TRAns-national Collaboration Empowering Key European Industries TRACE-KEI project

2018 TCI European Conference
Panel: Successful Networks, topic – Successful Projects
Sofia, 21st March 2018

Francesca Volpe
Project coordinator
f.volpe@darepuglia.it
Our cluster

DARe Puglia is a private company participated by Research organizations, Universities, SMEs, farmer and industrial associations with the aim to improve the innovation potential of the agrofood sector in the Region.

It supports public-private collaborations to deliver better, health quality and sustainable products and processes, covering the following technological domains:

- Functional foods
- Mild technologies and Biotechnologies
- Packaging and Convenience
- Food safety
- Eco-sustainable process and products
The national experiences

€ 34 billions

- Functional food
- Innovative Products
- Packaging
- Food safety
- Sustainable Solutions

5 Large collaborative projects and connected training projects were approved and implemented from 2011 to 2015
(4 master courses and 3 highly specialised post-graduate courses – 90 people trained)
The European experiences

COSME
Programme for the Competitiveness of Enterprises and SMEs
2014-2020

TracE-kEI
COS-CLUSTER-2015-3-02

HORIZON 2020
RURITAGE .... JUST APPROVED
SC5-21-2016-2017

Interreg
SEVERAL PROPOSALS UNDER EVALUATION

DAREPUGLIA

INNOSUP
LCE-2015-3

InCLuSilver
INNOSUP-2016-1
Objectives

TRAns-national Collaboration Empowering Key European Industries - TRACE-KEI – is a COSME Cluster Excellence project aiming at strengthening cluster organizations to provide more professional business services to their associates and contribute to develop world-class clusters in the EU.

To meet these objectives, TRACE-KEI clusters are achieving the following activities:

• **Mapping and evaluating** the range and quality of services provided to their associates, SMEs firstly;

• **engage associates** in the assessment of clusters’ performances and develop a renewed / redesigned strategy to meet SMEs’ needs and expectations;

• **Ease the dialogue with policy makers and boost** any possible convergence with the regional policy and operational frameworks;

• **Identify cross-sectorial collaboration opportunities in the participating territories**;

• **Share cross-borders opportunities** at Consortium level and beyond
Our consortium

TRACe-KEI

Two macro-regions involved

Agro-food
ICT
Energy

>300 SMEs represented by the TRACE-KEI clusters

1 silver label and 3 bronze label clusters involved

50 overall staff addressed by the project

Italy
Romania

Germany
Serbia
Bulgaria

Hungary
Portugal
The project workplan

Internal ecosystem

External ecosystem

Strategy formulation

CMO performances and knowledge need

Associates’ needs

Role of the governance

Level of cooperation among associates

Cooperation opportunities within the consortium

Cross-sectorial collaboration with other clusters in the regions involved

S3

ADDED-VALUE SERVICES

WORLD-CLASS CLUSTER

WORLD-CLASS CLUSTER

Ambassadors’ missions

Internationalization opportunities
Where to start....

1. ... to improve or introduce added-value services?
2. ... to improve CMO performances and skills?
3. .... to interact with associates and involve them?
4. .... to fill the gap between cluster initiatives and regional/national government for the benefit of our associates?
1. ... to fill the gap among associates and clusters?
2. ... to renew and redesign our strategies accordingly?
Clustering managers’ internal assessment

Clustering excellence assessment for 3 participating clusters awarded with the bronze label

Clusters’ practices alignment towards ESCA benchmarking

Mapping of services by surveying 7 cluster’ managers

- They were asked about:
- the CIs’ initial goals (must be monitored over time)
- The services provided (more fee-based services to be introduced)
- The financial sustainability (is very unpredictable)
- The number of committed participants (need to increase by face to face meeting)
Assessment of Managers’ performances to deliver a 6 services portfolio, built upon those provided by gold label clusters.

Knowledge gaps assessed towards the «core modules» identified by the European Foundation for Cluster Excellence

2 Joint Trainings organised and addressed to 14 cluster managers: the 1st in Bari (Italy) focussed on value-chain analysis and industry analysis the 2nd in Budapest (Hungary) focussed on business planning and cluster branding + two workshops on Internationalization and change management
Cluster managers’ skills improvement

2 study visits performed with qualified clusters.
- Femac, a Spanish gold label cluster,
- C2C networking event with Hungarian Accredited Clusters

TRACE-KEI mentoring programme

1. Identification and definition of the Cluster Management Model
2. Interviews with Cluster managers and the Cluster steering committees
3. Designing and preparing the Cluster Management Model and Cluster Strategy
4. Training program for cluster managers
5. Indicators definition and designing tools for a practical measuring
Cluster’s associates

Expected services

Associates SMEs’ satisfaction (15 companies by each participating cluster)
- the satisfaction of the cluster performance in general
- the usefulness of the services provided
- Their interest in introducing tailor-made services and readiness to pay for it.

General conclusion: further meetings by involving the members are needed to meet their expectations; and the strategic board should take further decisions

Shared strategy

- Vision
- Mission
- Goals
- Services
- Financial sustainability
- Indicators
Cluster organization

Cross-sectorial collaboration within the cluster and among clusters

Other stakeholders' contribution

International partnerships
The cluster organization

- Concrete and well developed RIS3 strategies can be found in the partner’s region and/or at least at National level
- The food industry, ITC and renewable energy are important target sectors of the strategies, but not always the available funding specifically address these sectors;
- Clusters are important actors for the regional development but they have not been assigned a specific role in the RIS3 analysed
- Associates are ready to develop and to participate, but there is a need for reliable and usable funding schemes

- Policy Makers recognise the clusters strategic role
- In every region, can be expected future funding options for the clusters and their associates
- As Clusters are private entities, the available fundings would be assigned on a competitive way
- Synergies with other clusters in different sectors is a rather weak point of the clusters from the regions
By creating cross-sectorial collaborations within the cluster and among clusters.
Cross-clusters’ opportunities

At Consortium Level

At inter-Consortia Level

INNO-­DROP
Plasma & water technology

Energy

Life sciences

Ict
Main conclusions and future steps

Having identified the main drivers and barriers, the further steps will contribute to ensure in the long run:

1. Orientate our clusters’ strategies according to these results
   - The extension of fee-based services that should be more networking oriented
   - The clusters’ financial sustainability to be periodically monitored

2. Continous learning
   - The increase of the professional trainings both for the staff and associates in order to ease cluster growth and reputation

3. Leverage cluster initiatives at regional level
   - The continuous dialogue with policy makers to obtain a more focussed support for Cluster’s initiatives
   - Involvement of academia and other relevant stakeholders

4. Spreading practices to other clusters and promote cooperation
   - The increase of collaboration opportunities with other sectors/clusters at regional/national level, at Consortium level and beyond
THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION!

Follow us @
https://www.linkedin.com/company/17936797/
https://www.clustercolaboration.eu/eu-initiatives/cluster-excellence/trace-kei-trans-national-collaboration

Francesca Volpe
Project coordinator
f.volpe@darepuglia.it