



Cluj Local Innovation Lab Framework



Introduction

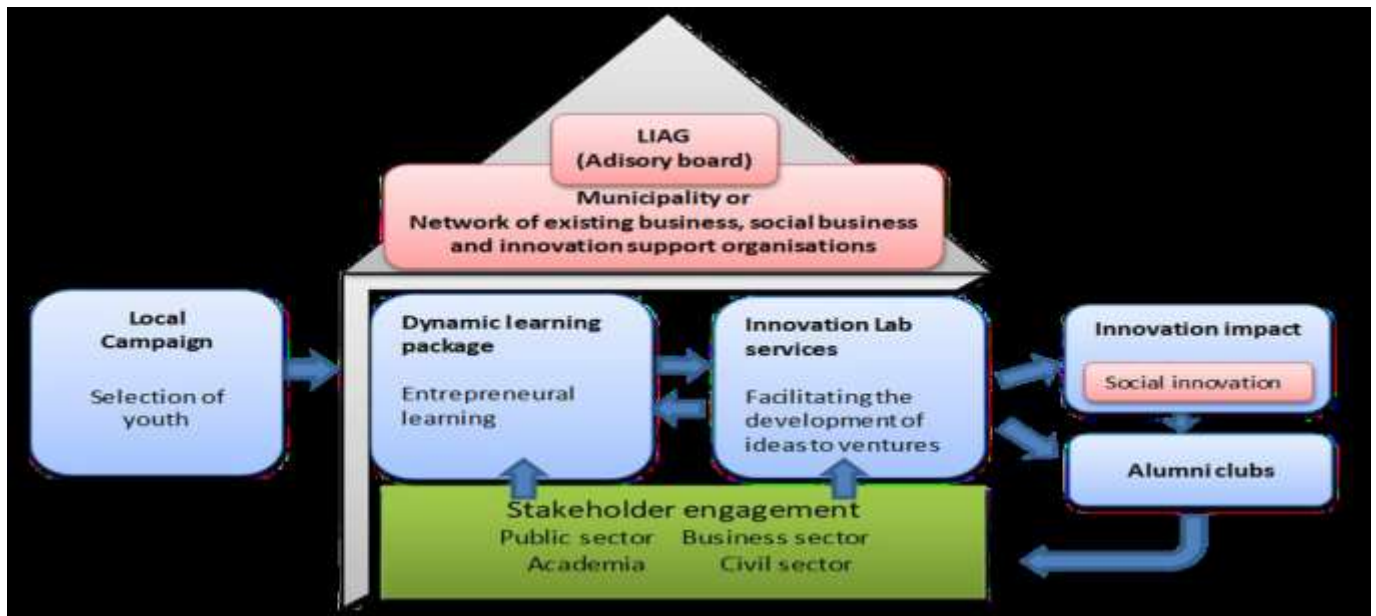
The ***NewGenerationSkills*** project aims to develop seven Innovation Labs (IL) in the seven partner countries in the project, to improve the existing cooperation mechanisms between the main target groups of the quadruple helix (municipality, business environment, education, civil society). The project will create joint local support programs that will endow the local young people with new generation skills and abilities.

The Innovation Labs will support young people in various fields such as: social and cultural entrepreneurship, but also in other areas (eg technology, environment). It will also facilitate young people's access to persons with experience in their area of interest or the access to a common workspace and equipments.

Through the Innovation Lab, young people will be able to learn from the experience of professionals and gain additional support for putting their ideas into practice.

Below, we will present the specific framework of the Innovation Lab in Cluj-Napoca, the infrastructure, organization, financing and sustainability.

1. The operational model



The main idea of the lab is to encourage local young people to actively use their intellectual potential to generate innovative ideas, for an already existing initiative or for a non-business initiative. In Cluj-Napoca, the Innovation Lab will initially have only a physical location. In the future the virtual lab will also be launched.

The young people involved in the Innovation Lab will have the opportunity to develop but also to sell their ideas.

The two main pillars of the Innovation Lab are:

1. Developing entrepreneurship and coaching on social responsibility
2. Match-making to facilitate the development of ideas for socially responsible entrepreneurship and profit-oriented entrepreneurship

The first pillar of the Innovation Lab (The Dynamic Learning Package) provides young people with an entry point in the entrepreneurial education, equipping them with some soft skills that, they usually do not acquire in formal education.



The second pillar of the Innovation Lab will be supported through active mentoring, entrepreneurial skills development and modern ICT infrastructure.

These two pillars of the Innovation Lab are interconnected. The active mentoring will support the implementation of the Dynamic Learning Package, so that at the end of the day young people can be able to develop in a real business their idea of socially responsible business.

1.1. Infrastructure

The Innovation Lab will be in the University of Agricultural Sciences and Veterinary Medicine (USAMV) in Cluj-Napoca, in the library building. ADI-ZMC will sign a commodate contract with the university in this regard.

The space offered by the university is relatively new and furnished.

ADI-ZMC has compiled the list of equipments that it will buy in the lab, such as: 3D printer and scanner, laptops, multifunction printer, video conference system.

After the physical form of the Innovation Lab will be organised and after the activities foreseen in the Dynamic Learning Package will have started, the virtual version of the lab will be built. The trainings will be video recorded and uploaded to the online platform to help those who could not benefit from the Dynamic Learning Package during the project.

2. Organisation and management

The activities of the Innovation Lab will be organized and coordinated by ADI-ZMC and USAMV together with ADR-NV, alongside with LIAG, as a consultative forum.

Taking into account the partnership we have with USAMV within the project (LIAG member and providing the space for the Innovation Lab) a multidisciplinary team will be formed to organize the events and activities of the lab, team consisting of: a member of the ADI- ZMC, a member of the ADR-NV and a USAMV member. The three members will be carefully selected to cover all areas of interest (eg, coordination, marketing, communication) to ensure a good functioning of the lab.

3. Financing and financial planning of the innovation lab

The lab will be financially supported, in the opening phase, by ADI-ZMC/ADR NV. There will be expenses that will be supported/settled through the project and from possible sponsorships. USAMV will also contribute to the financial support of the lab by ensuring the administrative expenses.

3.1. Cost Planning

Staff / Employees - a person from ADI-ZMC who will be in charge of the Lab will be delegated. Besides this delegated person, we will try to attract potential volunteers to help with the lab activities.

Marketing and communication - there is currently a budget for such actions, which we anticipate will be sufficient for the whole campaign to promote the lab and its results until the end of the project.

3.2. Funds for the Lab

Once the project is completed, all opportunities available on the market will be taken into account to ensure the functioning of the Innovation Lab:

- from EU-funded projects in the field of innovation and entrepreneurship, public or private development agencies, town halls, etc.



- from private funds, from companies looking for innovative ideas in some sectors
- membership fee in the innovation lab (if applicable)

4. The main actors and the role of the parties involved

Due to the fact that the Innovation Lab is addressed to young people and brings together different actors, from different areas, we present you the list of the main actors involved:

- ADI-ZMC (municipality) - organizes and coordinates the LIAG activities
- the creative young people from the community, focusing on high school students and first-year students
- universities
- schools
- entrepreneurs
- mentors
- companies
- civil society
- solutions and services providers
- business support organizations
- media

Their main role is to collaborate in a co-creative environment, from different perspectives, to provide expertise and additional information for a deeper understanding of the relationship between technology and the market.

The main approach on which the Innovation Lab is based is that there must be mutual benefit between the parties involved. Those who contribute to the sustainability of the Innovation Lab should benefit from this collaboration, otherwise there is no direct interest in supporting the initiative.

5. The activities of the Innovation Lab

- **One Stop Shop** - is the main scheme on which the Innovation Lab is based (young people can take advantage of the opportunities offered by the Lab in all stages of the entrepreneurial development).
- **Educational activities** - will help young people acquire the entrepreneurial skills and the knowledge needed to achieve the goal: workshops, trainings, case studies, research papers.

Youth education will be in areas such as: circular economy, digital manufacturing, urban sustainability, smart city, etc.

We will create a mini FabLab with 3D printer and 3D scanner

- **Mentoring activities** – to guide and support young people through joint work, consultations and meetings. This activity is closely linked to the training/educational activities.

Here we include networking, pitching, matchmaking, etc.

- **Communication and collaboration activities**

- Introduction concept of co-working, space sharing
- Communication with mentors, university, market players

- **Practical activities related to hardware and software instruments**

- Development of concepts, computerized simulation, prototyping, etc

- **Management activities** - such as fundraising, customer relationship management, internal management (identifying management tasks, organizing team meetings, process coordination, monitoring, and project control).



6. Durability and Sustainability of the Innovation Lab

Ideally, the Innovation Lab will work as long as possible after the project is completed (June 2019). That is why all laboratories should include the following elements of sustainability:

- **revolving scheme** – the beneficiaries of the program offered by the lab will become alumni members, while providing support to the community and to the subsequent participants. Alumni members will be asked to share their stories and career trajectory, and to be mentors to newcomers.
- **cooperation with all stakeholders:** with the universities that can offer internships and scholarships, with private companies that can also offer scholarships, mentoring and other type of support. The business sector is the most important source of sustainability, giving them access to young talents.
- **administrative costs will be covered by ADI ZMC/university**