



CONCEPT PAPER

Innovation Camp on Resilience

Date: 21-23 September 2017

Venue: Centre for Research and Technologies Hellas
Charilaou-Thermi Road (6th km), Thermi, Thessaloniki

1. Rationale

The ability of the European Union to address societal challenges and to improve competitiveness largely depends on the ability of local and regional actors to create regional innovation ecosystems. This innovative bottom-up approach, which extensively relies on self-organising principles, cannot realistically be put in practice without political endorsement and a certain level of institutional governance and support.

This is why the City of Thessaloniki together with the Committee of the Regions and the European Commission's Joint Research Centre have joined forces to organise an Innovation Camp as a tool to facilitate collaboration between the so-called *quadruple helix*¹ approach by developing a local culture of innovativeness.

Innovation Camps² are an instrument for addressing societal challenges in an open innovation context based on effective self-organised teamwork. They are based on a *process* that provides a concrete template to decision-makers and societal actors for developing breakthrough ideas and new insights, combined with an entrepreneurial discovery process. Especially in short 2-3 day Innovation Camps, the challenge facilitators have a crucial role. Other key success factors are the commitment of challenge owners and the good definition and background information of the challenges.

The Innovation Camps process includes three steps:

- Step 1: Before the camp, identification of the thematic challenges to be analysed at the camp, selection of challenge owners and defining the challenges with them, choice of stakeholders and experts who can contribute to address the challenges;
- Step 2: Carrying out the actual Innovation Camp;

¹ Stakeholder from public, private, academic and civil society

² Innovation Camps are based on the ACSI's (Aalto Camp for Societal Innovation) methodology which has been co-developed by Aalto University in Finland and the New Club of Paris. It combines elements of foresight, open innovation and policy discussion.

- Step 3: After the camp, the *follow-through* continues at locations where issues occur. During subsequent months, prototypes of promising ideas are tested and improved and can be built up on by the respective organisations with the networking contributions of the camp participants.

2. Goals and Objectives

Resilience determines the capacity to successfully deal with difficult events and to adapt and overcome adversity, and in a changing world it creates stability, which in turn promotes job creation, economic growth and sustainability.

As the EU recovers from the deepest economic crisis since the Great Depression whilst facing the challenges of a world of growing uncertainties, we have some time at the *Thessaloniki Innovation Camp on Resilience* to reflect on how to better deal with the shocks and stresses that our societies are being increasingly exposed to. We need to see more clearly how these shocks and stresses interact and sometimes reinforce each other. We need to reflect on how to improve resilience and systematically address all the risks to the safety and well-being of citizens. About three quarters of EU legislation is implemented at local and regional level. Local and regional authorities play an important role in the daily management of the challenges we are faced with.

The Thessaloniki Innovation Camp on Resilience 2017 offers the possibility to develop grassroots ideas together with policy makers, entrepreneurs, academics and civil society. The Innovation Camp is free of charge for all people above the age of 17, with the desire to develop creative ideas into innovative societal solutions. The Innovation Camp will close with a plenary session for demonstration and assessment of the developed ideas. Prizes for the best ideas will be given and each participant will receive a certificate.

3. Challenges

The Innovation Camp comprises four parallel challenges, which are however in interaction with the other challenges. The challenges are presented by *challenge owners* having a special link to the follow up of that specific challenge. Each challenge is tackled by a dedicated team guided by a professional *facilitator*. *Participants* are invited to share their expertise by working together by forming small cross-disciplinary teams, each focusing on one of the camp's challenges. Supported by the facilitators, participants analyse different perspectives and develop concrete suggestions on how to tackle the challenge in new innovative ways. As the camp advances, participants define potential implementation activities and plan for experimenting and piloting of those activities. On the final day, an exhibition or similar showcase event is organised where the participants will present their ideas, solution or prototypes.

The working language of the Innovation Camp is English.

When registering, participants will choose one out of the four challenges:

1. *Resilience of Energy Critical Infrastructures for European Defence*

Challenge Owner: European Defence Agency (EDA) Protection of Critical Energy Infrastructure (PCEI) Expert Group

Challenge concept in brief: While the concept of Energy Critical Infrastructures (ECI) for the civilian sector has received sufficient attention the same is not true for the defence sector. This is understandable considering the fact that the defence sector

relies to a large extent on civilian energy infrastructure leading to the further realization that identifying the Energy Critical Infrastructures for European Defence is a non-trivial task. It is clear that an objective and dynamic (evolving) definition of ECI for the defence sector will have to be devised before any required measures and policies can be put in place to mitigate disruptions in the operation of such critical defence relevant infrastructures.

The objective of the challenge is: *How to achieve “resilience by design” for an eco-system of interconnected infrastructures?*

2. ***Resilience in a financially volatile environment***

Challenge Owners: Municipality of Thessaloniki (tbc) / Centre for Research and Technologies Hellas (tbc)

Challenge concept in brief: In the current economic environment the decisive factors for improving the country's productive re-development and competitiveness are the promotion of Research and Innovation and the acceleration of the transfer of research results to applications and products. The sovereign debt crisis in the euro area however has raised questions about the stability and availability of traditional funding, as banks face pressure to sell assets and scale back their operations, especially outside their home markets. On the other hand there is a number of smaller investors who in the absence of attractive investment option from the mainstream financial sector can be channelled toward fuelling technological and social innovations generated by the research community, start-ups and SMEs. Managing these rapid developments has posed challenges to the availability, management and smart investment of capital both in the traditional financial sector and the emerging innovation funding sector.

The objective of the challenge is: *How to foster synergies between financial sector actors and the research community, start-ups and SMEs by exploiting interdisciplinary approaches, innovative technologies and on-going technological disruptions and thus achieving resilience in a financially volatile environment?*

3. ***Resilience in migration flows***

Challenge Owner: Municipality of Thessaloniki

Challenge concept in brief: This challenge concerns the need for fast track integration with efficient and effective ways into the local and regional labour markets and the social life of the community of asylum seekers, refugees and their families. Mapping skills and needs, matching supply and demand and providing where needed proper training or reorientation are important aspects of the challenge.

The objective of the challenge is: *How to increase the fast track integration into the labour market of asylum seekers, refugees and their families and thus strengthening the resilience in migration flows?*

4. ***Resilience in regional innovation ecosystems***

Challenge Owners: European Commission's Joint Research Centre & European Committee of the Regions

Challenge concept in brief: This challenge aims to explore how to foster capabilities of local development actors to link their own strategies to wider trends in research and innovation in a regional, national and European smart specialisation strategies (S3) context. The broad approach comes from the Territorial Agenda of the European Union 2020 which states that the use of social capital, territorial assets, and the development of S3 can play a key role in strengthening local economies and in enhancing their contribution to the overall development goals.

The objective of the challenge is: *How to strengthen the capabilities of regional development actors to promote entrepreneurial engagement in order to foster regional innovation ecosystems?*

4. Partners

City of Thessaloniki

<http://thessaloniki.gr>

Centre for Research and Technologies Hellas (CERTH)

<http://www.certh.gr>

European Commission – Joint Research Centre

<https://ec.europa.eu/jrc/en>

European Committee of the Regions

<http://cor.europa.eu>

(open to further partners)

5. Contact and registration

To register to the event, please send an email to: JRC-CONFERENCE@ec.europa.eu



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