



D.T4.2.2

CE SMART ACCELERATOR GUIDELINE - **DRAFT**

WP T4: A.T4.2 Guideline for the establishment
of SMART Accelerators in CE area

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1. Background

The CE SMART Accelerator guideline presents the proposed practical paths to create a SMART Accelerator, which aim is to support cross-sector cooperation and public-private partnerships by helping in the development, implementation and monitoring of joint ventures of representatives of cultural heritage and the cultural and creative sectors (CCI).

The idea of SMART Accelerator assumes its operation in a regional environment based on the knowledge, experience and resources of cooperating stakeholders and their local and supra-regional networks of contacts, in order to support projects / ideas with development potential, drawing on and helping to promote the richness of the diversity of local cultural heritage using modern digital technologies and innovative solutions. The mechanism of operation of the SMART Accelerator is based on an atmosphere of understanding, cooperation and support for entities operating and interacting with each other in the regional environment.

CE SMART Accelerator guideline is in line with the assumptions and supports the implementation of the SACHE strategy in the field of stimulating creative entrepreneurship within and around cultural heritage, as well as facilitating and accelerating dialogue between representatives of cultural heritage and cultural and creative industries (CCI).

It is a preparatory tool for the transfer of solutions analyzed and tested under the pilot action of the SACHE project, in those regions of Central Europe (as well as outside them) which, recognizing the potential of dynamic and developing cultural and creative sectors, want to encourage the implementation of technologically advanced solutions, as well as stimulate entrepreneurship rooted in inter-sectoral cooperation.

The guideline describes, step by step, the most important stages of creating and operating the SMART Accelerator, proposed models of its functioning in the regional environment, as well as key resources on which its development and durability depends. Due to their form, the accelerator creation paths proposed in the document enable adaptability of solutions to local conditions, ecosystems and the development (maturity) phase of cooperation between local entities.

The guide was based on the experiences of the SACHE project, including the pilot action, which results enabled to identify the success cases presented in the final part of the document. In addition, the guide was enriched with good practices and recommendations resulting from the implementation of the project "One Stop Shop towards competitive SMEs, focusing on the ecosystem for the first line service system", acronym "OSS", funded under the Interreg Europe program, which aimed to do this improve SMEs growth, entrepreneur skills and to overcome defined barriers by development of an attractive tailor-made ecosystem for start-ups.



2. Rationale for developing SMART Accelerators guideline for the CE AREA

2.1. Why should we accelerate ideas/cooperation?

The sector of creative industries and culture plays a very important role not only in building a competitive economy, but also in initiating social changes in the region.

The creative sector is an area of the economy with hard-to-define borders. For the purposes of further analyzes, therefore, it seems to be necessary to, at least, briefly describe the designation of this concept.

In the literature on the mentioned subject, there are two basic methods of distinguishing organizations belonging to the creative sector. The first method is to accept the criterion that the manufactured product is protected by copyright. In the second method, the criterion is the nature of production processes taking place in the organization, assuming that they must be creative, consisting in creating, providing specific experiences or producing a specific element of symbolic culture. In this approach, a specific group of economic activity is most often distinguished, often assuming in an arbitrary manner that these are the areas of creativity. The categorization rules presented above allowed for the identification of several terms for the creative industries sector.

One of the most commonly used is the definition proposed by the DCMS (Department for Culture, Media and Sport), in which creative industries are those areas of economic activity where individual creativity is the main input of the production process, and intellectual property is a characteristic feature of the product being its product, result. The definition also defines individual areas of activity that fit into this area, thanks to which it is possible to conduct analyzes examining the impact of this sector on the economy and comparative studies between regions and countries.

It can therefore be seen that creative industries are not only activities related to the creation of new symbols, but also activities consisting in introducing them into the economic circulation. That means that, firstly, the task of these industries is to create and commercialize cultural products and then to introduce them into the economic circulation.

Therefore, trying to define this sector, one can try to define it as the sphere of social services covering both areas of economic activity aimed at the creation and commercialization of cultural products, as well as various organizational forms of running a business in the following sub-sectors:



- arts and crafts, including: visual arts, performing arts and national heritage, libraries, archives;
- creative production, including: programming, publishing, film and television production as well as radio and music production;
- creative services, including: fashion and design, advertising and related activities as well as architecture and interior design ¹.

The creative sector, understood in this way, combines many different areas of activity and its goals, and one of its basic characteristics is a strong internal differentiation in terms of the organizational forms used, activity goals and the location of the headquarters.

When analyzing the issues related to the diversity of organizational forms and goals of activity, it can be noticed that within individual sub-sectors of the creative industries there are various organizational forms, which include:

- enterprises (including sole proprietorship, civil law partnerships, limited liability companies),
- public units (including state, regional, local organizational units),
- non-governmental organizations (including foundations, associations, economic self-government).

Internal differentiation contributes to the necessity to develop an individualized approach for the creation of an ecosystem focused on supporting the development of these entities.

2.2. Capitalization of experiences from the implementation of pilot actions and SACHE show cases

This part will be elaborated on the basis of reports from pilot actions.

¹ R. Kasprzak, Creative Industries in the Polish Economy: Growth and Operating Conditions. W: Creative Industries in Europe 2017, C. Chapain, T. Stryjakiewicz (eds.), Springer International Publishing, s. 151–176.



3. SMART accelerator concept

Acceleration is currently a popular term in the context of institutions focused on the development of loss-ups and, to put it simply, means a coordinated several-month-long process of support for a new enterprise in overcoming new development challenges. In the business reality, we usually deal with the term "acceleration program", which covers a several-month-long mentoring and advisory process for teams of entrepreneurs who have established or plan to start their own enterprise participate.

As part of such a program, under the supervision of qualified advisors, they go through the process of creating or refining a business model, identifying key value factors of the offered product and verifying the planned product innovation. Depending on the acceleration program organizer and operator its final chord may be the possibility of presenting the final vision of the business to strategic investors, signing an investment agreement providing for the process of financing business development, or establishing cooperation with a large economic partner.

The idea of start-ups acceleration, despite the fact that it is a relatively new mechanism in the ecosystem of support for innovative solutions, has already repeatedly proven its effectiveness in the business area. The versatility and effectiveness of this method encouraged us to popularize the SMART accelerator concept focused on the creative industries and the cultural sector.

SMART accelerator idea is based on:

- **understanding** by the local community of the need to support joint ventures of entities and specialists in the cultural and creative sectors to preserve and promote cultural heritage, as well as to stimulate the development of the region through entrepreneurial initiatives initiated thanks to their cooperation
- **learning** about the problem areas and challenges facing the implementation of projects combining the knowledge, experience and potential of representatives of the cultural and creative sectors AND the resources and capabilities of entities operating in the region

What is the basis in the process of creating a climate of cooperation between specialists and regional entities such as industry organizations, business environment institutions, universities, local government units, and representatives of the cultural and creative sectors.

Simply speaking, **SMART accelerator is the atmosphere of understanding, cooperation and support of entities operating and interacting in the regional environment, what allows the implementation of common ideas of entities and specialists in the cultural and creative sectors, as well as helping them to convert their goals into specific activities.**



SMART accelerator combines the methodology of management by objectives, results and cooperation between the cultural and creative sectors with the support of other external stakeholders, such as non-governmental industry organizations, business environment institutions, universities, local government units.

The purpose of the SMART accelerator is to help in the implementation of joint ventures of cultural sector entities, SMEs and professionals acting in the creative industry sector, who are at the initial stage of development in terms of translating ideas into a specific action plan, showing the possibility of implementing given solutions, products or services through a dedicated several-month support program offered as part of the accelerator.

The support in the form of acceleration activities will provide cooperating entities with the opportunity to create a project development strategy and increase their chances of implementing a given project thanks to mentoring, consulting and training care tailored to the needs of experienced specialists, including entrepreneurs.

The operation of the SMART accelerator is characterized by:

- openness to participants of the acceleration process and their ideas,
- clear definition of the objectives of activities and focus on their implementation in accordance with the SMART methodology,
- focus on creativity and innovation,
- entrepreneurial approach,
- flexible support system tailored to the needs of participants in the acceleration process,
- monitoring the progress of the acceleration process and evaluation of the accelerator's activities in order to improve the support system.

SMART accelerator activities provide program participants with assistance in such activities like:

- development of ideas from design to implementation,
- expanding knowledge in various areas necessary for the implementation of the project,
- solving current problems that arise at the stage of project development, including thanks to the assistance received in the field of law, including the protection of intellectual property and the implementation of public procurement, accounting, and marketing,
- expansion of the cooperation network necessary for the development and implementation of the planned project,



-
- preparation of ideas and projects for official presentation in the form of a project pitch deck addressed to potential investors and entities who can support their implementation,
 - finding financing for the incubated project and / or co-financing the projects.



4. Various models of creating and functioning of the SMART accelerator in the regional environment

4.1. Placing of the SMART accelerator in the regional environment

The driving force behind the operation of the SMART accelerator is the previously defined atmosphere of understanding, cooperation and support of entities, however, in order to ensure the coordination and effectiveness of their actions, as well as the development and durability of the cooperation network on which the acceleration process will be based, it is important to decide on the location (place embedding) SMART accelerator in the regional environment.

The decision on the method and place of running the acceleration activities should be made on the basis of an in-depth analysis of the resources, resilience and effectiveness of the entities operating in a given regional environment, not to formalize the activities of the accelerator, but to set the framework for its operation, the scope of the support offered, and the involvement of specialists. and supporting entities, as well as enable the improvement of the acceleration process thanks to the monitoring and evaluation system.

This will, on the one hand, avoid the randomness of the supported initiatives, ensure the development of the acceleration process in the long-term perspective, and, on the other hand, it will enable effective (without overloading) use of the potential of the acceleration support team, which is the most important resource of the accelerator, in terms of its competences and experience.

The proposed models for creating and operating a SMART accelerator in a given environment are based on the infrastructure of institutions operating in the region, in whose structures and on the basis of which resources the acceleration process will be initiated, with the support of external specialists and entities.

The selected location of the SMART accelerator defines the input resources and the manner of its operation characteristic for the specificity of the functioning of a given type (s) of entity (entities) and / or connections between entities. It also allows you to determine the potential for the development of the accelerator and problem areas that should be taken into account when choosing a given model.



Model for localization of Smart accelerator in regional environment

	Strengths (potential advantages)	Weaknesses (potential problem areas)
<p>In the structure of a cultural institution</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ the direct access to knowledge about cultural heritage, which is a source of inspiration for the development of the cultural and creative sectors; ▪ experienced and specialized staff (knowledge and experience profile adapted to the specificity of the operation of cultural institutions); ▪ crystallization in the awareness of the management of new needed directions / areas of activity that can be undertaken by a cultural institution (openness to new activities); ▪ a large network of contacts and permanent cooperation with creators, organizations and institutions operating in the field of culture; ▪ activity in the field of culture, i.e. a large number and variety of educational and cultural activities; ▪ increasing involvement in the development of cooperation between cultural institutions (joint events, conferences, projects) - development of networking of cultural institutions; ▪ stable cooperation with the local government unit under which the cultural institution is subordinated (in the case of a public institution); 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ lack of experienced staff in supporting the development of entrepreneurship and innovation; intellectual property protection, etc.; ▪ insufficient managerial competences and lack of project orientation of the people managing the cultural institution; ▪ the staff of cultural institutions very often does not constitute a team aiming at achieving jointly set goals (no project orientation); ▪ the institution's staff is unwilling to engage in additional activities; ▪ insufficient level of cooperation between cultural institutions; ▪ lack of permanent cooperation with entities and specialists operating, inter alia, in the area of entrepreneurship, social and technological innovation, marketing, business models, etc.; ▪ lack of cooperation with investors and insufficient cooperation with non-governmental organizations; ▪ difficulties in meeting the changing expectations of recipients and the needs of new recipients by the staff of institutions (not very friendly and rigid opening hours, narrowly understood digital culture);



- constant source of financing (mainly public financing);
 - a clear decision-making process and the division of responsibilities of the institution's staff;
 - material resources adapted to the specifics and scope of activity (performance rooms, conference rooms, workshops, equipment for educational and workshop activities);
 - own publishing and research activity (depending on the type of cultural institution).
- insufficient use of new technologies in many cultural institutions;
 - lack of extensive, networked education provided by cultural institutions at the regional level;
 - basing the implemented activities mainly on the resources of the institution (permanent or temporary);
 - limited budget translating into difficulties in undertaking new activities requiring additional funds and co-financing the accelerator's undertakings;
 - the need to plan and budget activities well in advance;
 - less flexibility of operation associated with the need to use numerous procedures, including in the field of public procurement law;
 - lack of experience (or appropriate experience) in obtaining funds from external funds (programs and projects), especially for activities that go beyond the specificity of the entity's operation;
 - material resources insufficient and / or inadequate to conduct the acceleration process (lack of appropriate multimedia equipment in co-working rooms and spaces and / or the involvement of resources in the basic activities of the institution so far);
 - difficulties in reaching audiences outside the institution's main target



		<p>group;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ no action strategy in most cultural institutions, no defined action goals; ▪ lack of experience in carrying out monitoring and evaluation activities and, consequently, lack of research on the needs of recipients of activities of cultural institutions.
<p>In the structure of business environment institutions (based on the example of regional development agencies)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ experienced staff with a wide range of specializations, including experts in the field of entrepreneurship, economy, finance, law, including intellectual property, marketing, innovation development, technology transfer - cooperation business science; ▪ experience in creating and developing start-ups, supporting the development of entrepreneurship and innovation of companies, in advising on business plans, marketing strategies and company development, creating plans and strategies for local government units; ▪ extensive experience in obtaining resources from external funds (programs and projects) also to support and develop entrepreneurship, innovation, and implementation of new technologies; ▪ experience in managing investment, consulting and training projects, including partnership projects with various territorial and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ lack of staff with specialist knowledge in the field of cultural heritage, activities of entities from the cultural and creative sectors; ▪ lack of or insufficient cooperation with creators, organizations and institutions operating in the field of culture (except for activities under implemented projects and events); ▪ insufficient knowledge about the needs and problem areas of activities of creators and entities from the cultural sector (except for activities under implemented projects that will allow for the acquisition of this knowledge - if applicable); ▪ difficulties in building cooperation with cultural institutions (air-tightness of the environment) and reaching some local actors operating in the cultural sectors; ▪ activities and projects concerning the operation and support of the cultural and creative sectors are not the main area of interest



thematic ranges;

- knowledge and experience in conducting cluster activities and networking entities;
- experience in conducting activities in the field of monitoring and evaluation;
- high managerial competences and project orientation of managers and middle management of the institution;
- an extensive network of contacts and permanent cooperation with entrepreneurs, universities, research and development centers, local government units, investors and involvement in networking these entities;
- activity in the field of entrepreneurship support, innovation development, technology transfer;
- flexibility of operation, the ability to quickly respond to the needs of participants in the acceleration process and the ability to take non-standard actions due to the form of business;
- focus on efficiency and results;
- stable cooperation with the local government unit under which the cultural institution is subordinated (if applicable);
- basing the implemented activities both on the human resources of the institution (permanent and temporary) and external experts - adjusting human resources

and activity of the institution;

- lack and / or insufficient number of undertaken information, education and promotion activities aimed at supporting the activities of the cultural and creative sectors;
- in the case of conducting activities for entities from the cultural and creative sectors, often after the end of given events or projects, there is often no continuation of activities aimed at maintaining relations with them (which is the result of high accumulation of activities and / or thematic dispersion of the undertaken activities);
- depending on the legal form and source of financing, the institution focuses on profit-generating (commercial) activities in order to ensure financing and sustainability of operation;
- heavy workload of human resources and use of material resources as part of current activities;
- no systematic analysis of the needs of customers and stakeholders in all areas of activity.



	<p>to the needs;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ a more flexible budget of the institution, allowing for new activities requiring additional financial resources; ▪ clear decision-making process and division of responsibilities among institutional staff; ▪ material resources adapted to the specifics and scope of activity (workshop, training, conference rooms, computer and / or specialist laboratories); ▪ high level of use of new technologies in the activities of the institution. 	
<p>Within the structure of a university</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ great scientific potential, experienced research staff with a wide range of specializations, incl. experts in the field of entrepreneurship, economy, cluster activities, finance, law, including intellectual property, marketing, cultural studies, ethnology, culture management, development of creative industries, modern technologies, etc .; ▪ openness of university research staff to cooperation and knowledge exchange - work of scientists in international networks, consortia and projects; ▪ knowledge and experience in carrying out activities in the field of monitoring and evaluation; ▪ increasing effectiveness in obtaining grants for the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ lack or insufficient translation of theoretical knowledge into practical - insufficient part of the university staff has extensive professional experience and practical knowledge on the creation and development of start-ups, support for the development of entrepreneurship and innovation of companies (no reference to the real needs and conditions of the entities' operation); ▪ focus mainly on obtaining funds from external funds (programs and projects) supporting the university's scientific and research goals, development of its infrastructure and activities aimed at students; ▪ insufficient cooperation with creators, organizations and institutions operating in the



implementation of university activities and partnership projects;

- experience in managing investment, consulting and training projects, including as a leader or partner of projects with various territorial and thematic ranges;
- research programs and projects with great potential for internationalization and achieving significant scientific results;
- increasing activity (apart from education within the university) in the involvement of universities in activities in the field of entrepreneurship support, innovation development, technology transfer through cooperation with other entities as part of implemented projects and projects;
- achievements in the field of patent applications, commercialization and cooperation with business (mainly related to technical universities);
- involvement in the implementation of pro-quality solutions in the field of organization and management;
- an extensive network of contacts, permanent and effective cooperation with other universities, research and development centers, local government units, incl. in the scope of selected technological areas;

field of culture (except for activities under implemented projects and events);

- lack of cooperation with investors and insufficient cooperation with non-governmental organizations;
- basing the implemented activities mainly on the university's resources (permanent or temporary);
- failure to fully use the scientific and intellectual potential of universities due to insufficient institutional support (organizational and administrative barriers, e.g. bureaucratization of activities, lack of support for project and research activities, including the process of their creation and ensuring the sustainability of their results);
- the lack of a transparent policy of human resource management and the development of university employees;
- limited activities supporting the professional development of university staff, in particular of younger people;
- a specific budget for the university's operation, which translates into the need to plan new activities in advance (this applies to tasks requiring additional funds and a significant involvement of university resources);
- the need to plan and budget



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ result orientation (mainly educational and research and development); ▪ stable cooperation with local government units; ▪ extensive material resources - modern research and educational infrastructure (numerous and well-equipped lecture halls, computer and specialist laboratories); ▪ own scientific publications. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ activities well in advance; ▪ low flexibility of operation associated with the need to use numerous procedures, including in the field of public procurement law and a long decision-making path; ▪ unsuitable preparation of university staff for internal cooperation, including inter-faculty, and building relationships with stakeholders (atomization of university departments); ▪ insufficient cooperation and support from the business community (apart from research and development activities).
<p>As an activity implemented as part of a specialist - creative cluster</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ combination of the potential, knowledge and experience of many entities; ▪ large variety of knowledge and experience of cluster members (creative companies, business support institutions, universities and local government units); ▪ direct access to practical knowledge and specialists, practitioners-entrepreneurs; ▪ a common goal of action, consistent with the SMART accelerator idea - understanding the need to support initiatives from the cultural and creative sectors; ▪ experience in undertaking and implementing joint initiatives by cluster members; ▪ openness to accept new members and undertaking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ in the case of a consortium agreement connecting cluster members, the lack of legal personality somewhat limits the activities of the cluster; ▪ when there is no separate supervisory body in the cluster authorities, it causes difficulties in coordinating the activities of the cluster; ▪ in the absence of or very low membership fees, it is difficult to undertake new initiatives within the cluster; ▪ frequent lack of willingness to finance additional cluster activities, mainly by its private members; ▪ focusing private cluster members mainly on financial benefits; ▪ the lack of a separate cluster office for the provision of services to



	<p>development activities;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ very good relations with the communities of young innovators and creators thanks to the co-working space and involvement in the development of the creative community (network); ▪ a high rate of informal relationships that allow the use of external knowledge to create innovation; ▪ extensive cooperation network of cluster members due to their diversity - creative companies, business environment institutions, universities and local government units; ▪ financial independence of the cluster from subsidies - membership fees (if they are sufficient to undertake development activities); ▪ large material resources - availability of professionally equipped conference and co-working spaces, specialist workshops with equipment (depending on the composition of the cluster members); ▪ recognizable brand of the cluster on the regional (and national - if applicable) market, which will favor the promotion of accelerator activities; ▪ a wide range of forms and channels of communication used. 	<p>cluster members and servicing its bodies causes difficulties in managing the activities of the cluster;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ small diversity of cluster members reduces the potential of its operation and the possibility of engaging in additional initiatives; ▪ a small number of cluster members interested in investing in the development of innovation; ▪ low use of modern digital technologies in many micro-enterprises that are members of the cluster.
<p>As an activity carried out by cooperating</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ goal-oriented cooperation, efficiency and results; ▪ voluntary cooperation of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ the need to sign an agreement between cooperating entities in order to define the scope of their



<p>entities</p> <p>(e.g. universities, local government units, business environment institutions, cultural institutions, non-governmental organizations)</p>	<p>entities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ flexibility in the selection of entities for cooperation in terms of their potential, knowledge and experience, resources necessary for the operation of the SMART accelerator; ▪ a large variety of cooperating entities (creative companies, cultural institutions, business environment institutions, non-governmental organizations, universities and local government units) increases the development potential of the SMART accelerator; ▪ direct access to practical knowledge and specialists, practitioners-entrepreneurs; ▪ common mission and purpose of operation, consistent with the SMART accelerator idea - understanding the need to support initiatives from the cultural and creative sectors; ▪ cooperation of entities under the SMART accelerator will stimulate their development - the flow of knowledge, good practices and skills development; ▪ large and varied cooperation networks built by each entity supporting the SMART accelerator activities (possibility to reach all key target groups and necessary specialists); ▪ no need to employ external specialists, provide external infrastructure - mutual complementation of 	<p>responsibility and involvement of the resources of individual entities in the activities of the SMART accelerator;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ the need to select an entity coordinating the SMART accelerator activities; ▪ the need to involve the institution's own funds in the activities of the SMART accelerator and / or to jointly raise funds from external funds (programs and projects), especially in the case of entities for which activities under the SMART accelerator go beyond the specificity of the entity's operation; ▪ a small variety of cooperating entities may reduce the operation potential of the SMART accelerator and the possibilities of its development; ▪ the combination of entities with different decision-making paths and internal procedures requires planning all activities well in advance - the risk of less flexibility and slower activities due to internal procedures of the institution; ▪ the risk of striving to achieve your own goals and maximizing your own benefits of individual entities supporting the SMART accelerator activities; ▪ the need to build a common SMART accelerator brand from scratch.
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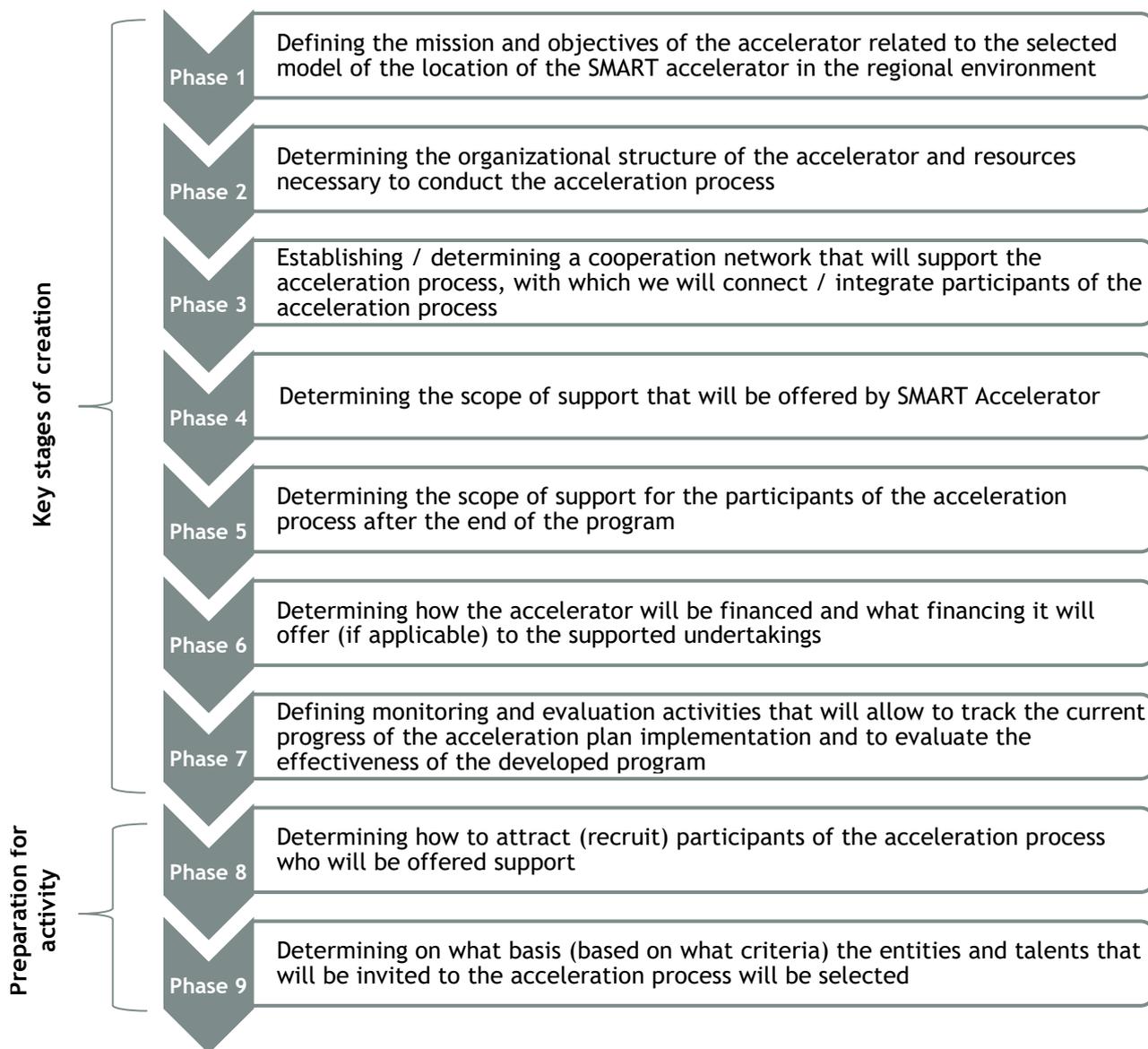
resources of cooperating entities;

- the inclusion of entities with an established position on the market, including public and private entities, causes that their individual reputation works to build the SMART accelerator brand;
- a wide possible range of forms and channels of communication with the environment.



4.2. Development and operation of SMART accelerator

The process of creating and preparing for running a SMART accelerator includes the following phases:





5. Operation structure and resources necessary for the operation of the SMART accelerator

5.1. SMART accelerator operational structure

The organizational structure of the accelerator, regardless of the way it operates, whether as an independent, dependent institution or a group of cooperating entities, should include at least four areas of operation that interpenetrate and complement each other:

- substantive support for the development of ideas of participants in the acceleration process,
- promotion of the accelerator and the undertakings it supports,
- activities in the area of finance (financing of the operation and development of the accelerator and, optionally, co-financing of projects supported within its framework),
- activities in the area of accelerator management, including:
 - coordination of activities that must be carried out to perform acceleration services in a time and cost-effective manner consistent with the needs of participants in the acceleration process,
 - organizational activities necessary to provide support under the accelerator, including the preparation of events, the provision of experts, incl. in legal terms, public procurement, GDPR, settlement of completed activities,
 - administrative activities related to the management of physical resources (owned infrastructure).

5.2. SMART Accelerator resources

When planning the creation of an accelerator, it is extremely important to thoroughly analyze the resources of the institution in whose structures it will be created and the resources of entities closely cooperating with it, which will support the operation of the accelerator.

The resource analysis should be based on the forecasted demand for accelerator services and refer both to the current state and take into account the development potential of individual types of resources.

In the context of SMART Accelerator resource management, flexibility of operation and the ability to change (especially in the area of human and



social resources) are important in order to be able to quickly respond to the evolving needs of the participants of the acceleration process and the related new challenges.

5.3. Human resources

The quality of services offered by the accelerator depends primarily on human resources, i.e. on the knowledge, professional experience and commitment of a team of specialists who will offer support as part of the accelerator's activities, with the support of a technical and organizational team ensuring the daily operation of the accelerator.

The structure of accelerator's team:

- specialists - mentors directly involved in the idea acceleration proces;
- experts supporting the acceleration process, specializing in defined areas of accelerator operation;
- employees performing auxiliary functions, i.e. carrying out organizational, technical and logistic activities in the preparation, service and settlement of activities carried out by the accelerator, including events, cooperation with external experts and the provision and development of other resources necessary for the operation of the accelerator.

Accelerator's team members competences:

The human resources of the accelerator, constituting both its internal staff (within a given entity / where the accelerator operates) and external (cooperating individual experts or specialists provided by entities supporting the accelerator's activities) must be carefully selected taking into account such criteria as:

- qualifications,
- work experience,
- interpersonal predispositions that will allow the effective transfer of knowledge, information, experiences and good practices to participants of the acceleration program.

In the acceleration process, a special role will be played by mentors who, due to the specificity of the SMART accelerator's operation, will also partially act as a manager or coordinator of the development of joint projects of complex teams bringing together representatives of the cultural and creative sectors, which translates into a number of competences expected from mentors divided into various areas. It should be noted, however, that the indicated competences are not the same as the scope of tasks performed by the mentor as part of the acceleration process.



Key competences of the SMART accelerator mentor (based on the "Description of universal managerial competences" developed by PARP, 2019):

- **moderating the cooperation of professionals from the cultural and creative sectors:**
 - operating in the cultural and creative sectors,
 - process management,
 - finance management,
 - shift management,
- **strategic orientation:**
 - defining goals and priorities as explained by SMART definition,
 - projects strategic analysis,
 - entrepreneurship,
 - innovation,
- **managerial effectiveness:**
 - goal oriented,
 - decision-making,
 - problem solving,
 - conflict solving,
- **leadership:**
 - inspiring and building commitment,
 - building relationships with the team,
 - vision creation and dissemination,
 - influence,
 - flexibility in operation
 - morality,
- **team management:**
 - acquiring entities / specialists supporting team members necessary to implement the idea,
 - evaluating the activities of team members,
 - skills development of team members,
 - task delegation,
- **communication and information use:**



- effective communication
- presentation,
- information retrieval, analysis and use,
- use of ICT in the communication process,
- negotiation.
- **Mentor's social competences:**
 - responsibility,
 - independence,
 - openness,
 - objectivism,
 - ability to work in a group,
 - easiness of making contact,
 - assertiveness,
 - empathy,
 - the ability to learn, change over and understand the way of thinking, needs and premises of the participants of the acceleration process;
 - the ability to stimulate the participants of the acceleration process to thoughtful planning of activities, to be aware of potential risks, ways to eliminate or minimize them, to creatively solve problems and challenges arising in the acceleration phase, to skillfully use own potential, etc.
 - ethical behaviour,
 - fair use of the knowledge (information, data) possessed and acquired in the acceleration process.

The competences of experts supporting the acceleration process (internal and external) are directly related to the scope of their activities, described in more detail in chapter four.

5.4. Finance resources

The financial resources of the SMART accelerator should be considered in two dimensions:

- operation of the accelerator (ensuring the sustainability of financing internal and external experts, organization of events, development of the scope of the accelerator's activities and material resources owned),



- co-financing of supported projects (seed capital) and assistance in obtaining financial support from a loan fund, guarantee fund, assistance in obtaining grants and subsidies and attracting investors.

5.5. Material resources

Material resources belonging to the entity or group of entities running the accelerator, incl:

- computer laboratories or other specialized laboratories,
- conference rooms,
- office rooms,
- specialist equipment with software, office equipment, i.e. computers, printers, scanners, cameras, cameras and the necessary office supplies.

In the process of accelerating the cooperation of cultural and creative sector entities, physical resources are not crucial to achieving the assumed goals, however, access to certain infrastructure facilities will certainly make it more attractive and extend the offer of support services. In this aspect, it is worth identifying opportunities for cooperation with fab lab institutions, where it is possible to prepare a prototype or a short series of products.

5.6. IT resources

- know-how,
- databases,
- Internet platform supporting the acceleration process

OSS good practices

hoppid.no - the first line service system which provides advice, network and courses for the entrepreneurs in the region of Møre and Romsdal, Norway.

hoppid.no have 30 offices in the municipalities. The municipalities are very different, and vary from rural to urban settlement. The development of the digital tool was initiated because of the different level of quality provided in the first line service system in the region. The County Council developed a project to innovate hoppid.no, as an answer to this difficulty, to increase the level of quality. With a digital tool, which includes online training and guidance, online communication with advisors, available experts in the online service, and concrete actions towards developing a business plan, region tries to make the start-up service equal in quality. The different advisors at the hoppid.no offices are all going through training in using the digital tool, in their meetings and communication with the start-ups to increase efficiency of the time spent on advising the entrepreneur - saved time can be used to prepare the start-up for growth, instead of just answering questions about the formalities about starting new business.

The stakeholders and beneficiaries are the advisors and the start-ups, together with the providers of the hoppid.no



5.7. Relation resources

The developed networks of cooperation with experts, organizations, entities and their groups which, due to their contacts, knowledge, experience or financial potential, may support the acceleration process.

Specific elements of the acceleration process may constitute several different resources at the same time, e.g. a cooperating external expert may be both a human and social resource.

In the context of resources at the stage of creating a SMART accelerator, consider:

- whether the resources currently held (separately for each type) are sufficient for the effective implementation of acceleration activities?
- what resources require additional investments and what is the scale of these investments (demand for human, material and financial resources) to ensure the development of accelerator services?
- that all resources have a specific lifetime and therefore resource lifecycle management is essential,
- whether the possessed financial resources will enable the maintenance and development of other resources, and in particular whether it is possible for the accelerator to undertake investment activities on a larger scale in the entities covered by the care.



6. The scope of SMART Accelerator support

6.1. Mentoring services (managements services)

Mentoring (managerial) support is individually tailored to the specifics of each idea and the needs of participants in the acceleration process from the cultural and creative sectors who have decided to cooperate in order to implement a joint project. The mentor looks after the participants throughout the acceleration process. Its role is to provide substantive and practical support in the field of project development from idea to implementation, as well as to coordinate the entire acceleration process of a given idea, including:

- setting key goals for the participants of the acceleration process,
- developing an acceleration plan together with participants in the process, including activities, including milestones in the development of the project, as well as the scope of basic and specialist services, together with the definition of the expected results;
- organization of the acceleration process, incl:
 - determining the detailed scope of services (determining the type of necessary services, the level of their advancement, the necessary number of hours of each type of support, a list of experts necessary to provide services, the expected results for each of the planned services) along with the determination of the accelerated entity's development indicators to assess the effectiveness of the support mechanism,
 - supporting and motivating the participants of the acceleration process in the implementation of the assumed plan,
 - monitoring the course of the acceleration process, i.e. continuous monitoring of the progress of activities (or their lack) taken during the acceleration process (comparison of the results achieved with the adopted assumptions), the monitoring activities carried out allow you to answer the questions:
 - do the activities undertaken lead to the planned result / s?
 - are the acceleration activities carried out according to the schedule?
 - do the participants of the acceleration process show full commitment and undertake all planned activities?
 - do the results obtained lead to the achievement of the assumed goals?
 - do the assumptions of the acceleration plan require updating / correction?



- update / correction of the acceleration plan based on the results of monitoring activities,
- assessment of the possibility of obtaining financing or co-financing, including finding a suitable investor for the implementation of the project,
- assistance in creation and expanding a cooperation network necessary for the development and implementation of a project resulting from the cooperation of representatives of the creative sector and culture,
- assisting the participants of the acceleration process in preparing for the official presentation of their project to potential investors and entities that can support their implementation in the form of a project pitch deck,
- assistance in the development of models of financing (co-financing) projects.

OSS good practices

Proposed solution to bottlenecks in terms of lack of human resources

Mentoring activities are also carried out by experienced retired professionals. Thanks to this solution, retired specialists share their knowledge, use their full potential (being on retirement does not mean they would like to stop their professional activity) and feel needed by society. In return they offer greater availability to support future start-up initiatives

6.2. Advisory services in various specializations

Include services in the field of:

- law,
- intellectual property protection,
- public procurement,
- creating and verifying business models,
- accounting,
- marketing.

These should be services focused on stimulating business development and building cooperative relationships between entities from creative industries and cultural institutions.



6.3. Educational and training services in various specializations

SMART Acceleration process can offer services in the field of:

- public speaking and preparation of presentations for pitching sessions in terms of cooperation with investors or building cooperative relationships,
- developing a business plan or business case or Business Model Canvas,
- building a communication strategy both in traditional media and social networks
- obtaining public funds along with competences related to the settlement of projects financed from public funds.

6.4. Development services

SMART Acceleration process can offer services including:

- organization of hackathons to support the development of solutions to specific problems identified during the acceleration process,
- organization of focus groups in order to generate ideas supporting the development of projects covered by the acceleration process,
- the use of innovative methodologies for the creation or development of products, including sprints, design thinking events/actions.

OSS good practices

Incubator program that facilitates the acquisition of digital competences and supports the development of start-ups in Eastern Poland.

The first incubator, established in 2017 in Rzeszów, focuses on the development of Internet of Things projects. At the beginning of 2019, two new incubators appeared on the map of Eastern Poland - the Samsung Incubator in Lublin, in which start-ups dealing with cybersecurity receive support, and the Samsung Incubator in Białystok focused on the Sustainable Development Goals.

As part of the initiative, start-ups can count on the support of Samsung R&D experts, access to laboratory space and the latest Samsung devices, free training, and the possibility of financial support. Incubators organize events for local communities, incl. coding classes, hackathons, gaming tournaments and entrepreneurship workshops. During intensive work on the prototype, each start-up is assigned a mentor and expert from Samsung's R&D department. Their task is to motivate, supervise the course of work on the project, but also to serve with their experience and specialist knowledge. During twelve weeks, start-ups take part in 6 intensive training courses. These will be practical workshops, including in areas closely related to technology and mass production, but also marketing and sales, or presenting your business ventures to investors.

The activities of the Samsung Incubator are aimed at originators who intend to start operating in start-ups.



6.5. Promotional and networking services

Among the promotional and networking services connecting the participants of the acceleration process with other enterprises, organizations and institutions that may support the development process of their project and / or its financing, it is worth considering:

- events pitchingowe / Demo Day - meetings for the presentation of ideas (Pitch) to potential investors and recipients of their services organized at the end of one or more acceleration rounds,
- networking meetings between the participants of the acceleration process to exchange experiences,
- inviting entities with a similar profile to study visits conducive to the exchange of experiences and initiating cooperation both in the interregional and international dimension,
- organization of cyclical meetings, e.g. in the formula of business breakfasts, branches that will create a space for exchanging experiences and establishing contacts.

6.6. Offering access to the infrastructure

Access to infrastructure is not a key area of support under the SMART Accelerator, but it can support activities carried out by participants in the acceleration process, including by:

- access to space for events promoting regional products and cooperation;
- wynajem przestrzeni na potrzeby pracy (system tzn. „hot desk”);
- rental of infrastructure enabling the implementation or co-creation of prototypes (the so-called fab lab).



7. Financing the creation and operation of accelerators

In the context of the information presented in the guideline, the following scenarios for financing the creation and operation of accelerators can be identified.

Scenario 1. Credit financing

The scenario assumes obtaining capital from funds from commercial banks or regional loan funds. An interesting option may also be a loan from loan funds supported by funds from the European Commission. It is worth noting that this type of financing is relatively the most widely available on the market, and within the logic of supporting the enterprise sector by the European Commission, debt mechanisms are an increasingly important element of it.

Scenario 2. Financing with non-returnable funds

In this scenario, it is necessary to separate the acquisition of funds for the creation of accelerators (e.g. subsidies under regional operational programs) and their substantive activity (funds from programs dedicated to the creative sectors and cultural institutions). Acquiring funds from grant mechanisms requires ongoing monitoring of the grant mechanisms offer and the ability to efficiently prepare applications for project co-financing. From the point of view of the network of grant institutions, this type of support may be available at the following levels:

- local government units offering subsidies and organizing competitions to select an organizer / operator of specific tasks related to cultural activity;
- non-governmental organizations, in particular foundations, offering targeted support for the implementation of selected projects;
- organizations of local and government administration aimed at supporting innovative enterprises and social activity;
- government administration, in particular the Ministers;
- international organizations.

Scenario 3. Financing through the involvement of strategic investors

The scenario assumes gaining strategic investors interested in co-financing the development of partnerships and incubated entities. In this development model, it is assumed that the private investor will take the risk of co-financing the incubated entities in exchange for a share in their future profits or the possibility of reselling



their shares to other entities. This type of scenario favors those areas of activity that are able to generate a significant level of return on investment.

Scenario 4. Self-financing

The relatively slowest scenario, assuming development based on funds generated as a result of commercial activities. In such a scenario, the accelerator organization should assume a non-for-profit operation, in which the profit generated as a result of operating activities will be used to finance development plans.

Scenario 5. Crowdfunding

Raising funds based on the society's readiness to finance the development and implementation of projects. In this context, platforms supporting the implementation of public fundraising or platforms supporting the acquisition of funds for ongoing substantive activity can be used.

Scenario	Strengths	Weaknesses
Scenario 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Wide availability of funds. ▪ Relatively fastest process of obtaining funds in comparison to other scenarios. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ High risk of losing financial liquidity. ▪ The need to provide collateral for the capital obtained in the form of a loan or loan, which may constitute a significant growth barrier for the incubated entities.
Scenario 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Non-returnable funds. ▪ The possibility of obtaining capital for activities that do not generate income with a significant impact on the local environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ High administrative costs of project implementation related to the need to allocate resources for the preparation of application forms and project administration. ▪ Difficulty with the applicant's recurring costs and the inability to generate income from the activities covered by the grant. ▪ Relatively low flexibility of the capital obtained, conditioned by the necessity to implement the project in



		accordance with the vision presented in the application for financing.
Scenario 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enabling the creation of effective mechanisms to stimulate development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The relatively long process of establishing cooperation and the risk of losing strategic investors if alternative and more profitable forms of investment emerge. The risk of losing control over the acceleration process and the know-how created during it.
Scenario 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No financial obligations towards providers of funds enabling the implementation of various directions of activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The length of the process and its relatively low efficiency compared to other scenarios. Relatively small offer of products enabling their commercial sale.
Scenario 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It finances the relatively broadest possible range of activities. In the event of an unsuccessful fundraising, it can be, however, an important channel for marketing communication. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The need to compete for donor favor in a highly competitive environment of various initiatives.

OSS good practices

Voucher system - non-refundable small value incentives for SMEs

The main purpose of this action is the establishment of a system of allocating small value incentives, which allows micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) significantly simplified access to co-financing of individual services, through which companies can strengthen their competitiveness and competencies. It is a new incentive program for SMEs - t.i. vouchers, which companies can obtain throughout the year. Vouchers have: - quick process - easy application - co-financing in the amount of 60% or up to EUR 9,999 per voucher - the total amount of vouchers that the company can use is 30,000 EUR / year - digital application - there are no deadlines for applying.

Stakeholders: Slovene Enterprise Fund Beneficiaries: micro, small and medium-sized enterprises with their registered office in the Republic of Slovenia, which as legal or natural persons are engaged in economic activity, are organized as companies, sole proprietors or cooperatives, have at least one employee on the day of application and have settled financial obligations (not in compulsory settlement proceedings, bankruptcy proceedings, etc.).



8. Monitoring and evaluation of SMART Accelerator activities

Monitoring of activities as part of the SMART Accelerator is aimed at continuous tracking of the progress of the participants of the acceleration process in achieving the adopted key goals and the acceleration plan covering the necessary activities, including milestones in the development of a given project, as well as the expected results.

The conducted monitoring activities will also have an informative function, i.e. thanks to the systematically collected data, they will enable the control of the acceleration process, including the involvement of a participant in the process, the effectiveness of actions taken by him, the compliance of activities and the degree of achievement of results in relation to the planned schedule, which will allow for possible corrective actions necessary to achieve the goals set by the participant.

Monitoring activities regarding the course and progress in the implementation of the acceleration process will be carried out by a mentor, separately for the project covered by SMART Accelerator activities. The performed monitoring activities will help to find answers to the following questions in relation to each project covered by the support:

- Are the participants in the process fully committed to the implementation of the acceleration plan?
- Are the activities implemented and set milestones achieved on schedule?
- Do the activities undertaken by the participants lead to the planned results and, consequently, to the achievement of the assumed goals?
- Do the activities assumed in the acceleration plan and the schedule for their implementation need to be changed or updated (corrective actions)?
- Have the corrective actions taken (if any) made it possible to achieve the planned results and, consequently, the assumed goals?
- Was the acceleration process successful for the project and participants supported by the support?
- Were the participants of the acceleration process receiving additional support after the end of the program and what was its added value?

Monitoring of activities should be carried out in fixed periods of time, the perspective of which seems to be optimal in the perspective of six months.

Monitoring activities will be a source of information necessary to carry out the evaluation, i.e. to assess the effectiveness of the developed acceleration program and the operation of the SMART Accelerator. The evaluation will



therefore enable checking whether the actions taken in general (and not individual projects covered by the acceleration process) are bringing the expected results and making a decision regarding the possible need to improve the adopted acceleration program and / or increase the budget for acceleration activities and / or to provide additional resources or expand the network cooperation supporting the acceleration process, etc.

The evaluation may be carried out by the team coordinating the activities of the SMART Accelerator or by an employed external entity at the end of the acceleration cycle for min. 10 projects included in the program.

Evaluation of the effectiveness of the developed program for the acceleration and functioning of the SMART Accelerator should include the following criteria:

- Compliance with the needs - to what extent do the program objectives match the needs of the participants in the acceleration process?
- Effectiveness - whether and to what extent the goals set for the acceleration program were achieved at the planning stage?
- Efficiency - the economics or profitability of the program, i.e. the ratio of resources involved and inputs to the results achieved.
- Sustainability - will the implementation of the acceleration program contribute to the occurrence of permanent and positive changes in relation to the participants of the process and entities of the regional environment?



9. Literature

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