangible and intangible.
- Providing the regional operational tools facilities to support the coordination of activities and of local tourist initiatives.



SPAIN

General Description of Best Practice

1. Name of best practice
Andalucía Lab, Tourism Innovation Centre

2. Partner responsible for the visit/meeting
 BIC EURONOVA, S.A.

- 3. Precise theme and objectives**
 To learn about the Tourism Innovation Centre activities:
- To identify the needs of tourism sector agents in order to be more competitive.
 - To analyse where are the knowledge and demanded solutions, or to promote research allowing to obtain them.
 - To provide personalised advice to professionals and accompany them throughout the innovation process.
 - To transfer in a useful and simple way all the knowledge that will allow them to be more competitive.

4. Description of the practice
 On the 5 October 2016 at the Andalucía Lab head office: the POWER2INNO partners met its manager, Mr. José Luís Córdoba, who explained the activities that are carried out there and are based mainly on knowledge transfer. This was followed by a visit to the centre: the Demolab premises, the Co-working area, the audiovisual production.

5. Reasons for which it is considered best practice
 The project has been promoted by the Ministry of Tourism, Commerce and Sport of the Andalusian Government, although the activities are carried out jointly with the private sector, both technological and tourism.

Andalucía LAB was founded to generate expert knowledge and enable its subsequent transfer to the Andalusian companies. It is considered a reference project in the field of tourism innovation in Spain.

ANDALUCÍA LAB is structured around four large interrelated thematic areas:

- Research Lab is the brain of the organisation, where knowledge is generated through different research projects to identify and respond to key sector concerns. The protagonists are universities together with research departments of private companies.
- Testing LAB: an eminently technical space, a workshop area where specific solutions are developed on the basis of research carried out in the Research Lab, or from other sectors or emerging technologies.
- Demo LAB: an interactive exhibition space and the showcase of solutions and products elaborated in the Research Lab and verified in the Testing Lab, or provided by tourist companies or technological suppliers. The users validate these solutions in real-life situations, such as innovations produced in hotel rooms, methods for virtual travel planning, etc. Feedback is obtained for a further development of the solutions.
- Consulting LAB: the place of connection between the Centre and the users, the place of knowledge transfer and services generated to the SMEs and other potential customers. It is where companies will find support and advice for the implementation of innovations.



Transferability of the Practice

1. Key factors associated with the regional context

In 2014, Andalusia was not considered the objective one for the ERDF funds any more, but as a transition region. That meant that grants and subsidies were not going to be as numerous as before. This new reality provoked that that kind of financing sources started attracting the attention of companies.

2. Other key factors for the success

- The availability of investors in the region to support innovative projects.
- When the market interest rate is low, the other sector investors (bank deposits, bonds markets) move on to more attractive Business Angels investor schemes.

3. Factors that might hamper the transfer of best practice

- The existence of other, more interesting sources of financing in the region.
- The lack of investors in the region.

4. Identified qualities of best practice

Hopefully, many of the European regions that are still considered less developed will further evolve, but that means that they will no longer receive as much subsidies and grants as they do now. This is also the crux of the future EU financial programming. The sooner the authorities start establishing alternative financing sources, the better, so the structure is ready when the moment arrives.

5. Identified gaps in the competences (SMEs' and partner's)

Training start-ups in topics such as "Investment readiness", "Pitching", etc.

6. Issues that need to be emphasized in the context of transferring best practice to different contexts

Creating a business angels' network is not easy; it is crucial to be able to anticipate events in order to be ready when necessary.

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Partners



