

InCompass

Study Visit Avilés/Asturias

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1 Introduction

An incubator is a type of business support infrastructure that assists new, usually young promising entrepreneurs for a limited period of time to grow from the birth of an idea for an innovative product to a starting business that can stand on its own feet. Most incubators of start-ups in creative industries are public and non-profit organizations. Therefore, it is often taken for granted that they are strongly supported financially by national, regional or local authorities. Besides, it is very common that these authorities provide physical infrastructure (buildings, land) for their establishment. In the past few years since the start of the global financial turmoil and economic slowdown, these business support institutions face growing difficulties for public funding due to austerity policies.

It cannot be taken for granted that public funding of creative incubators will be re-established in the way and to the extent as before the current austerity policies, irrespective of any recovery of public finance. Therefore, the EU-subsidized project InCompass (in full: Financially Sustainable Creative Incubator Units) aims to support the financial sustainability of creative incubator units by developing innovative methods to move away from a financial dependence on public funding. To that aim, it will undertake a program of transnational research and analysis of existing and emerging innovative financial practices by means of study visits to incubators in several partner cities in InCompass. The experiences and conclusions of each visit will be reported to Regional Implementation Groups in all cities and regions that are official partner in the project.

In the next chapter, this report discusses the definition of an incubator and the variety of incubators that can be observed, as well as a possible working definition. Chapter 3 then presents some background information on the main themes of InCompass. These themes are subdivided into three Work Groups. The Chapters 4 and 5 are dedicated to a short characterization of Avilés and the Region of Asturias as the urban and policy context in which the visited incubators are situated, as well as a characterization of these incubators as such. The main part of the report is constituted by the Chapters 6, 7 and 8, each one presenting how the incubators earn income by means that fit in each of the three Work Groups. The report concludes with some final remarks, including a table that overviews the findings from the Chapters 5 to 8 and some indications of opportunities and threats that in the near future could affect financial sustainability.

As few literature references are included, it should be mentioned that Chapter 4 has been written by the team from the Region of Asturias on the basis of their local expert knowledge. Chapters 5 to 8 are based on the presentations given during the study visit, as well as on notes and sound recordings made during the visit. The remaining chapters present a concise overview of the main findings, the remarks of the external validators, and the results of the thematic seminar.

2 What is an incubator

So far the definition of an incubator used in the project has been rather open and flexible. In general an incubator is considered a breeding place for starting entrepreneurs, and is assumed to consist of three elements:

- a building, access to inexpensive work spaces;
- networks, a community of incubatees as well as external relations;
- support services, for instance mentoring, training, courses, access to affordable loans, accounting and administrative support.

Literature provides more strict definitions. Bergek and Norrman (2008:20) define an incubator in terms of its function as a concept that "... is often used as an overall denomination for organisations that constitute or create a supportive environment that is conducive to the 'hatching' and development of new firms".¹ Likewise, Qian *et al.* (2011:79) define incubation as "... a business support process that accelerates the successful development of start-up and fledging companies by providing entrepreneurs with an array of targeted resources and services".² These services include primary services such as shared facilities, administrative services and professional services, including entrepreneurial support as well as networking.³

The functional definition of Bergek and Norrman allows for a considerable variety of incubators, many of which are indeed observed during the study visits of InCompass. In the study visit report on Milan we therefore suggested to adopt this as the working definition for the InCompass project. Many of the incubators observed are of the 'ideal type', providing work spaces, networking facilities and entrepreneurial support (e.g. Creative Factory, MINC, Incubadora/Tagus Park). Nonetheless, during the previous study visits several venues have been visited that, within the context of the project, have been considered incubators, but that lack one of the above elements (e.g. Hub Milano, Company Care). This lacking element is not always the same; in general it may be any of these elements.

On the one hand, an incubator may not provide primary services, in particular office space. Qian *et al.* define this as a virtual incubator - or in terms of Bergek and Norrman, we might say an incubator that provides a virtual (i.e. non-physical) supportive environment. Company Care for a large part meets this description, although it also offers work spaces to a small number of its members. On the other hand, some incubators provide office space but no additional support other than e.g. a shared reception desk and share catering and ICT services. These are in fact shared or managed work spaces rather than incubators, although the distinction is not always clearly made (cf. Montgomery, 2007).⁴ The LX Factory in Lisbon is an example of this. This type of incubator was not observed in the Patras region.

Furthermore, an important factor is whether an incubator focuses exclusively on start-ups, or on a combination of start-ups and more established firms. Several incubators, such as Media Evolution City and MINC in Malmö, or Corallia in Patras, focus on both groups. In the case an incubator does not focus (anymore) on start-ups, the question is justified whether we should actually speak of an incubator.

¹ Bergek, A. and C. Norrman (2008): Incubator best practice: a framework. *Technovation*, 28(1-2), pp. 20-28, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.technovation.2007.07.008>.

² Qian, H., K.E. Haynes and J.D. Riggle (2011): Incubation push or business pull? Investigating the geography of U.S. business incubators. *Economic Development Quarterly*, 25(1), pp. 79-90, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0891242410383275>.

³ Wiggins and Gibson, in: Qian *et al.* (2011:79).

⁴ Montgomery, J. (2007): Creative industry business incubators and managed workspaces: a review of best practice. *Planning, Practice & Research*, 22(4), pp. 601-617, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/02697450701770126>.

3 Themes of the project

3.1 Introduction

Self-sustainable financial independence of creative incubators from government funding depends on their continuous profitability. Taking into account their particular output – trained entrepreneurs in the creative industries and new companies that survived infancy – they invest primarily in programs to coach starting (young) entrepreneurs and to facilitate the growth of their businesses. Fees for obtained services and facilities and the rent of working spaces are the sources of income of creative incubators that first come in mind. However, these payments are in most cases a rather limited and insecure contribution to financing of the incubator. In addition, they also leave potential sources of earnings out of consideration. In order to diversify and extend their sources of income, incubators may also direct to a variety of opportunities to generate income from sources outside the incubator.

InCompass recognizes quite a broad spectrum of possible strategies to generate income that also involves external actors and partners. These strategies are grouped together as commercial contextualisation, social contextualization, and tiers of support, networks and partnerships. For each theme, a Work Group that is composed of partners in InCompass is responsible to collect data during the study visits and model the data as input for the Study Visit Report. Below, the three Work Groups (WGs) are specified into some detail, mainly by means of a few examples of possible ways of earning money that fit into their label. As some of these example show, the three types of income-generating strategies may to some extent overlap in practice.

3.2 Commercial contextualisation (WG1)

The aim of WG1 is to identify commercial ways for creative incubators to become more financially self-sustainable. These are first and foremost the above mentioned fees for services (e.g. workshops, master classes), facilities (from broadband internet to kitchen), and spaces (e.g. working spaces, rehearsal or meeting rooms) by start-ups that participate in the incubation programs. Economies of scale can be achieved by shared use of services, facilities and spaces by these incubatees.

In addition to these fees, there are other commercial ways to earn money. On the one hand, income may be generated from the building and the organisation of the incubator, for instance by

- making use of spaces for developing other activities (e.g. hotel, catering, conference tourism) on own account;
- renting out facilities and unused spaces in the incubator to commercial parties for activities that have little business with the incubation process but are attracted by the building;
- supplying specialised services (e.g. consultancy services) to external companies.
- charging fees to featured supplier companies

Regarding fees and rents, it is recommendable to keep them low for starting companies in an infant stage and increase these gradually with their survival and growth, i.e. with their increasing financial capacity. A well-considered selection of entries to the incubation program lays a favourable foundation for such successful entrepreneurs.

Income might also be generated from ‘alumni’, successful start-ups that have grown and left the incubator. This may be achieved by giving the incubator a share in the start-ups it supports. This model – maybe less known in Europe – stimulates the implementation of strict selection criteria for start-ups that apply for support, since the success of start-ups is directly linked to the future income of the incubator.

3.3 Social contextualization (WG2)

Social activity as labelled in the title of this WG includes mediation activities that connect incubatees both to each other and to partners and actors in the outside world. The main aims of these connections are stimulation of informal learning by exchanging new knowledge, information and best practices, and networking activities that may result in forms of co-creation. This entails stimulating networking between incubatees within the incubator, and between incubatees and potential partners or associates outside the incubator. The internal networks can be built up for example by

- organising social meetings in the incubator (e.g. 'Friday afternoon' and 'eat & meet' get-togethers);
- creating places in the incubator which encourage spontaneous encounters between incubatees.

In addition, networking may also go beyond the incubator itself. This may include

- opening up the incubator, physically and socially, towards the surrounding urban area to discover and possibly advance resident creative talent and creative activities;
- testing creative concepts and products in the surrounding district as a learning stage in concept and product development (open lab). If fees are received for this, social and commercial contextualisation may overlap.

By and large, social contextualization contributes to successful progress of start-up companies in the incubator rather than to a sound financial position of the incubator as an enterprise in itself. Still, the more successful incubatees are, the higher their financial capacity to contribute to covering the expenses of the incubator to provide and maintain services, facilities and spaces.

3.4 Tiers of support, networks and partnerships (WG3)

The topics of interest for WG3 include all sorts of more or less planned and organized forms of support, networks and partnerships, in particular with partners from outside the incubators. These partners can represent a diversity of firms and institutions, including industrial companies, consultancy agencies, banks and insurance companies, and education and knowledge institutes. The contribution of tiers of support to a solid financial position of incubators can be both direct and indirect, i.e. through contributing to the successes of incubatees. These include for instance:

- subsidies and sponsoring, the latter for instance in exchange for exposure as privileged partner on the website or the wall of the incubator;
- contribution to incubation programs by means of tutoring, lecturing and coaching of incubatees in both management and entrepreneurial skills and product development.

Usually, tiers of support, networks and partnerships involve mutual benefits: public and semi-public institutions and private companies enter into such arrangements with incubators in exchange for some types of contributions to their own objectives.

4 Local, regional and national context of the study visit

4.1 Introduction

Avilés (84,000 inh.) is the smallest of the three cities that make up the 'city triangle' of Asturias, one of Spain's 17 autonomous communities and officially a principality. The other two vertices of the triangle are Gijón (277,000) and Oviedo (224,000): see map in section 5.1. Gijón has a coastal location, Avilés is located near the coast and has a port with a direct connection of a few miles to the Atlantic Ocean while Oviedo is located about 25 km inland.

In the second half of the 20th century, Avilés witnessed an enormous demographic growth as well as significant economic and social changes due to the establishment of heavy industries, in particular metallurgical industry, that took advantage of its strategic coastal location including a seaport. In a few years time, around the middle of the 20th century, large factories were constructed by companies like ENSIDESA (steel) and ENDASA (aluminium). Although some heavy industries are still at work – for instance Alcoa Spain (aluminium) and Saint Gobain (glass) - the economic structure of Avilés was not kept from industrial restructuring that hit many cities in western economies in the 1970s and 1980s. The rapid deployments of new technologies, innovation and proceeding globalization have led to a shift from traditional heavy manufacturing to service industry also in Avilés. Since then, service industry has gained weight and shape, and it is currently absorbing most workers. In addition, the city is trying to focus on cultural tourism, including the recovery of the antique flavour of its town centre.

In 1991, Avilés and its surrounding area had a third of its workers in the industrial sector and 45% in the service sector. In 2009, only two decades later, the share of employment in manufacturing industry had dropped to 24% against a rise to 63% in the service sector. In Asturias as a whole, this last proportion even amounted to 70% of all workers in 2009.

The demographic development of Spain in general is marked by a gradual process of ageing, although this is a more pronounced tendency in rural than in urban areas where young people tend to move to. Both the region of Asturias and the city of Avilés are no exception to this tendency. Nevertheless, Avilés counts a relatively large cohort of under 35. In 2009, this represented over 35% of the population (30,000), implying an a-priori large capacity to absorb changes and adopt new technologies in economic activities.

Training of young people in disciplines of the cultural sector has experienced advances in recent years, as is shown, for instance, by the number of students in tertiary higher vocational training in Asturias. For instance, between 1999-2000 and 2007-2008, the total enrolment has remained stable at around 6,000, while numbers of registered students in several cultural disciplines have grown. Total enrolment in Communication, Image & Sound for example, had increased from 0.54 % to 4.71 % in this short span.

Cultural expenditure per household in Asturias is the fourth highest in Spain. The average figure has increased significantly, from € 661.6 in 2004 to € 1,049 in 2008, with the Spanish average at € 997.72 in that last year. It has to be emphasized however, that such figures might be revised in the future due to the impact of the economic crisis that started around 2008 and has hit Spanish households severely.

In summary, it appears that both Avilés and the region of Asturias have changed considerably in recent decades from a strongly manufacturing-based economic structure to a more diversified

structure in which the service sector is the main source of economic activity and employment. As elsewhere in the advanced economies, economic and sociological impacts of these processes are notable in the city and its region, indicating growing production and rising demand for cultural and creative goods. Besides, the young cohorts of its population, show a tendency of increasingly interest in cultural studies.

4.2 Cultural and creative industries at regional level

Asturias is a region where important and exceptional initiatives of cultural and creative activities can be witnessed. With 6,112 businesses and 12,146 jobs, cultural and creative industries (CCIs) account for 8% of all companies, and around 2,5% of the labour force in Asturias. According to a note by the Asturian Regional Development Agency (IDEPA), these figures confirm the growth of CCIs in recent years. The diversification of the region's economy and its commitment to innovation have resulted in a new approach to these activities. Important for this new approach has been a regional analysis of the characteristic of CCIs that was undertaken in the "White Paper of the Cultural Industries of the Principality of Asturias". This paper, promoted in 2009 by the Regional Government, is a baseline study about cultural and creative activities as new economic sector in the region, with the aim to detect problems, opportunities and challenges for growth of this sector in Asturias in the following years.

Graphic design, advertising and the audio-visual sector are the main components of the Asturian CCIs. Graphic design has a strong tradition in the region, underpinned and further stimulated by two Art Schools and the local Graphic Designers Association that brings together more than 30 companies. Similarly, the advertising industry has rapidly grown in recent years. It is represented today by 375 companies and by the Association of Advertising Agencies of the Principality of Asturias. Furthermore, according to IDEPA, the region's audio-visual sector grew by 80 % from 2001 to 2008, unfortunately leaving unnoted if this figure is about firms or jobs. More recent figures are not available by IDEPA, but the foundation of an association of audio-visual producers in Asturias (AEPA) in 2007, now constituted by 21 firms (website of AEPA), may be considered an indicator of growth of the sector. This growth is closely linked to the implementation of activities by the regional radio & TV channels. Currently, there are around 115 companies operating in this sector in Asturias, bound together by the Association of Audio-visual Production Companies in the Principality of Asturias (AEPAPA) and the Audio-visual Cluster of Asturias. The latter was constituted in 2011 as a professional association by a group of competitive, innovative and creative companies in the region's audio-visual sector. One of its aims to strengthen networking of companies that represent the value chain of value of this industry by stimulating new projects and ideas linked with innovation.

However, despite the growing importance of the creative industries in Asturias and the incubation of quite some companies in these industries, it must be commented that there is no specific incubator that focuses on CCIs in the region, nor any specific grants to support these. So far, a creative entrepreneur can be incubated only through traditional business incubators (e.g. BIC Asturias, Valnalón and La Curtidora) of which just a few promote specific projects or training more orientated to their needs (e.g. Let's Game at BIC Asturias).

In contrast with the lack of creative incubators, both the region and the town of Avilés have developed a broad and high level infrastructures for exhibition of cultural work, as well as equipped workshops and programmes to support the production of creative workers, artists and companies. Examples are the ones visited during the study visit and discussed in this report (Factoría Cultural, Laboral Centre for the Arts) and the Oscar Niemeyer International Cultural Centre. In particular this cultural centre is part of the key infrastructure that has been built to strengthen local economy and tourism through a more emblematic cultural and architectonic offer.

4.3 National context

According to the Spanish Ministry of Culture – merged into the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport in 2011 – the contribution of CCIs to the national GDP accounts for 4%. Further, these industries employ about 800,000 people, mostly working in micro-companies or being self-employment. The Ministry highlights the positive impact of CCIs on other economic sectors of the Spanish economy, such as ICT and tourism, as well as on innovation. Its Plan for the Development of the Cultural Industries (*Plan de Fomento de las Industrias Culturales y Creativas 2011*) includes the following objectives:

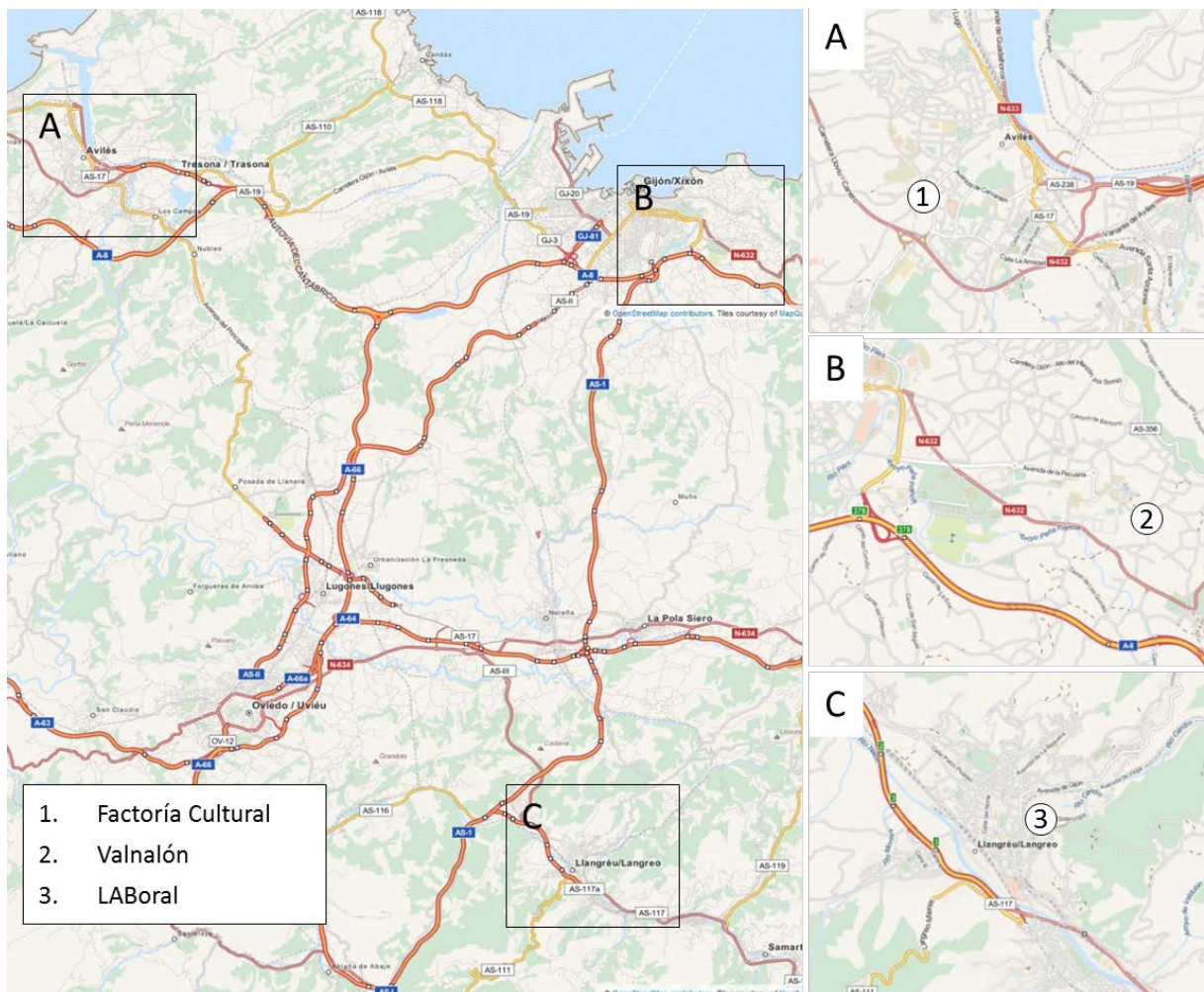
- re-orienting systems of grants and subsidies from the Ministry through the inclusion of new sectors and new financing instruments as repayable assistance,
- supporting the SMEs as the main core of the culture industry,
- promoting a special support to those companies which entire purpose is the realization of projects focused on innovation and modernization,
- encouraging the talent and creativity with special focus on ICT and online contents.
- promoting the internationalization of cultural industries,
- promoting the development of cultural management,
- promoting the legal supply of cultural content on the Internet.

Overall, the Ministry advocates the development of creativity; training as a basis for future development of cultural industries; and different types of funding of projects of these industries. These types include direct funds, reimbursable funds, additional grants and a system of bank guarantees.

5 The incubators

The InCompass consortium visited three venues in Asturias that are spread over the region's city triangle (see map): Factoría Cultural near the old town centre of Avilés, Valnalón Technological City in Langreo near Oviedo, and LABoral Art and Industrial Creation Centre south east of the city of Gijón. In Factoría Cultural, we became acquainted with three cases of incubator-like initiatives in Aviles: *Factoría Cultural* itself (together with the School of Ceramics), the *Escuela de Emprendedoras y Empresarias de Asturias* (School of Female Entrepreneurs), and *Centro de Empresas La Curtidora* (Business Centre La Curtidora). More than most other study visit, this one to the north of Spain focused on incubators and incubator-like initiatives for production in cultural industries.

Location of the visited incubators (@ OpenStreetMap contributors).



5.1a Factoría Cultural de Avilés

Factoría Cultural - Avilés
Avenida de Portugal, 13
33405 Avilés
<http://avilescultura.com/es/Factoria-Cultural>

The Factoría Cultural (FC) in Avilés is established in a former textile factory that was built in the midst of the 20th century and closed down in 1995. The building was bought and refurbished by the Municipality with the aim to make it appropriate as a venue for creative industries, in particular a centre for cultural creation and production. The physical renovation and transformation of the building happens to be a long-lasting project: FC opened its doors in 2010 but should be fully operational only in June 2014. The renovated building has two storeys. FC provides a variety of facilities in different spaces on a total floor area of 1182.5 sq. m.. In addition to ordinary storage rooms, these are four workshops for artistic creation and areas of multiple uses – like computer rooms, multipurpose classrooms–, some of which are designed for very specific activities like soundproof rehearsal rooms for musicians and rehearsal rooms with a stage for dancing and acting.

FC shares the building with the School of Ceramics. Ceramics production in Avilés has a long and prosperous history and the School is the most famous one in Spain. It was established until recently in the historic museum of Avilés, indeed a very inconvenient location because of small rooms and many stairways. The relocation to FC move has given it good opportunities for expansion, e.g. of the courses it can offer. The floor area of the School of Ceramics, 1275 sq. m., is divided into several large working spaces for ceramics production, a few offices, and one small conference room. The School is a collaborator of the Centre of Employment Service of Asturias, and provides various vocational training courses in pottery, including free use of workshops, mostly to jobless people. These courses are first and foremost a vehicle to pass ‘old generation’ knowledge and know-how of arts and crafts production to the new generation. Nevertheless, most courses are officially accredited. Today there are nearly two hundred ‘students’ enrolled in regular courses which last from October to June. During the academic year an activity called "Meet the mud" is organized: more than a thousand pupils and students from Avilés and its surroundings, aged between 4 and 18, visit the school, participate in work demonstrations by teachers, and create a piece of work by themselves that is taken as a ‘proof of experience’.

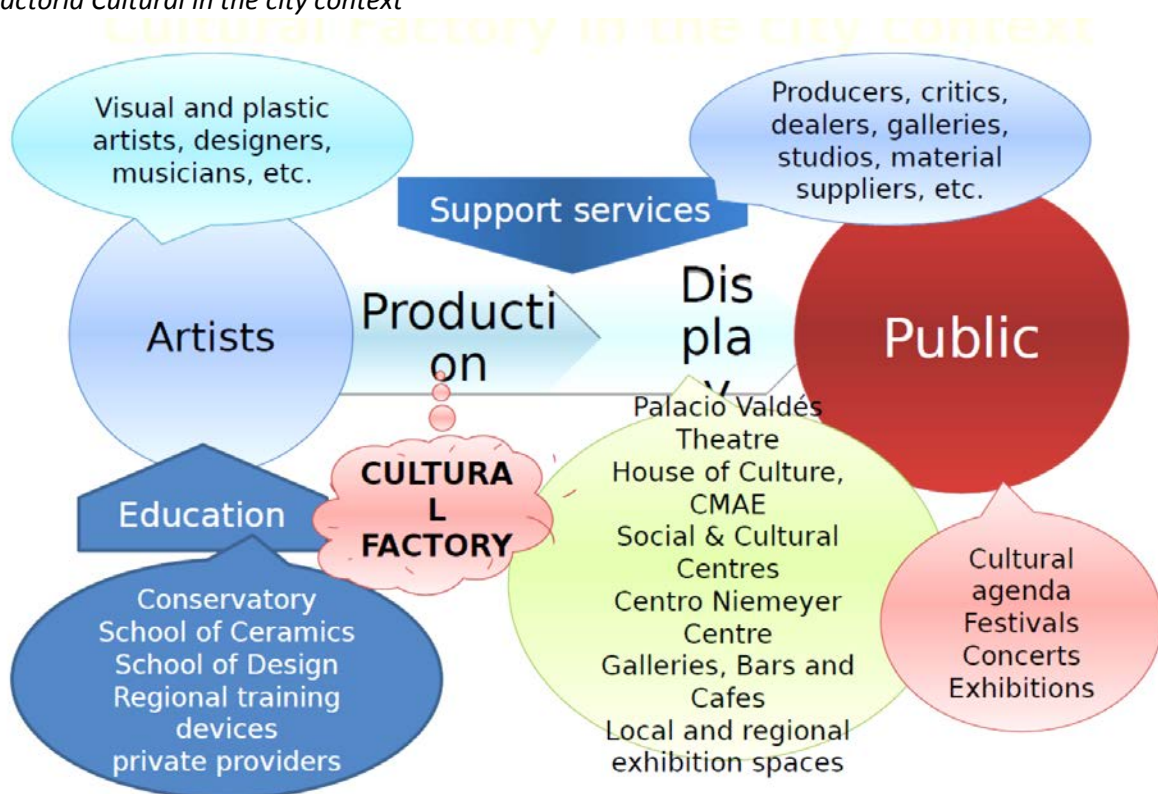
FC focuses on five main artistic branches: music, performing arts and dance, plastic arts, digital creation and audio-visual media, and fashion and design. This multiple focus is part of its mission to be(come) the major ‘reference space’ for artists and creators in the town of Avilés and its immediate hinterland. This mission is made operational by six different objectives:

- promotion of the cultural and creative industry and the creation of synergies and relationship between the different disciplines of culture,
- providing training opportunities, working and exhibition spaces and supporting services, especially to young local artists,
- increasing the space to develop cultural production activities,
- fostering collaboration and encourage networking among the local young artists,
- serving as auxiliary centre for cultural activities developed in other local centres,
- attracting a young audience.



The below graph presents a perspective of how FC is incorporated as a space of reference into the broader context of the local society, i.e. in the cultural life of the town. This is not limited to the production of art and culture, but also includes consumption, the broader spectrum of education and cultural venues, and secondary supporting services.

Factoría Cultural in the city context



Within the perspective of the debate about the definition of the incubator, the question if FC is a genuine creative incubator is not easy to answer. On the one hand, FC provides a rather extensive support programme to artists and other cultural creators that includes workspaces, training modules, network building among artists and creators of cultural and access to markets. This justifies a status of CF as a specialized business incubator for cultural and creative industries. On the other hand, it leaves much of the last two of these types of support to external organisations and institutions with which it maintains partnerships. Examples are the School of Ceramics (see above), the Chamber of Commerce and the School of Female Entrepreneurs of Asturias (see 5.1.b.). The management of FC attaches great importance to public-private cooperation, i.e. activities are preferably organized in

collaboration with the private sector, but seems to invest relatively little in coordination and programming this type of cooperation.

To support production as such, FC makes an array of infrastructure and services available to artists and creators. These are workspaces in several workshops and rehearsal rooms, the opportunity to rent equipment and materials, and access to technical assistance. This sub programme has two modalities. The foremost one is project-based work: “ F.C. is an incubator for projects”. Occasionally, however, short-term rent of space and equipment is also possible by people for non-project bound jobs.

The support programme for artists and ‘creators’ provides these with a broad array of necessary skills by means of specific specialized training activities. The basis of the training programme focuses on completing artists’ general basic skills that they need at the very start of a career. Next, more specialized training modules after the start of the business aim at enhancing their entrepreneurial and business skills, project management skills, and design skills to improve their creations.

Next, FC’s support programme contains quite a few initiatives for artists and cultural creators to ‘meet new friends’ for cooperation, both within and outside the FC building, with the aim to promote fusion between artistic branches. New friends can be met within the building at a physical meeting point with a coffee machine and at social networking events. Meetings by chance outside the building might occur at the annual White Night, a city-wide cultural festival in spring that is being coordinated by FC and provides stages in streets, gardens and galleries for the promotion of artistic and cultural creations. Finally, new friends from all over the world can be met thanks to the membership of FC of ResArtis, a worldwide network of Artist Residencies. FC makes places to work, to exhibit and to live available to artists in residence in a refurbished former youth hostel.

Last but not least, the support programme concerns assistance to improve the ability of creators to put their products on the market. This is being done by presenting cultural creation that originates in the Cultural Factory (and Avilés as a whole) to middlemen and cultural managers. Organisation of fairs and exhibitions, or requesting artists and culture professionals to attend such events elsewhere to display their creations is one way of doing this. Further, FC encourages and supports agreements with agents to negotiate with buyers in the interest of its creators. Finally, it stimulates effective use of the opportunities offered by social media and social networks for the dissemination and commercialization of cultural creation. For another Interreg project, an online database of network partners in the area of Avilés has been built up.

FC is part of the structure of the municipal Foundation of Culture of the City of Avilés. This Foundation provides annual support to FCs operational budget. In fact, its revenue model is almost fully dependent on local and regional public funding. Proactive participation in EU funding programmes is the only noticeable additional source of non-local money yet. This model is being put under pressure by the current austerity policies. So far, FC has been able to set off decreasing resources by doing the same work with less resources, but it is obvious to most stakeholders that the dependency on public funding should be diminished in order to adapt to a new financial reality. As said, the management of FC attaches great importance to public-private cooperation, i.e. activities are preferably organized in collaboration with the private sector, but this type of cooperation has not yet been extended to financial collaboration.

5.1.b - Escuela de Emprendedoras y Empresarias de Asturias

Avenida de Oviedo, nº 11

33402 Avilés

<http://institutoasturianodelamujer.com/iam/programas/escuela-de-emprendedoras/>

Escuela de Emprendedoras y Empresarias de Asturias, School of Female Entrepreneurs (SFE), is a project set up recently – in 2012 - by the regional government of Asturias, i.e. the Asturian Institute of Women which aims to advance social equality of both sexes in cooperation with the ministry of Health, Social Services and Equality. SFE was established in Avilés because it was this Municipality in Asturias that made a suitable premises available. Thereto, an old building was reconstructed for € 2.8 million funded by the regional government, the ministry of Equality, and the 2007 – 2013 Operational Programme of the Principality of Asturias with money from the European Social Development Fund. It is a multipurpose building of 1,500 sq m that contains rooms for education, meetings, communication and creation by all female entrepreneurs from both urban and rural areas. In addition, it houses various supporting services for these entrepreneurs in technical, administrative and marketing issues - to help them to run their businesses successfully.

SFE is an institution for the promotion of women’s participation on the regional labour market. Its principal objective is to incorporate women into the productive system of Asturias in order to take advantage of their talent and their capacities to renew, to diversity and to give a boost to the regional economy. Concrete actions are programmes for training of women entrepreneurs, pre-incubation services, mentoring and networking. What is more, one of its mission statements is that making use of the talent of this half of the population is not only a strategy for sustainable development in economic, social and human terms, but also a matter of social justice. To that aim, SFE promotes gender equality – by both labour market policies and policies to convert entrepreneurial culture - as a valuable economic recourse. Today, SFE is one of the agencies active on the labour market that work together with employers, unions, branch associations, and schools (i.e. the School of Ceramics) in the Employment Pact that was set up by the Municipality.

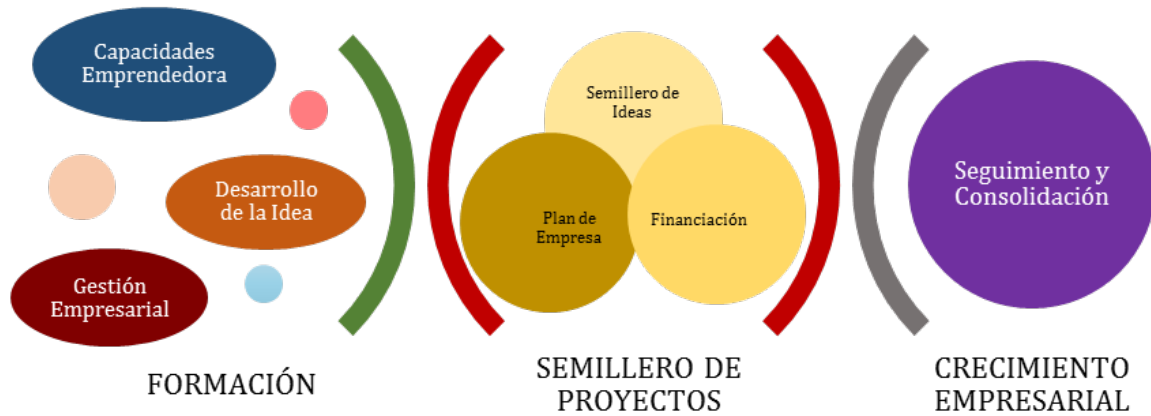
In practice, women that started a business or think to do so face quite a few obstacles. First, they face difficulties to get access to finance to establish and develop their company. This limited willingness of financiers – a masculine world - to grant loans to starting female entrepreneurs is the usually very small size and, hence, supposed low life expectancy of their companies. In addition to capital, training opportunities communication, leadership and management skills are also scarce. When it comes to the inclusion of the principle of equality in procedures of firms’ personnel policy, a lack of knowledge and awareness by those responsible to advance entrepreneurial culture in the region can be observed. In their social and family circles, female entrepreneurs suffer from a lack of co-responsibility for housekeeping and care tasks, and from support for their entrepreneurial activities as such. Last but not least, female references and *lobbies* in regional entrepreneurial circles are rare. SFE aspires to convert its building into a ‘centre of reference’ where female entrepreneurs in different stages of progress can meet one another and discuss ways how to face these obstacles.

The strategy of SFE to achieve its principal objectives includes five main fields of activities:

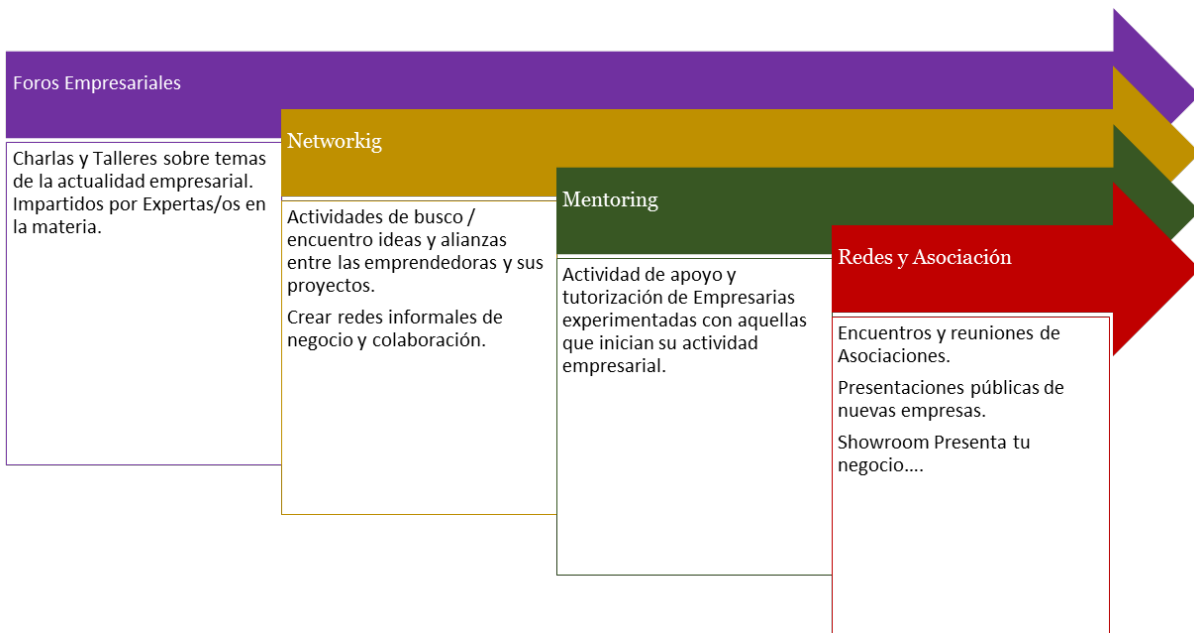
1. design and implement integrated and specialised training and mentoring services to support starting female entrepreneurs,
2. promote equal conditions of employment between men and women in firms, in accordance with Spanish law, by means of professional consultancy services to design and put into practice purposive policies, including training courses for female executive staff,
3. elaborate training programmes and materials, work procedures and awareness campaigns in order to raise sensitivity and transfer knowledge how to include the principle of equality in employment policies and entrepreneurial culture,

4. work together with the educational system in the region to promote an entrepreneurial culture of equal working conditions of both sexes in all economic sector,
5. collaborate with both organisations of entrepreneurs and unions to facilitate introduction and integration of equality policies and plans in firm daily practices.

These fields of activities are distinguished in three basic sub-programmes. The first involves support of the creation and consolidation of new businesses by female entrepreneurs. These are more or less chronological activities - from left to right in the below diagram – that go from a first idea to a consolidated enterprise.



At the left side, three activities that aim at training in fundamental prerequisites for the foundation of firms are pictured: development of an idea to start an enterprise and improvement of both entrepreneurial and business management skills. The central part consists of three features of disseminating these ‘projects’: sowing the idea, making a business plan, and find financing. Finally, the right side refers to consolidation of the enterprise, not in the last place by keeping up with its progress.



In the second sub-programme, much effort is being invested in building up networks of entrepreneurs. To start with, (in)formal meetings (*foros*) and workshops with experts to discuss themes of topical interest are being organised. Further, informal cooperative business networks by female entrepreneurs are promoted around identified ideas and problems that they share. Another way to build up networks is a mentoring programme in which more experienced entrepreneurs assist and tutor those in an initial stage of enterprising. Finally, the level of organisation of female entrepreneur networks is attempted to be increased by bringing these into contact with, and let them work together existing professional associations in Asturias, e.g. by organising public presentations and exhibitions by new enterprises.



The third sub-programme aims to incorporate gender equality plans in Asturian companies' personnel policies. This includes simply distributing information about existing legislation in this area. SFE's key activities in this sub-programme are, however, professional assessment to company managers how to diagnose the current gender equality situation in their firm, how to formulate objectives, to design 'measures' to reach these objectives, and to formulate a plan of implementation and evaluation.

In spite of these sub-programmes, SFE is not a real incubator itself. A main argument is that it is not a business centre where starting companies can settle. It maintains close relationships however, with a network of centres of incubation in Asturias (including Valnalón) that it can recommend to starting female entrepreneurs as the places that provide facilities and services they particularly need. Hence, SFE is rather a pre-incubator than an incubator. Further, SFE cooperates to some extent with the Factoria Cultural de Avilés, i.e. when assisting and supporting female producers with the ambition to start their own business in arts and cultural goods production is at stake.

Since the outbreak of the economic crisis, quite a few highly educated women between, say, 35 and 40 years of age lost their salaried job and wanted to start their own company. Hence, the number of these people that request SFE for support is quite large. Since its start about a year before the time of the Study Visit, SFE was consulted by already about 320 female (would-be) entrepreneurs, provided training to 145 starting entrepreneurs and had assessed more than 75 business plans. Support by SFE is indispensable for success of female start-ups because they people have to change their attitude – running your own business is highly different from a salaried job – as well as their

focus and branches of work: innovative production rather than traditional female branches like care, education and retail.

The revenue model of SFE depends fully on public funding by the regional government. Its annual budget of € 125.000, however, is too small to run the organisation and implement all activities of its sub-programmes. To raise its budget, or better, to share its costs is carries out several activities in cooperation with other institutions, in most cases also public ones like the Regional Association of Business Development. In spite of this full dependency on local and regional public resources, the governments do not yet put pressure on SFE to attempt to raise additional funds from non-public sources. Nevertheless, the time is right now to start a debate about opportunities for new partnerships, for instance with sponsors. There are indeed opportunities for new partnerships based on the uniqueness of SFE as the first of its kind in Spain, resulting in increasing numbers of requests for cooperation. Besides, the important role for SMEs in the coming European programmes of co-financing creates new possibilities for external financing. The School is already building up a network of European partners – in France, UK etc. - that are necessary to participate in future projects.

5.1.c Centro de Empresas La Curtidora

Gutiérrez Herrero, 52,
33402 Avilés, Spanje
<http://www.curtidora.com/>

La Curtidora as this centre is commonly known was founded in 1995 in the framework of Avilés 2020, a strategic development programme set up by the municipality of Avilés to face the then economic and social crisis due to the downfall of traditional heavy manufacturing industries. It is now an instrument of the Municipality that aims to strengthen the economy of the town and its surrounding area. Its core objective is to support both the consolidation of existing firms and the start of new ones in relevant economic sectors. The Centre is open for local entrepreneurs, individuals who want to start an entrepreneurial initiative, and businesses that think of starting a branch in Avilés to demand for support, including finance. The ownership and management of La Curtidora responds to the scheme of public-private partnership. It is fully owned and financed by the municipality of Avilés, while the management is carried out by a plc for municipal policy objectives.

To establish La Curtidora, a former leather factory area of 9.500 sq m was transformed and equipped as a business centre. It now consists of three buildings - 6.450 sq m of floor space – gardens and a private parking. In these buildings, it rents out a quite large number of workspaces of different types and size to host economic activities and enterprises that may contribute to the revitalisation of the local economy. There are four types of 'closed' working spaces for single entrepreneurs and firms – rooms (17, size between 10 – 15 sq. m.) offices (32, between 20 and 200 sq. m.), workshops for industrial projects (9, between 90 and 280 sq. m.) and technology offices (22, between 13 and 550 sq. m.). All are equipped quite well, with general services like air-conditioning and heating, telephone and internet, and the technology offices also with dedicated equipment for their particular technology branches. In addition to these closed workspaces, there are also open co-working spaces for, usually, very small business to work together on joint projects, and well equipped as well, and communal zones where professionals can meet either spontaneously (coffee corner, resting area) or planned (conference rooms, training rooms).

Most of the above mentioned services in the working spaces, as well as a number of shared services (reception, library, cleaning, car park, maintenance and repair of ICT installations etc.), are included in the rent of the working spaces. Besides, a few other optional services are available on payment: e.g. hi-speed internet, photocopy and printing in colour, and conference rooms. Meeting rooms and

audio-visual equipment in these rooms can also be rented by companies or entrepreneurs that do not rent workspace in La Curtidora.

Since its very start, a total number of 306 companies have rented workspace in La Curtidora, of which 218 were start-ups. At the time of the study visit, 44 companies rented workspace in one of the three buildings. The maximum rental period is 4 years for rooms and offices, 5 years in the co-working spaces, and 6 years for workshops for larger industrial projects. Precise statistics were not available, but it was estimated that the success rate of companies at the end of the rental period amounts to about 70 percent.

In addition to businesses that rent workspaces, La Curtidora also hosts different institutions that are involved in some way or another in supporting companies and promoting entrepreneurship in Asturias. One of these is the Avilés' municipal Office for Promotion of Entrepreneurship. This Office provides support to entrepreneurs to found and develop their business, including finding adequate finance from the stage of the idea for a business until its future maturity, and generating dynamic collaboration of these businesses with relevant institutions. Besides, the Office is also an instrument for the municipality to develop policies to strengthen the role of new entrepreneurs in local economic development.

Two other institutions that hold office in La Curtidora are the Centre SAT and PAIT. SAT assists firms and institutions in Asturias in incorporating ICTs in their processes of management, production, relations with suppliers and clients, and marketing. The office in La Curtidora is part of a regional network of SAT centres that sprang from collaboration between La Curtidora and IDEPA in order to provide *free* services to firms and institutions. PAIT is a one-stop office to obtain all licenses and documents that a starting business requires.

In addition to its facilities and services to starting businesses, La Curtidora also manages a fund of 1.2 million euro for the period 2011-2014 that was set up and fully financed by the municipality for granting participative loans to business and entrepreneurs. The loan can be used to finance a maximum of 50% of the required investment capital to develop the activity it is requested for. The interest rate for this loan is partly fixed and partly a function of the commercial results of the business, and is tax-deductible.

5.2 Technological City of Valnalón

Valnalón
Ciudad Industrial del Valle del Nalón S.A.U.
C/ Hornos Altos, s/n
33930 Langreo
<http://www.valnalon.com/web/>

Valnalón Technological City, or simply Valnalón, is a public agency dependent on the Council of Economy & Employment of the Government of the Principality of Asturias. It is established in Langreo, in the heart of the former coal mining and related iron and steel manufacturing area in the valley of Nalon river in Asturias. In 1984, when the large steelwork of Duro Felguera, the most important company of the Valley, had shut down, the regional government started to refurbish its outstanding, one century-old buildings. After a few years of physical regeneration, Valnalón Industrial City S.A. was founded by the regional government of Asturias in April 1987: 'Valnalón, an entrepreneurial place since 1987'.

Some features of the built environment of the early 1980s were preserved – e.g. the now coloured cooling tower - but most were demolished and replaced by new buildings. It now offers a mix of buildings for business development and education, including a business centre where all start-up companies are located, an occupational training centre and a teacher training centre, a telecom and ICT centre, and even a museum; the Museum of Iron and Steel Works.



At the time of the closure of the last industrial activities, local and regional governments not only inherited a deteriorated and contaminated area with obsolete mining and industrial factory buildings, but also serious socio-economic problems of huge unemployment and selective migration of talented young people. Attempting to reduce unemployment, regional government had already launched a campaign to persuade jobless people to start their own company. However, former salaried miners and industrial workers were not very eager to start a career of working on their own account where there was no need for before. When it became clear that this campaign failed, a more comprehensive strategy towards the development of a more enterprising regional society was launched. It was acknowledged that the challenges to transform the former industrial regional economy towards a dynamic post-industrial 21st century economy and to successfully stem age selective migration indeed required a more comprehensive ambitious strategy.

Along with the new strategy, driven mainly by the start in the creation and development of start-ups in the ICT sector, the concept Valnalón Industrial City was morphed into Technological City. Valnalón Technological City plays a key role in the new strategy. Today, it is labelled a ‘pioneering incubator’ that manages programmes to support the development of start-ups and more consolidated companies in new alternative industries. What makes it rather unique however, is its programme to integrate entrepreneurship in curricula of all three levels of the formal education system in the region: “society needs entrepreneurial citizens” and “society has changed so we need a different education”. Valnalón is now acknowledged as a best practice in the field of integration of entrepreneurship education and business development by several regional, national and European bodies. Its current staff counts 24 people of which about half is working in the field of entrepreneurship education. The other half focuses on entrepreneurial promotion (incubation and business support) and administration.

In 1993 the regional government of Asturias implemented the ‘Entrepreneurship Training Chain’ model through Valnalón. Most of the time since then, this model has consisted of two different but interconnected programmes:

1. Entrepreneurship in education, which aims to promote entrepreneurial spirit at the different levels of the education system;

- Promotion of Entrepreneurship, which is aimed at business development

Valnalón has been part of the three agreements of social consultation that the Government of the Principality of Asturias has implemented in the field of entrepreneurship:

- 2004-2007 ADECE Agreement for the economic development, competitiveness and employment
- 2008-2011 ACEBA. Agreement for competitiveness, employment and welfare of Asturias
- 2013-2015 AEPA Agreement for employment and progress of Asturias

Entrepreneurship in education programme

The objective of entrepreneurship education is to foster knowledge, abilities and attitudes which create the basis of an entrepreneurial spirit of children and young people. Basically, it aims to foster their entrepreneurial abilities and skills to take initiatives, focus on innovative problem solving, and be flexible but with an open mind for planning and organization. The desired effect of this programme, a more enterprising regional society, contributes to social change and progress in various respects.

In this programme, Valnalón works together with schools and teachers (and students) as both clients and collaborators in integrated projects. The programme starts at the primary level of education and ends up in VET and university: the table below presents the stages of the Entrepreneurship Training Chain model of Valnalón. It is a continuum: projects for higher levels of education build on those for lower levels. The subjects and modules of the programme are acknowledged by the official Secondary Education and Vocational Training Curriculum. After the tertiary level of education, entrepreneurship, or an entrepreneurial approach, should grow further, ideally leading to a rich *harvest* of entrepreneurial people. Thereto, the programme also attempts to stimulate personal motivations for lifelong learning to foster entrepreneurial skills and spirit.

Stages of the Entrepreneurship Training Chain model of Valnalón

<i>seed</i>	<i>sow</i>			<i>grow</i>	<i>harvest</i>	
early years	primary	lower secondary	upper secondary, VET and university	pre-incubation services	business centre	promotion of infrastructures

The focus of the programme and its projects has evolved over time from a narrow one on technical training to create enterprises towards a much broader one that is no longer exclusively directed to the creation of enterprises and their commercial success. Instead, it now involves broader sets of knowledge, skills and attitudes that can be put into practice in very different domains of life and contexts. The primary criterion for success of the programme is not “to discover the new Bill Gates” but to promote entrepreneurial spirit and culture in curricula. Hence, Valnalón considers its training programmes for entrepreneurship “a method for the development of an entrepreneurial *culture* from primary school to business consolidation”. This method can be illustrated by examples of projects it has developed, one for each level of educational, in the *sow* stage.

- Primary education – EME (‘A Company in My School’)

Pupils create and manage a cooperative throughout the school year. This cooperative manufactures products that are sold once a year in a local market or fair. The general objective is to spread entrepreneurial culture among children by encouraging the development of skills in communication, collaborative attitude, co-creation and, as a side effect, market awareness.

2. Secondary education – PETIT (‘Educational Project for Technology, Innovation and Employment’).
Students of secondary schools form working teams that design, create and develop innovative services or test prototypes of products in close consultation with potential users. The work by the students is based on active participation, cooperation and decision making in projects that are guided and tutored by teachers. All projects in PETIT are student-centred, about learning by doing and, most important, about community engagement, including communication and cooperation with community stakeholders.
3. Bachelor and vocational training course - JPC (‘Young Film Production Companies’).
JPC seeks to create and start school film production companies that make documentaries of the living environment of young people. The general objective is to promote and make visible young people’s abilities for initiative, entrepreneurial spirit and creativity through the area of film making. JPC is a project in which schools cooperate with the International Film Festival Gijon.

The above illustrates that Valnalón does not equalize successful entrepreneurship to making profit. In fact, it also acknowledges three other entrepreneurship pathways: intrapreneur and social and cultural entrepreneur. Besides, it attentively follows a type that is more familiar now in North America: the teacherpreneur who combines teaching and entrepreneurship.

The key person in Valnalón’s entrepreneurial education programme is the teacher. Its professional staff has developed specific teacher training modules, including support for implementation and follow-up. In addition, it develops new teaching methodologies - courses and materials - and supports teachers to put these into practice. Teaching methodologies and teacher training focus on principles of project-based work – a new reality on the labour market next to the traditional company-based work -; basic principles of management of a company or association; assessment tools; and techniques how to establish links with local and business communities. Further, the teachers are also stimulated to come up with new project ideas that can be carried out by students in the regional setting.

The below table shows some statistical data about students’ participation in Valnalón’s education programmes for entrepreneurship. It shows that the programmes are no longer limited to Asturias. Indeed, drawing on the experiences acquired in the Asturian education system, the Valnalón entrepreneurship in education programmes have been exported [transferred] to and implemented in other Spanish regions and foreign countries since 2002.

The educational programme for entrepreneurship is part of a regional action plan signed by main stakeholders, including government, trade unions and employers. On the other hand, some stakeholders, in particular employers “could be more active” while on the other end the preference for immediate and measurable output by politicians – new start-up companies and new jobs – are too ambitious.

SUMMARY OF RESULTS 2011-2012

Entrepreneurship Education

STUDENTS' PARTICIPATION

EDUCATIONAL PROJECTS	Asturias 2012	Other Territories *	Total 2012	Total from 1994 to 2012
EME – A COMPANY IN MY SCHOOL	1.773	4.387	6.160	51.252
EMC - A COMPANY IN MY CENTRE	859	12	871	4.540
PETIT- EDUCATIONAL PROJECT FOR TECHNOLOGY, INNOVATION AND EMPLOYMENT	246	109	355	957
JES - YOUNG SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURS	845	982	1.827	8.716
EJE – EUROPEAN JUNIOR ENTERPRISE	3.257	7.240	10.497	89.063
TMP - ENTREPRENEURIAL WORKSHOP	9.500	361	9.861	144.209
JPC- YOUNG FILM PRODUCTION COMPANY	-	-	-	812
EIE - BUSINESS AND ENTREPRENEURIAL INITIATIVE	530	521	1.051	2.543
OTHER EDUCATIONAL PROJECTS: Motivational Talks, Courses, School visits...	3.000	566	3.566	43.089
TOTAL	20.010	14.178	34.188	345.181

* Rest of Spain, Europe, Latin America, Africa and Asia

Source: Valnalón – Kit to transform spaces in entrepreneurial environments.

Entrepreneurial promotion programme

The entrepreneurial promotion programme consists of three sub programmes which together make up the stages of *grow* and *harvest* of the Entrepreneurship Training Chain model of Valnalón Technological City.

1. Create - Pre-incubation. For would-be entrepreneurs who come to Valnalón with a good idea but no skills and resources to put it into practice.
2. Develop – Incubation. A business centre that rents out office and workshop space as well as provides services and facilities to already existing companies.
3. Consolidate – (Helping to) build new entrepreneurial infrastructures to accommodate companies

There is no obligation or need whatever that entrepreneurs who want to rent working space in the business centre and to make use of its facilities (Develop) have passed through the pre-incubation stage (Create). In fact, most companies have not. The same absence of obligation, apart from general regulations regarding labour, social services and documentation for contractors of services, holds for companies in the sub programme Consolidate in relation to Develop.

Create: Pre-incubation services

Valnalón business pre-incubator has supported entrepreneurs who want to create their own business since 1992. Support concerns the composition of their business plan, enhancing their entrepreneurial skills, and providing technical training in business by management. The methodology of pre-incubation is based on permanent individual and group training of entrepreneurs, including

courses 'on demand' by means of tutorials. Further, the pre-incubator provides (co-)work spaces and organises networking events. When possible, the courses and network events encompass the regional business community.

Although the pre-incubator is a physical space, an on-line platform was created that takes into account the [supposed, *own addition*] decreasing importance of shared physical space in incubation processes. The platform functions as a shared cyber space where incubatees can meet both one another and their tutors who advise them in drawing up their business plan.

Develop: Valnalón Business Centre

Valnalón Business Centre is a business incubator that started in 1992. It supports just started companies in their further development by providing them with means and tools they need. These include:

- industrial premises and offices for temporary rental,
- shared facilities, including meeting and training rooms, management of incoming phone calls, photocopying, library, cafeteria and dining room,
- training in entrepreneurial management and skills,
- tailor-made business tutorials by means of a mentoring system,
- networking events and activities,
- a regional 'club of companies'.

The current Business Centre building counts 26 offices for rent, varying in size between 18 and 131 sq. m., with a total space of 1,102 sq m. There is an upper limit to the length of the rental period of 5 years, but with the possibility to extend this period under specific conditions. In sum, 392 companies have rented work space in the incubator since its very start up in 1992 to and including 2011. In 2012, the year before the study visit, 18 companies rented space, meaning an occupancy rate of the available offices of 77% in case each office was rented by one company. In general however, office sharing by small companies is widespread in creative incubators. Although there are no data about what has happened with companies that left the incubator [!], it was estimated during the presentation *in situ* that the survival rate of these companies is about 85%.

The Business Centre keeps up a certain degree of cooperation with other business centres or parks in Asturias. This includes the exchange of information to select the one that provides the best incubation environment and conditions for specific start-ups. Although competitive relationships between these centres sometimes prevent an optimal allocation, there is definitely no fierce competition.

SUMMARY OF RESULTS 2011

Promotion of Entrepreneurship

ENTREPRENEURS / PROJECTS / BUSINESSES

ACTIONS	YEARS		TOTAL
	1992-2010	2011	1992-2011
TUTORIALS SESSIONS	11.203	1.157	12.360
INDIVIDUALS ADVISED	2.370	425	2.795
BUSINESS PLANS	1.103	185	1.288
COMPANIES CREATED	427	84	511
SELF-EMPLOYMENT CREATED (PEOPLE)	581	90	671

Source: Valnalón – Kit to transform spaces in entrepreneurial environments.

The above table shows some basic data about the volume of service provision and number of created companies since 1992. A comparison of the 2011 figures with the total figures of the eighteen previous years makes obvious that the number of people “that entered the building [pre-incubator and incubator; *authors’ addition*] with a project idea has increased in recent years”. In fact, it had tripled in 2011 compared to 2007, the year of the onset of the current economic downturn. This increase is not because Valnalón does things very differently or much better than before, but because starting one’s own company has increasingly become the alternative for the growing shortage of salaried jobs in Asturias, as elsewhere in Spain.

Consolidate: promotion of business infrastructures

In 2003, Valnalón started the Business Infrastructure Development subprogramme that gears towards successful companies and provides these with support they need to consolidate their growth. Old buildings of the mining industry have been transformed and supplemented with new ones to accommodate these companies. The decision to rent industrial units or office space in one of these buildings is to their advantage for three reasons. First, this space can be rented without any fixed duration of contract. Second, there is the option to buy the rented unit against favourable conditions once certain commitments regarding employment and activities have been fulfilled. Last but not least, the table below shows that these buildings are suitable for companies that require relatively large working spaces. Requirement of large space can be due to either the type of activities of companies (e.g. traditional manufacturing or artisanal activities), or their number of employees. An occupancy rate of one hundred percent in five of the six building (table) illustrates that the above advantages make these building attractive for entrepreneurs to rent working space.

Building	Companies	Area in sq. m.	% Occupancy	Employment
Nalón 1	7	3.000	100	73
Caudal 1	10	3.000	100	29
Caudal 2	8	6.400	100	92
Oficess (Incuvatic 2)	1	3.600	100	400
Los Relojos	1	800	100	90
Entrego	1	3.003	28	61

Source: Valnalón – Kit to transform spaces in entrepreneurial environments.

Enterprising Network

Set up last year (2012), a new tool - Enterprising Network – aims to interconnect the two programmes presented above. It supports local employers and schools to get in touch and to establish fruitful, effective and sustainable partnerships: "There is much more that can be done in this respect than apprenticeships" at the benefit of both employers and schools. Further, students that carry out projects within the framework of these partnerships are exposed to challenges faced by real companies or institutions that require innovative solutions, and to role models that may raise their professional aspirations. The approach of Enterprising Network is highly flexible, making it possible for employers to decide themselves how much time and effort they are willing to commit. To make things easy, they can choose from a menu of actions ranging from one single session to mentorship of a group of students throughout a whole school year.

Cooperation between employers and groups of student in full course projects are organized as a stepwise processes in which respectively teachers and Valnalón play intermediary roles. During this process, different means of communication and interchange of data are used. At the start, leaflets provide all necessary information of projects. By profile sheets of employers, basic information is gathered of their professional career, their motivation to join the scheme, and their level of engagement. Finally, assessment surveys are completed by the involved employers and schools in order to improve practices of the current or future projects.

Funding

Current funding of Valnalón emanate from three sources of revenue: public funding (50%), transfer of know-how (30%) and rental income (20%). Pre-incubation is chiefly paid by public money, i.e. by the Association of Public Business Centres in Asturias (ACEPPA). The most important source of the revenue model of the incubator is, on the other hand, the letting of units for industrial production and office space. The rents vary somewhat – between € 5 and 7 a sq. m. a month – and is supplemented with € 45 for general services.

As to the public source, Valnalón enjoys much assistance from the Department of Education of Asturias, but that is primarily in kind. Most of the public money comes from the region's Department of Industry. An indirect source of public funding is the exemption from payment of rent for the buildings owned by the government. A small percentage of public money originates from European project funds.

Funding from transfer of know-how, finally, is earned in the last 5 or 6 years by exporting the entrepreneurship in education programme to areas outside Asturias. These are partly other regions in Spain (still public funding, but not from the Asturian budget) but also other countries.

5.3 LABoral Art and Industrial Creation Centre

LABoral Centro de Arte y Creación Industrial
Los Prados, 121,
33394 Gijón
<http://www.laboralcentrodearte.org/en>

LABoral Art and Industrial Creation Centre is based within the so called LABoral City of Culture in the municipality of Gijón. It is a cultural centre where artists explore new technologies, in particular ICTs, and new ways of artistic expression arising from the creative use of these technologies. Its programme of activities mirrors the changes that contemporary society is undergoing, in particular the 'immersion' in visual culture. The Centre emerged from an initiative by the regional government of Asturias that was based on its explicit acknowledgement of the potential of ICTs and CCI as substantial driving forces of a new model for economic development in contemporary society.

LABoral City of Culture is the result of a transformation project, carried out by the regional government in 2001, to renew the old, monumental building of the Laboral University of Gijón. To give new life to the refurbished building – with 270,000 sq m considered to be the biggest building in Spain – about 130,000 sq m is now in use by educational, cultural and catering venues that daily receive more than 4,000 people to study, work, create and have fun. This multifunctional cluster is officially labelled Laboral City of Culture. The LABoral Art and Industrial Creation Centre [from here on shortly 'LABoral'] is one of these users of the refurbished part of the building. According to its own website, LABoral is a 'spearhead of the City of Culture' where people can experience art, new technologies and industrial creation.

LABoral is established in old workshops of the university that were constructed in the 1950s and recently refurbished by the regional government of Asturias. LABoral was opened in March 2007 and its total floor space amounts to 14000 sq m. This space is divided over two storeys for research, production, educational programmes, events and exhibitions for all audiences. For musicians, sound studios and rehearsal spaces are available.



LABoral is designed as a multidisciplinary platform where resources (tools and know-how) are available to facilitate and support artists and creators with the development of projects of new forms of visual arts, design and architecture and occasionally other branches of contemporary CCI that arise from creative use of ICTs. Some of the projects are mainly about arts production and others more in research, but what matters most is the integrated approach to carry out the mentioned activities in close cooperation. This approach promotes integration of activity areas (research and production; training, education and mediation; and exhibition, diffusion and networking) as well as cross-overs between different branches (arts, science, technology and industrial creation) in the best possible ways.

All by all, LABoral is working on building an ecosystem where technology and knowledge are used and fused into both the most creative and most effective ways. In this ecosystem, main efforts of LABoral focus on interrelations of three above mentioned broad activity areas:

Research and production

In the area of research and production, it provides various types of support– to artists and creators but also to educators in which research and production are interwoven to some degree. These types of support are both technical and artistic in nature. To put these supporting activities into practice, several technologically advanced resources are available. The first and foremost of these is fabLAB Asturias, an laboratory equipped with digital fabrication machinery for the production of real and virtual prototypes, and for research, training and consultancy workshops. The fabLab is financially supported by Alcoa and agreements of cooperation are signed with Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and the Institute for Advanced Architecture of Catalonia (IAAC). In addition to the fabLab, LABoral runs an Audio-visual Production Platform and Audio-visual Laboratories for research, experimentation and production of new audio-visual forms and products.

Training, education and cultural mediation

For training and cultural mediation, LABoral makes various equipped spaces available for different types of knowledge transfer and extensive training programmes. These spaces are classrooms for training courses and rooms for workshops, meetings, conferences and symposiums. In addition the Archive of Asturian Creators offers a database of work by creators born or resident in Asturias. To support research activities about today's art and creative industries, LABoral runs a Multimedia Centre and an Interpretation Room that offers all sorts of documentation to users.

The training programmes - including tailor made methods and formats - are designed for artists and creators, but also for different types of 'outsiders', in particular educational and knowledge institutions. Groups of pupils and students of school and other educational centres are invited to experiment with creative use of technology for artistic products. On the tertiary level of education, LABoral works together the *Universitat Oberta de Catalunya* (Open University of Catalonia) in a postgraduate programme that aims to provide students with tools to understand and take part in present-day culture from an interdisciplinary perspective in connection with main international debates.

Exhibition, diffusion, networking and partnerships

LABoral is a learning place not only due to the facilities and training it offers but also due to the open platform model of working . “No one here keeps his or her activities secret, the spirit is one of ‘interaction to share knowledge gives opportunities to learn’, and learning is the basis of innovation, i.e. of becoming better in what we are doing”.

The work by local, national and international artists and creators in LABoral is called its 'DNA'. LABoral experiments with various means – exhibitions, performances, presentations and the like – to optimize the experiences by audiences of that DNA. Between 30 March 2007 and 31 December 2011, just over 800,000 people have visited or participated in activities at exhibitions.

Since its inception, LABoral has worked together in co-productions or other types of cooperation with institutions in the region, elsewhere in Spain and abroad. In the region, these are companies, cultural institutions, schools and universities. Some of the foreign partners are high-standing, such as ZKM (Centre for Art and Media Technology) in Karlsruhe and Centre Pompidou in Paris.

Although LABoral emerged from an initiative by the regional government of Asturias, it is today an institution in which the regional government cooperates with other types of corporations, including private companies, knowledge institutions and professional associations. It is a not-for-profit

organisation: it does not sell things nor does it charge artists and creators that make use of its different spaces and facilities for profit. However, against the background of probable shrinking of public financing as a source of revenue, successful artists and creators' companies may be a substituting source in the near future. Further, a recently launched programme for artists and researchers in residence may also be a new source of revenue.

Overview of incubators in Asturias

	Factoría Cultural	School for Female Entrepreneurs	La Curtidora	Valnalón	LABoral
SERVICES					
office spaces and shared facilities	yes	no	yes	yes (in one subprogramme)	yes
networking (e.g. meetings)	yes (primarily by partners)	yes	Yes (indirectly through co-work spaces)	yes	yes (building ecosystem)
entrepreneurial support (e.g. training, courses)	yes	yes	yes (via 3 rd organisations)	yes (pre-incubation, incubation, education)	yes (technical & artistic)
FOCUS					
focus on start-ups or existing firms	both (primarily start-ups)	start-ups	Both	start-ups (students, pupils)	no clear distinction
specialism	broad variety of types of arts, AV media and design	no / general	no / general	no / general	hardly (from ICT to traditional craft)
KEY FIGURES					
surface (sq. m.)	2460	1500	6450	1100 for start-ups, 19800 for other uses	14000 (4800 for exhibitions)
current no. of incubatees	-	-	44	18 (in 2013)	-
no. of incubatees since start	-	75 with business plan	306	-	-
funding	public (municipality & region)	public (region)	public (municipality)	public (region): 50%; other: 50%	founded by regional government, mixed funding

-: no data,

6 Commercial contextualisation (WG1)

Two general remarks can be made beforehand regarding the good practices that we present in the chapters 6 - 8. First, the triple helix does not seem to be in operation at least in terms of funding. All cases we visited were founded by government initiatives, either local or regional government, and dependence on public funding is still quite high. In spite of eventual impacts of austerity policies and budget cuts, we observed little pressure to develop alternative revenue models with less dependence on public money. Further, several of the visited cases have strong relationships with education or educational institutions in ways that have not been seen during earlier study visits: most organise courses for pupils, students, teachers and teacher trainers while Valnalón is also a curriculum developer. The role of the private sector as participant in development of the visited cases on the other hand, is at best not very clear but most probably rather insignificant.

Second, for some good practices it is still unclear how these generate revenues in ways that fit in Working Group 1, commercial contextualisation. Hence, the below stated good practices are partly hypothetical – might be rewarding commercially – rather than observed. Furthermore, the problem that we have seen before, the relation between revenues from initiatives for individual companies in the incubator and the incubator as a company, is not being settled by the visited cases in Asturias, on the contrary!

6.1 Factoría Cultural de Avilés (FC) Escuela de Emprendedoras y Empresarias de Asturias (SFE) Centro de Empresas La Curtidora

Rental income

The first source of revenue of FC is rental income from workspaces. This type of income can be increased by putting some new types of specialised spaces for rehearsal and recording that are now being finished 'on the market'.

La Curtidora also hosts various institutions that are involved in some or another in supporting companies and promoting entrepreneurship in Asturias. Although most of these are public as well, so may also face budget cuts, and we lack information about leasing agreements, it offers the opportunity to La Curtidora to earn rental income.

Public-private partnerships

The management of FC attaches great importance to organize activities in collaboration with the private sector. For now however, it still invests little in initiating these partnerships, and these have not yet led to successful examples of cost sharing. SFE seems a bit further on this road - it already carries out several activities in cooperation with other, usually also public institutions – but whether this also implies cost sharing is, again, unclear.

Organisation of events

The School of Ceramics annually organizes the San Agustin Ceramic Competition. This promotes ceramics – now often considered a minor and old fashioned artistic discipline – on more equal terms with modern types of art. A prize of € 1000,- to the winner is sponsored by a regional bank. In addition, the School also organises the three-day Ceramics Fair, usually in May, that attracts potters from all different backgrounds. The stands and participation in the fair is free.

During the White Night event in Avilés, FC together with local galleries and artists develop a comprehensive program of activities (exhibitions, workshops, performances, concerts, dance, etc.) in its building but also in public space and in other venues.

These public events do not generate revenues for FC as such, but attract visitors from other regions and countries who spend money. So, through tax proceeds, this contributes to the budgets of the city and the region.

Bringing creations on the market

FC takes initiatives to bring 'its' cultural producers into contact with agents who represent interested buyers of their creations. Furthermore, it stimulates creators to make use of the opportunities offered by social media and social networks to disseminate and commercialise their cultural creations.

6.2 Technological City of Valnalón

Rental income and fees for services and facilities

Rental income is raised from start-ups in the business incubator and from larger industrial companies in the refurbished buildings of the former mining economy in the valley. The rents in the business incubator for small start-ups are very competitive: approx. € 3,00 per sq m per month including cleaning service. The incubator provides the tenant companies with some other facilities and services as well: shared facilities (management of incoming calls, meeting rooms, training rooms, photocopying, library, dining room, canteen etc.), business tutorials, training in business management, workshops and seminars for networking, enterprising network. Tariffs, if charged at all, are unknown.

Mix of start-ups and larger firms for stable income.

The incubator building actually consists of a variety of different buildings and spaces, both for small firms and start-ups and for large firms (e.g. Cap Gemini). This mix of tenants reduces risks of default and provides a more stable income from rents and fees.

Selling knowledge.

Valnalón has developed entrepreneurship curricula for formal education programmes that aims at the development of a variety of entrepreneurial attitudes and skills of young people that are demanded in the contemporary economy. These programmes are widely promoted and have stirred interest in other regions of Spain and abroad. The transfer of these curricula to these other areas is a source of revenue for Valnalón.

Property acquisition possibility.

Valnalón provides the larger companies in the old buildings of the mining economy a *Lease with the Option to Purchase*. Through monthly rent, once commitments of employment and activities have been fulfilled, this option to purchase can be taken in advance, at which point the premises become property of the company.

EU funding

The quality of the curricula of entrepreneurship education have been further developed through participation of Valnalón in the European project ADEPTT (Acknowledging and Developing Entrepreneurial Practice in Teacher Training). Besides, this participation was co-funded by EU Lifelong Learning Programme. Further, some revenue has been obtained from participation in the European programme Leonardo.

Accounts for on-line platform

It is possible to charge start-ups in the pre-incubator for an account that gives them access to the on-line platform. However, this is only a hypothetical opportunity to earn money because information about this is missing, and these earnings can at best be quite limited.

6.3 LABoral Art and Industrial Creation Centre

Exhibition

LABoral runs an exhibition programme that aspires to become a local, national and international reference for investigations into innovative formats and languages. This programme consists of approximately 15 exhibitions each year.

Research and creation 1

The fabLab Asturias in LABoral makes available advanced infrastructure through scholarships to young researchers and creators in fields of applications of ICTs. Equipped with hi-tech machines, fabLab offers consultancy services, training courses and workshops in 3D digital design and manufacturing of prototypes. Researchers and creators without scholarship can also lease the infrastructure of fabLab when attending corresponding training courses. The most advanced equipment is available for lease at a charge of € 12 a day, and smaller equipment at € 8 a day. If needed, qualified operators are available at € 25 per day and consultants at € 50 per day. These are indeed remarkably low tariffs, in particular in the context of commercial contextualization.

Research and creation 2

The Centre has a multimedia workshop - Platform 0 - for research, experimenting and creation of artistic productions. It offers space and equipment for producers of cultural and creative goods to work in intersections of research, design and mere production. Spaces of 30 sq m are available at a charge of €100 a month. Equipment such as optical fibre connection, video projector etc. is also available at respective prices. Platform 0 as a whole has a modular and flexibly dividable space where truss structure up to 5.59 m high can be built up according to the needs for specific products or programmes. The rent of spaces including the building of the truss structure amounts to € 180/hour, €1000/day or €5000/week. To the extent that their projects are non-commercial, leasers can get a Plataforma 0 Friend Artist card with which they can lease equipment and resources at preferential rates, access the Art Centre free of charge, and receive 20% discount on courses and workshops as well as on publications of LABoral.

7 Social contextualisation (WG2)

7.1 Factoría Cultural de Avilés Escuela de Emprendedoras y Empresarias de Asturias Centro de Empresas La Curtidora

Openness to and strong relations with local and regional community

FC structures its work by the main strategies to support the production, exhibition and market access of arts and crafts by local and regional artists and creators. By promotion traditional arts and combining these with contemporary technology, FC builds up intergenerational bridges. Besides, FC is very open to visitors – often local people- to walk in, to watch and to inform themselves about the ongoing activities. It is expected that these bridges and this openness have built up strong relations with the local and regional communities. The result is a strong popular image which tends to be an integral part of the local community.

Networks with local and regional institutions

FC is part of, and hence supports networks of formal and informal contacts with local and regional institutions. One of these is its formal relationship with the educational system by organizing special courses of traditional arts for students, teachers or adult educators.

Provision of financial means

All the above social activities provide some financial means to FC from fees by schools for organizing and participating in courses for the students, from adults participating in courses for traditional and fine crafts and the transfer of know – how.

'Meet new friends'

FC hosts a diversity of cultural activities to different internal spaces with shared space for coffee break or lunch. This diversity of cultural activities leads to the development of a dialogue and forms of cooperation between the different artists which is facilitated by the architecture of the building and the proximity of the artistic activities. Further, new friends can be met at the annual White Night cultural festival and among **artists in residence**.

7.2 Technological City of Valnalón

Strong relation with the regional authorities

As the founder and main funder of Valnalón Technological City, the regional government of Asturias plays a crucial role in its mere existence. This role is evident because the change of the societal mind-set away from the industrial culture towards an entrepreneurial culture has become a principal objective of the regional authorities since the industrial breakdown of the 1980s. Valnalón is a main vehicle in creating this new entrepreneurial culture as a strategic policy approach.

A typical and adequate business incubator environment

Valnalón Business Centre, a business incubator, helps starting companies in their creation and development by providing them with the tools they need. These are shared facilities that enable informal contact of the incubatees, such as meeting rooms, training rooms, library, dining rooms, and canteens.

Strong relations with the local community

The business pre-incubator and incubator came up as an answer to the de-industrialization during the 1980s, aiming to a new economic development model for both the local community and the region as a whole. More explicitly than FC, Valnalón has put the educational dimension of its activities in the core of its intervention in the local and regional communities. This intervention aims to 'empower' not just incubatees but all new entrepreneurs, and builds new attitudes into communities.

Extensive networks ranging from local community to national institutions

The educational dimension of Valnanon activities has built up extensive networks with different players at several spatial scales. These range from local schools and the Ministry of Education to young entrepreneurs, women entrepreneurs (as a focus group; cooperation with SFE), the private business sector, the third sector and authorities elsewhere in Spain and Europe.

7.3 LABoral Art and Industrial Creation Centre

A diverse ecosystem

LABoral hosts a diversity of cultural and creative activities with the intention to build up an ecosystem where technology, knowledge art and creativity are fused into both the most creative and most effective ways. As a common philosophy, this may lead to sharing ideas and visions with the general public in the local community, and to co-productions by resident companies.

Links between modern and traditional

Like FC, LABoral – or at least some of the resident companies in LABoral - deals with traditional arts and craftsmanship. More specifically than FC however, it does so by combining these traditional skills

and techniques with science and present-day technology. Although it appears difficult to trace artisans who still master traditional skills, the effect is a kind of heritage conservation if these people can be found and are willing to cooperate.

Part of the City of Culture

LABoral is part of a cluster of educational and cultural institutions in LABoral City of Culture that includes part of the University of Oviedo, a theatre and art center, the Asturian TV company, a technical school, a superior School of Dramatic Art and a Music Conservatory. The physical proximity of these various institutions and their thousands of visitors, workers, students and teachers every day, create a positive image and a very advantageous environment for cooperation and interchange between the resident artists and new entrepreneurs in LABoral.

Proximity of other knowledge institutions

According to its own website, LABoral is “one of the cornerstones of a ‘golden mile’ of knowledge and innovation” together with the technology campus of the University of Oviedo and Gijón Science and Technology Park. Although not based inside the LABoral City of Culture, both these other cornerstones where innovative businesses are concentrated are very near.

Informal contacts

Shows and exhibitions that create opportunities for exchange and fusion of creative and innovative ideas are taking place regularly. The architectural construction of LABoral, away from the idea of a typical incubator unit with little offices and workspaces, is productive in a different way enabling informal contacts on a larger scale and building up a common philosophy about creative industries.

Contacts with firms outside are being stimulated

LABoral acts as an anchorage point for the purpose of fostering dynamic relationships between the artistic and creative communities in Asturias and other parts of Spain and foreign countries. Due to its consequent extrovert character, it tries to establish connections between resident companies, local artists and creative entrepreneurs with people all over the world.

Training and education

LABoral attempts to make up for current deficiencies in the use of new technological media in schools, vocational training institutes and universities by organizing thematic workshops in cross-sections of art, science, technology and creativity. In addition to upgrading young people’s knowledge of these technologies as such, training and education programmes may also stimulate levels of participation by the wider community of amateur enthusiasts.

8 Tiers of support, networks and partnerships (WG3)

8.1 Factoría Cultural de Avilés Escuela de Emprendedoras y Empresarias de Asturias Centro de Empresas La Curtidora

Partnership yields equipment.

FC has acquired some precious pieces of (used) equipment - traditional printing and engraving machines - for free by means of a partnership with a museum in Madrid. This helps to keep down on costs for infrastructure in training and production activities. used

Strengthening the ties with ResArtis

FC is currently interested in strengthening the ties with ResArtis, in particular by starting the local program of Artists in Residence. Some revenue can be raised then from providing places to work, to exhibit and to live to these visiting artists. Further, the arrival of artists in residence may encourage the use of the municipal Centre for Art and Exhibition (CMAE) for exhibitions and other events to promote their work.

Partnership with 'genuine' incubators.

As a kind of pre-incubator, SFE maintains close ties of cooperation with 'genuine' incubators in the region, e.g. Valnalón. Thus, start-ups leaving the pre-incubator can continue their development at one of these regular incubators rather than trying to survive without assistance.

Being 'one of a kind'

SFE in Avilés is a new phenomenon - the first of its kind - in Spain. Because of that, it receives an increasing number of requests for cooperation, not only in Spain but also abroad. Consequently, it is building up a network of national and European partners. In particular the international network is interesting with a view to acquisition of EU funded projects, even more now SME development is a major topic in the new European programmes of co-financing.

8.2 Technological City of Valnalón

Strong and direct relationships with the educational sector

Valnalón has built up and maintains a strong engagement in education, aiming at introducing the broad field of entrepreneurship in curricula at all three levels of formal education. Its ties to schools, universities, the regional education board and the national Ministry of Education are quite solid. Furthermore, it recently started the programme Enterprising Network that narrows the gap between educational institutes and employers (businesses) by mobilizing students in practical projects with companies.

Network of business centres

The business centre (incubator) of Valnalón keeps up a certain degree of cooperation with other business centres or parks and incubator-like organisations like SFE in Asturias. This includes the exchange of information to select the one that provides the best incubation environment and conditions for specific start-ups.

Intermediary between schools and employers

The newest programme of Valnalón - Enterprising Network – that was set up in 2012 makes contacts between schools (students) and local employers in order to establish partnerships: "There is much more that can be done in this respect than apprenticeships" at the benefit of both.

8.3 LABoral Art and Industrial Creation Centre

Partnerships with private sector and renowned knowledge institutions

Not in the last place due to the presence of fabLab Asturias, LABoral has succeeded in entering into partnerships with international private companies and knowledge institutions, some quite celebrated. Examples of these latter are MIT (Boston), ZKM (Karlsruhe) and Centre Pompidou.

9 Overview

Table 1: Overview of main findings

	commercial contextualisation	social contextualisation	tiers of support, partnerships
Factoría Cultural (incl. School of Ceramics)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Rental incomes from workspaces, Artist-in-Residence programme and events ▪ Fees from schools ▪ Commercialisation of products by social media 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Common spaces for informal interaction ▪ Networking events, e.g. with educational institutes ▪ Establish relations with local context through events and courses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Partnerships with schools: courses for pupils, students, teachers and adult educators ▪ Mediation between cultural producers (in FC) and sales agents ▪ Partnerships with genuine incubators
School for Female Entrepreneurs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <u>Potential</u> for EU grants due to unique focus 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Meetings and workshops with experts stimulate networks ▪ Presentations and exhibitions are freely accessible for locals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Feeder for other regional incubators ▪ Developing gender equality plans for regional companies personnel policies ▪ Experienced entrepreneurs as tutors of new start-ups ▪ Easy entry as one-of-a-kind institution to (inter)national networks
La Curtidora			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Involvement in support programmes by partner organisations accommodated in incubator
Valnalón	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Rental incomes from workspaces, workshops and seminars ▪ Fees for provided services ▪ Sales of work spaces (Lease with option to purchase) ▪ Sale of educational modules & methodologies ▪ EU projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Common spaces for informal interaction ▪ On-line platforms ▪ Contributing to entrepreneurial attitude in local community ▪ Programmes to link businesses and education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ In-depth involvement in regional education at all three levels with self-developed modules ▪ Mediating between businesses and educational institutes (teachers & students)
LABoral	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Rental incomes from equipped work spaces (studios, multimedia workshops) and specialised infrastructure (e.g. 3D printing) ▪ Consultancy ▪ Fees from school projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Open building (rather than separated workspaces) stimulates informal interaction ▪ Exhibitions and shows fuel internal networks ▪ Multifunctional cluster City of Culture (4000 visitors/day) encourages f-2-f contacts and networking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Extended network of major regional, national and international (MIT, Centre Pompidou) partner institutions

10 Validators' remarks

The study visit report has been validated by several experts:

- Iván Diego Rodríguez, Mónica Baretino Coloma and Sara Cillero Rodríguez – Valnalón
- Lucía García and Lucía Arias - LABoral
- Leo van Loon - European Creative Business Network, PopVox and Buzinezzclub (Rotterdam).
- Liesbeth Jansen - Linkeroever Gebouwen en Gebieden (The Left Bank Buildings and Areas), Amsterdam.

By far most corrections, comments and observations to the report have been included in the text of the previous chapters. The only exceptions are below brief comments by the two Dutch validators. When relevant, observations have been added or edited by Arie Romein.

Mr. Leo van Loon was surprised by what he called 'curious examples' of incubators compared to those he knew about in other visited regions. He did not itemize this observation, but from his comments it can be concluded that he is pointing at two issues that are indeed noteworthy, i.e. not observed in content and degree during previous visits:

1. A very high degree of dependency on funding – either in money or in kind – by the local but more in particular the regional authorities. Over all, dependency on public resources has indeed shown to be greater in the visited southern European than in the visited northern European cases.
2. Strong relationships with education. Unlike these relationships observed during previous visits, the Asturian cases, in particular Valnalón, maintain such relationships with all three levels of the educational system and designs components for curriculums for sale by public departments of education all over Spain and abroad.

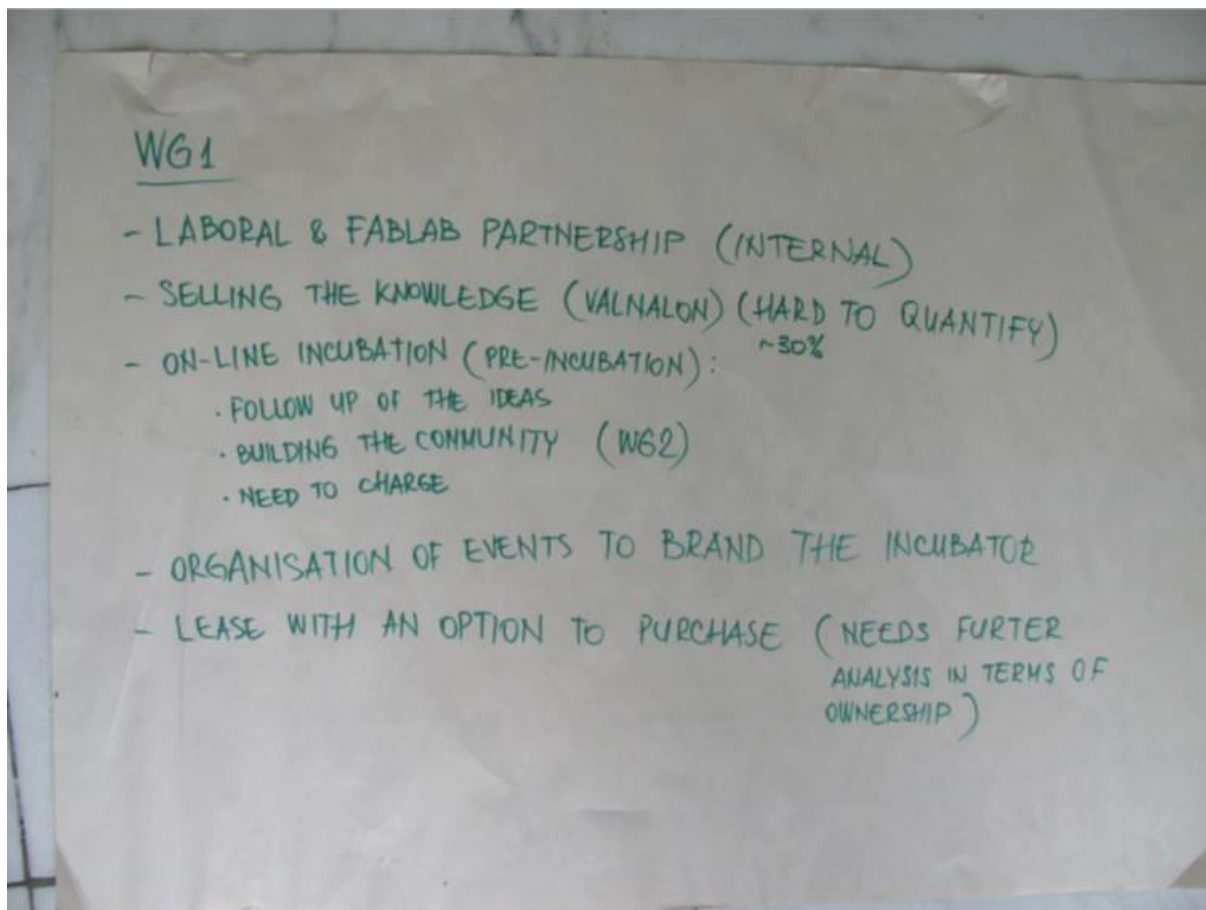
11 Thematic seminar

11.1 Introduction

The Thematic Seminar (TS) on the report of the study visit to Asturias was held during the partner meeting in Szombathely, Hungary, in June 2014. The good practices observed in Asturias were brought up for discussion - as has become customary in the course of InCompass project – and the outcome of the discussions were summarized and presented by the three WG leaders at the end of the seminar. Photographs of the summaries of their observations as put on flip charts are added to the below paragraphs.

11.2 Commercial contextualization (WG1)

The first important practice identified is internal partnership in the Fablab of Laboral. WG1 expects that this attracts more clients and ensures revenues. A second eye-catching practice is the sale to public departments and institutions of education in other regions by Valnalón of deliberately developed curricula and practically oriented projects for schools and educational institutions all three levels. Selling knowledge as a commercial practice is not brand-new for InCompass: we have seen it during previous study visits but definitely not to this extent as a deliberate major source of revenue; it is estimated that it covers on average about one-third of the annual revenue of Valnalón.

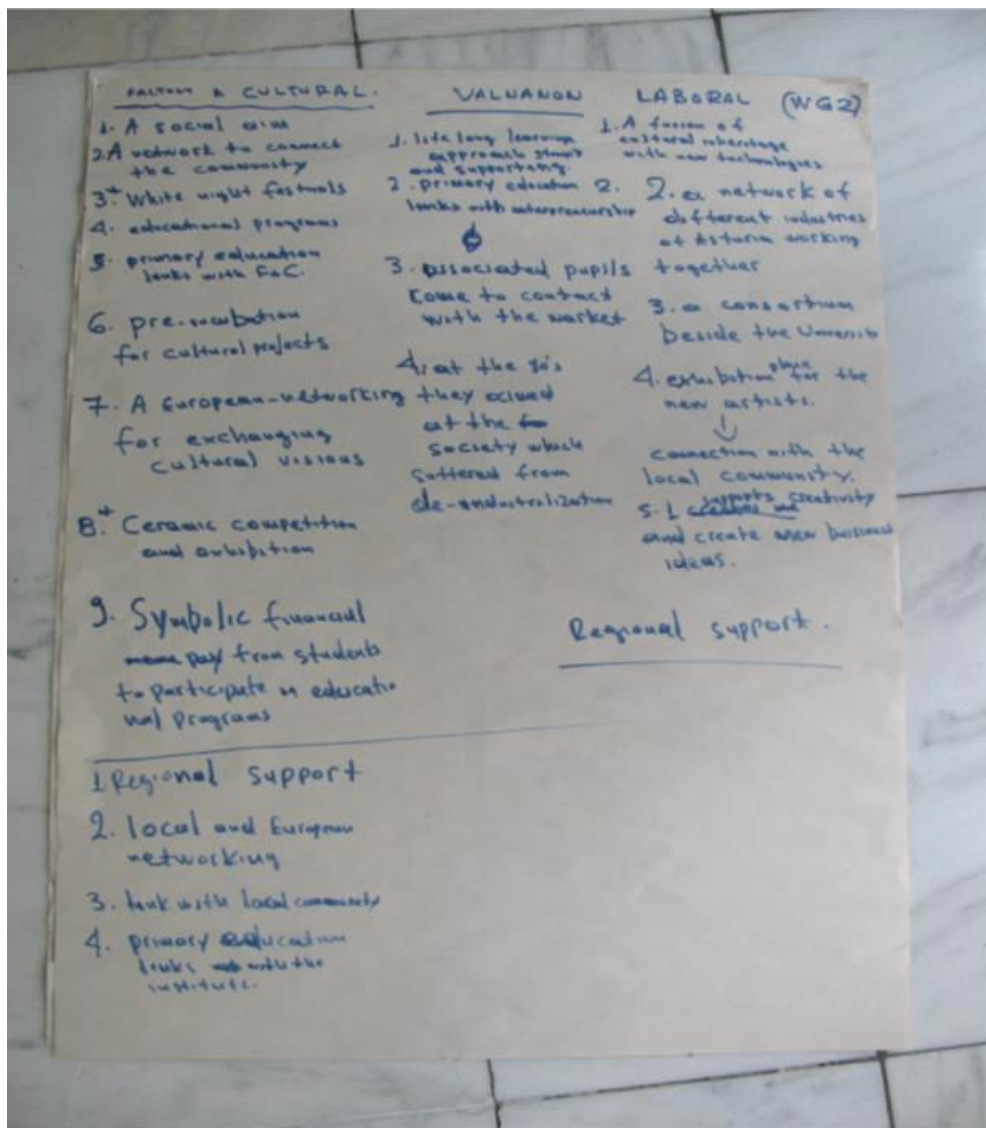


Flip chart of Working Group 1

On-line incubation in the pre-incubation phase of Valnalón's programme is another interesting practice, although WG1 considers it a practice with a still hypothetical commercial value. It can be of promising commercial value in case it is being charged to 'clients'. The organisation of events as is being done by Factoría Cultural generates revenues for the commercial tourism sector – hotels, catering, souvenirs - in the city of Aviles, tax income for the city, and helps to brand this incubator-like organisation. Both directly and indirectly, these events generate revenue for the Factoría. Finally, WG1 consider the practice by Valnalón to 'lease with an option to purchase' as interesting but comments that further information is needed to assess that observation more thoroughly. There is uncertainty for instance about the ownership of these premises: by Valnalón itself, the municipality or the mining companies that had these in use in the past.

11.3 Social contextualization (WG2)

WG2 reported about the cases visited in Astúrias one by one. The social aim of Factoría Cultural is obvious. The first practice is the network that connects the artists working in the Factoría with the local community in its vicinity. The organisation of exhibitions and taking advantage of the White Nights events has the same objective. In addition, the Factoría is included in a European network for the exchange of the work and visions of these artists with a broader outside world. A 'strong element' of the social contextualisations of the Factoría is the educational programmes for young pupils in primary schools. The symbolic payment by / for pupils participation in these educational programs yields some revenues for the Factoría (WG 1).



Flip chart of Working Group 2

The most impressive social type of contextualisation of Valnalón is its strong link with primary education aimed at improving entrepreneurial skills, including a specific relation with regional public departments of education. Participating pupils in the courses and projects it has developed come into contact for the first time with 'the market' and how it basically works. Probably the most social of Valnalón's activities is its focus of on the working class families that suffered severely of the de-industrialisation of the valley of the Nalón river in the 1980s by attempting to support the rise of an entrepreneurial culture among the local population

In LABoral we saw a fusion of cultural heritage, i.e. traditional crafts, with modern technology. Further, LABoral is part of a network in which different industries of Asturias work together and has strong relationships with both universities and local community. The latter link is through exhibiting activities and products and showing the modern technologies and how these work to members of the community, including groups of pupils. All these linkages with other people stimulate the rise of new business ideas with the community of artists working in LABoral. A controversial element about all three visited cases is the impacts on their social role of the support by local and regional authorities.

11.4 Tiers of support, networks and partnerships (WG3)

WG3 also reported about the cases visited in Asturias one by one. The Factoría Cultural provides pre-incubation types of support to local would-be business, working together in that framework with other incubators in the area. It does some market research to find out how such new businesses would fit in the economic 'ecosystem' of the city, i.e. to uncover lacunas and to avoid unnecessary competition in this system. The Factoría has entered into tiers of support with two local institutions, i.e. the School of Ceramics (in the same building) and the School of Female Entrepreneurs. Further, it maintains networks of on the one hand local artists and on the other hand partners across Europe. Finally, existing tiers of support can be strengthened or new ones can be born out of the White Nights events, both for individual artists or the Factoría as a whole and on different levels of scale.

The main partnerships of Valnalón are with educational institutions, both teaching (schools and academies) and policy making (regional public department of educational policy) institutions. These are multidimensional partnerships, involving inputs to curricula aimed at stimulating entrepreneurship among pupils and students, evaluation of results of the courses and projects that make up its input to curricula and linking schools and students to enterprises for mutual benefits. The overarching goal of these practices is social regeneration of the whole region that was hit hard by earlier de-industrialisation.

LABoral finally provides an infrastructure of dedicated technical equipment for 3D printing, studios for TV productions etc. Further, it offers opportunities to companies to work in clusters ('consortia') of companies in specific sectors, e.g. games and audio, it provides shop, showroom and exhibition space to local creative entrepreneurs, and maintains partnerships with schools. The most partnerships however, it keeps up with major regional, national and international knowledge institutions like MIT. All visited cases of incubation are supported by strong political commitment.

W63

- CULTURAL FACTORY → PRE-INCUBATION FOR ARTIST
→ MARKET RESEARCH → RULES CULTURAL ECOSYSTEM
- ↳ URBAN ENTREPRENEURSHIP SCHOOL
 - ↳ NETWORKING WITH PARTNERS ACROSS EUROPE, WORK IN PROJECTS
 - ↳ WORKING WITH SCHOOLS OF CERAMICS (WITH LOCAL ART)
 - ↳ SOLICITING LOCALS ON EVENTS (WHITE NIGHT)

LABORATORIA → COOLS FOR INCUBATORS

- UAKAUN → PROVIDING LOW-COST WORKSPACE ALL-STAGES → ^{FINANCING} ...
- ↳ DRIVING UICENCE FOR EXPANSION
 - ↳ INFLUENCING CURRICULUM IN SCHOOL
 - ↳ STIMULATING ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN SCHOOLS → WORK COMPANIES
 - ↳ PEOPLE MOTIVATE BY REGENERATING WHOLE REGION
 - ↳ EVALUATE IMPACT OF EDUCATION
 - ↳ LINKING SCHOOLS & EMPLOYERS
- GREEN-IDEA-GRIN → HARVEST

LABORAL | FABLAB

↳ INFRASTRUCTURE → TU STUDIO, 3D PRINTERS..

- ↳ ONLINE NETWORK
 - ↳ COOPERATION IN CONSOCIUM FOR PARTNERS (COFF, SQUAD)
 - ↳ ^{SHOW ROOM} CAFE, EXHIBITION SPACE FOR LOCAL CREATIVE
 - ↳ RELATION WITH SCHOOL
 - ↳ INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIP WITH INCUBATORS
 - ↳ NETWORKING LOCAL CRAFT MODULES
- ↳ WITH UNIVERSITIES
↳ ART

↳ STRONG POLITICAL COMMITMENT

Flip chart of Working Group 3