



# Approaches for designing SME support schemes

A catalogue for just transition regions

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## 1. Aims and scope

The aim of this toolkit is to provide guidance to Just Transition Fund (JTF) regions which are considering using JTF funds towards Small and Medium Enterprise (SME) support schemes (henceforth, ‘schemes’) which could provide a range of services from financial support for innovation to operational consulting to employee competence development. This toolkit will summarise the main focus areas of these schemes, provide best-practice case studies from across Europe, and provide recommendations for scheme design broken down by focus area. Finally, this toolkit provides some overarching recommendations and further resources for additional information and support in designing and delivering these schemes.

## 2. Who is this toolkit for?

The toolkit addresses local governments in JTF regions. It can also be a valuable resource for local actors interested in understanding and meeting the needs of SMEs in a just transition setting.

## 3. Background information

Many JTF regions have identified diversifying their territorial economy as a key focus area of a just transition, enabling new businesses to grow and thrive in municipalities where fossil fuel-dependent industries and enterprises used to or still dominate. One way to achieve this is to design schemes which support the development of new startups and businesses, help entrepreneurs, or guide smaller businesses to grow. Such startups, businesses and enterprises are grouped together in this toolkit as SMEs.

SME support schemes cover various elements of support. The five most common focus areas are:



**Incubation & coaching/mentoring**



**Training, education & competence development**



**Consulting & advisory services**



**Financial support for investments**



**Equal opportunities for underrepresented groups in the SME workforce**

This toolkit covers nine case study schemes which, as the table below shows, all overlap across more than a single one of the five focus areas.

Scheme	Location	Focus Areas				
		Incubation & coaching/ mentoring	Training, education & competence development	Consulting & advisory services	Financial support for investments	Equal opportunities
SpinLab	Leipzig, Germany	X	X			
Scale-Up Denmark	Denmark	X	X			
ICUK	Czech Republic	X		X		
SMARTCymru	Wales				X	
CAPSULE	Croatia, Hungary, Romania	X	X			X
Innotech Student	Romania	X	X		X	X
Danish Social Fund	Denmark		X	X		
Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs	EU-wide		X			X

Note that the case study coverage is not limited to JTF funded initiatives, nor to initiatives located only within the European Union.

The following sections each discuss one of the five focus areas, detailing several case study schemes which cover that focus area, and synthesising recommendations for designing an effective scheme intended for each focus area.



## 4. Incubation & Coaching/Mentoring

Europe has a thriving early-stage startup scene, with a growing number of so-called “unicorns”<sup>1</sup> (a startup valued at over USD 1 billion (EUR 940 million)). Between 2009 to 2019, Europe produced around 36% of global startups. However, European startups have an approximately 30% lower likelihood of longer-term success relative to startups in the United States. This is largely because the former are more likely to stall after a fundraising round and therefore either do not advance to the

next stage of funding, or instead manage a successful exit (e.g., via an acquisition<sup>2</sup>).

The three-year-survival rate of new companies, a common metric for startups, assisted by business incubators is around 90%, compared to just 56% for a typical (non-incubated) new company<sup>3</sup>. This demonstrates that business incubators can be considered to have a rather proven track record for improving

a startup's chances of successfully lasting beyond their early years, where competition for funding is most intense.

Many support schemes for SMEs therefore act as business incubators, assisting fledgling businesses with finding support and resources which can be otherwise difficult for new companies to access. Incubation can encompass several activities, from incubation “bootcamp” weekends for deep dives into business ideas, such as delivered in the CAPSULE scheme (read Section 8 to learn more), or a full-on incubation programme over a longer time period, such as SpinLab (see below).

Business incubation often includes some sort of coaching or mentoring, either from experienced entrepreneurs or business experts attached to the scheme, or from larger firms who are part of the scheme and matched with the new businesses/entrepreneurs being supported. Incubation schemes often involve networking, for instance through the aforementioned bootcamps, or through shared co-working spaces made available to scheme participants.

#### 4.1 Case study schemes

→ **Scale-Up Denmark**<sup>4</sup> was a national Danish initiative supported by the EU which ran from 2016–2020 and aimed to establish a group of high-growth companies in Denmark. Supported by the EU Regional Development Fund and managed by the Danish Business Authorities, the initiative was a business development program in collaboration with the public sector, providing expertise from both academic institutions and corporate partners. It consisted of intensive development courses, professional discussions, mentoring, workshops, and access to experts and venture capital<sup>5</sup>. Companies who participated experienced noticeable results within two years, including an average 25% increased turnover, 32% increased exports, and 16% increased job creation. Supported companies focus on energy efficient technologies, offshore industry, experience economy and tourism, amongst other topics.

increased turnover	25%	Within <b>2</b> years
increased exports	36%	
increased job creation	16%	

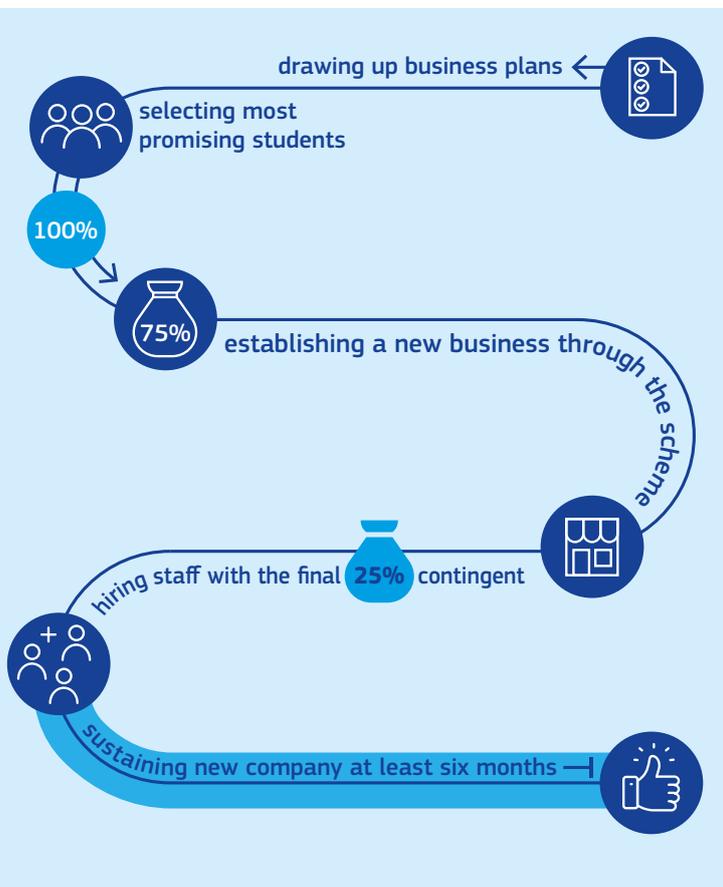
→ **SpinLab**<sup>6</sup> has been recognised as one of the EU's best startup accelerators by UBI Global<sup>7</sup>, which compiles an authoritative annual ranking of incubation programmes to help incubators benchmark themselves and understand their place in the global innovation ecosystem. Based in Leipzig (centre of one of Germany's JTF regions), the SpinLab initiative provides accepted startups with connections and know-how from over 25 established corporate partners and one of the EU's top business schools<sup>8</sup>. It also provides round-the-clock access to a co-working space in the city, fully funded living costs whilst startup entrepreneurs are attending their hybrid programme, and opportunities for additional funding for earning the status of “best pitch” and “most sustainable idea” at their Investor's Day. Accepted startups also receive

personalised coaching and individualised mentorship, with partners and mentors available for on-site workshops/events and on-demand e-learning. Finally, they have access to an entire ecosystem of innovation hubs, from the agri-innovation hub RootCamp<sup>9</sup> to Smart Infrastructure Hub<sup>10</sup>. SpinLab is funded through contributions from corporate partners with whom successful startups are paired for pilot projects and mentorship. It is administered by the Leipzig Graduate School of Management.



→ **Innotech Student**<sup>11</sup> is an ongoing Erasmus+ programme, part of European Social Fund (ESF)-funded Operational Program Human Capital<sup>12</sup>. It offers Romanian students up to EUR 100,000 of “de minimis” Aid<sup>13</sup> to open a small business, with the maximum cap dictated by the number of jobs created. Institutions such as universities, professional institutions, trade unions, and NGOs initially applied to be grant managers of up to EUR 2 million each, responsible for selecting which students would receive training and coaching to start their own business and apply for the de minimis funds. Of the 351 institutions which applied to manage potential funding worth a total of EUR 680 million, 66 were selected. This led to the original EUR 20 million budget for the entire programme being increased to EUR 134 million, of which approximately EUR 90 million is de minimis funds<sup>14</sup>. After drawing up business plans during entrepreneurship courses delivered by the institutions as part of the programme, the most promising students have been selected for more targeted mentorship, entrepreneurial skill development, and internships at relevant companies in their desired market. Those who establish a new business through the scheme receive 75% of their allotted aid proportion, with the final 25% contingent on them hiring staff as detailed in their business plans and sustaining their new company for at least six months. So far, 22,000

students have participated in entrepreneurship courses, leading to the employment of 3,300 people in over 1,300 newly established companies (compared to pre-programme estimate of 350 new companies created by the scheme)<sup>15</sup>. Each new company has received an average of EUR 40,000 so far.



## 4.2 Recommendations for schemes focussed on Incubation & Coaching/Mentoring

**Participants value personalised coaching and mentorship.** This is something that UBI Global identified as a strength of SpinLab's, and which led to a high success rate for its participating businesses, particularly enabled by the breadth of sectors covered by the scheme's established corporate partners, including healthcare, automation, financial technology (also known as "fintech"), and consulting. For ScaleUp Denmark, companies interviewed by the evaluators consistently experienced the greatest value from activities tailored to their individual challenges/needs, while collective activities were viewed as useful for early startups, but then seen as progressively less valuable the more mature a participating company was.

**Results-driven schemes should be targeted to those best able to participate.** Given ScaleUp Denmark's goal of accelerating the growth of promising startups, the evaluation of the programme recommended that future programs should focus on a more precise target group of scalable

startups instead of working with the entire SME segment. Comparatively, Innotech Student only let participants access funding after passing through multiple stages, such as meeting job creation key performance indicators (KPIs) – this carefully curated approach led to over 1,300 students receiving funds to establish and grow their new small businesses.

**Results-driven schemes require a nuanced definition of desired results.** The indicators used to define and evaluate the growth of participating SMEs, and therefore to evaluate the outcomes of the scheme itself, should be well-defined and nuanced, for instance accounting for both jobs and turnover rather than focussing on just one element of growth, or by aiming for international expansion as well as national growth. In Denmark, this is an area where evaluators felt that the Danish Regional Fund, which consisted of multiple schemes aimed at supporting SMEs between 2014-20, fell short<sup>16</sup>. Some indicators were found to overlap, placing unnecessary administrative demands on programme managers. They recommended determining only a few project-specific indicators that measure project activity outcomes rather than simply about managerial aspects of their implementation<sup>17</sup>.

**Matched coaching is valued by participants and should be facilitated by scheme operators.** Schemes should take an active role in partnering participating SMEs with advisors if they include such a service. For example, providing a list of suitable or collaborating advisors could facilitate the evaluation of SMEs' growth plans and performance, as well as ensuring that advice comes from trusted sources. This strength was demonstrated by both SpinLab and Scale-Up Denmark. Indeed, evaluators of the latter deemed its greatest success to be the integration of the programme's growth course with the participating companies' business ecosystems. Startups found it very valuable to be matched with larger, established companies in various roles as sparring partners, potential customers, or investors.

**Knowledge centres are more challenging to integrate, but it is worth the effort to do so.** Knowledge centres like universities, colleges, and business or sector associations can provide valuable know-how and expertise to participating SMEs, as well as dedicated facilities for product testing and specialised entrepreneurial efforts, such as the successful collaboration between SpinLab and academia. However, such relationships can sometimes be harder to integrate into support schemes because their funding models often demand more certainty over their roles and required contributions. Indeed, Scale-Up Denmark was less successful at building bridges between companies and knowledge centres, which ended up not being systematically involved. The Danish evaluators recommended that such institutions should have more a central role in growth-focussed SME support schemes, for example as demonstrated in Romania's Innotech Student, where these types of institutions were the support scheme grant managers.



## 5. Training, Education & Competence Development

Many schemes involve some form of training or education for businesses, either through universal training courses or bespoke efforts for participating companies. Several schemes also focus on developing employee competencies, in turn enabling companies to grow in new directions or hire new staff.

### 5.1 Case study schemes

→ **Danish Social Fund** was a 2014–2020 scheme in Denmark that included priorities on entrepreneurship and job creation. The aim was to provide 9,400 participants with entrepreneurial advice, and entrepreneurship courses for 9,525 participants. For competence development, the number of participating companies was higher than targeted, but the number of participants per company was significantly lower than targeted (6 vs 35). A midway evaluation of the scheme recommended that future schemes choose a lower target figure if deciding to make participants per company a KPI<sup>18</sup>.

→ **Innotech Student** (See Section 4): This Romanian scheme includes entrepreneurship courses for those students selected to participate in the programme.

**New SMEs should be partnered with trusted external course practitioners.** Schemes should aim to partner participating SMEs with external advisors who are trusted and vetted by the scheme operators. In turn, these advisors should receive clear expectations from the operators in terms of the scheme's requirements and success criteria. This enables the advisors to provide tailored advice, increasing the scheme's effectiveness.

**Establish concrete learning goals for any competency development courses.** This enables clear evaluation of the efficacy of the courses, for instance judging their relevance to participating companies and any advisors involved. Without clear goals, evaluating the scheme's success is made more complicated. This was recommended in the evaluation of the Danish Social Fund.

### 5.2 Recommendations for schemes focused on Training, Education & Competence Development

**Entrepreneurship courses should be delivered by advisors familiar with a culture of entrepreneurship.** It has been shown that teachers with personal experience in entrepreneurship are most effective at delivering courses about such skills, enabling learning for participants that remains truly relevant and actionable.

**Combine managerial and employee-oriented competence development.** Several success stories from an evaluation of the Danish Social Fund have shown the importance of organising upskilling of both managers and employees to anchor SME development and growth efforts.



## 6. Consulting & Advisory services

Whilst schemes under some of the other focus areas often include some form of coaching, mentorship, and/or access to specific expertise for entrepreneurs and SMEs, schemes under this section have a distinct consulting focus. They are primarily designed to provide a wider range of consultancy support to SMEs who apply in areas such as business transformation, adapting to the climate crisis, business strategy, and digitisation. These consultancy services can be offered for free, via match funding (funds set to be paid in proportion to funds available from other sources), or via other funding lines.

### 6.1 Case Study Scheme

→ **ICUK<sup>19</sup>** is the Innovation Centre of the Ústí Region (Czech Republic), which offers a range of services within this a JTF territory, including assistance to aspiring entrepreneurs with business ideas, development and innovation in established companies, rental space for businesses, and consultation on business plans and funding options. On the consulting side of services, there are three key schemes on offer:

→ **ICUK PLATINN<sup>20</sup>** provides access for SMEs to more than 150 top experts sourced from the transnational Ynovate network linking eight Czech innovation support centres, including one in fellow JTF region Moravia-Silesia<sup>21</sup>. The first 40 hours of expert time is free to SME applicants, with up to 80 additional hours to be 50% co-financed by

the recipient company and 50% by ICUK. Results so far demonstrate that 87% of companies consider the free phase so beneficial that they continue to the co-financed stage. After collaborating with ICUK employees to define specific problems and desired advice, SMEs are assigned appropriate expert(s) via a peer-to-peer approach rather than using traditional consultancies. The experts can provide support on:

- Developing financing, pricing, or cash flow management Strategy
- Business development, international expansion, marketing, or product innovation

- Internal process optimisation and corporate culture development
- Strategic partnership creation and tech transfer with companies, universities, or other organisations

→ **Digital Innovation Hub**<sup>22</sup>, among other functions, provides grant consultancy, helping companies to find and check eligibility for relevant digitisation grants.

→ **Business Ambulance**<sup>23</sup> is a weekly service for appointments with experienced entrepreneurs, CEOs, and other ICUK experts to discuss any element of running a SME, from developing a new idea to dealing with finances and customers.

## 6.2 Recommendations for schemes focussed on Consulting & Advisory Services

**Covering multiple consultancy areas at once can enhance the overall scheme.** For example, connections across ICUK's multiple strands all interlink, with experts providing multiple services for interested SMEs. ICUK also collaborates with a myriad of organisations, enabling ideas and businesses to be more organically incubated and assisted.

**Scheme account managers can improve the effectiveness of the consulting services provided.** ICUK PLATINN's participating SMEs are supported by account managers who help them to uncover which advisory expert would be most useful for them.



## 7. Financial Support for Investments

Providing financial support to SMEs are another common focus area for many support schemes. Access to funding is typically contingent on certain conditions being met by those companies applying. Note that, whilst schemes described in other focus area sections of this toolkit also offer grants or funding towards those focus areas, the financial support described here in this section is towards direct investment in company initiatives relevant to the scheme's support scope.

### 7.1 Case Study Schemes

- SMARTCymru was a research, development, and innovation (RD&I) scheme targeted at SMEs across Wales offering financial support for various stages of the RD&I process between 2009–2015. The scheme provided match funding to innovative businesses aiming to create high quality R&D related jobs, increase business expenditure on R&D, encourage and support industry collaborations with other partners, and contribute towards cross-cutting themes including targets for environmental action plans and equality and diversity strategies. The funding amount and matched

proportion available varied by RD&I stage, as summarised in the table below. By the end of the programme, SMARTCymru supported 146 enterprises with GBP 26.2 million (EUR 30.2 million), smaller than their target of 245. However, the scheme exceeded job creation targets, with a total of 768 jobs created or safeguarded, created GBP 27.9 million (EUR 32.1 million) in gross added value, and led to an average of GBP 420,000 (EUR 484,000) in additional sales per evaluated company<sup>24</sup>.

RD&I Stage	Funding to...	Match funding by enterprise size			
		Small	Medium	Large	Limit
Development of Concept	Explore and further develop the initial concept	<50%	<50%	<50%	£1,400 (€1,610)
Feasibility	Assess viability of new products, processes, or technologies.	<75%	<75%	<65%	£15,000 (€17,270)
Industrial Research	Support research to facilitate the development of new products, processes, or technologies.	<70%	<60%	<50%	£100,000 (€115,000)
Experimental Development	Implement results of Industrial Research via pre-production prototype, product design, or initial demonstration projects.	<45%	<35%	<25%	£200,000 (€230,000)
Exploitation	Assist with the costs of new product/process developed in an earlier phase funded by SMARTCymru (e.g., marketing, publicity, advertising, or product certification)	<50%	<50%	<50%	£20,000 (€23,000)

## 7.2 Recommendations for schemes focused on Financial Support for Investments

### Prioritise raising awareness of financial support schemes.

Though only 16% of Welsh businesses had even heard of the SMARTCymru programme, 76% were interested in learning more and potentially applying for support upon hearing about it. This may explain why the scheme only supported 60% of its target number of businesses. Scheme partners should provide clear referrals to apply to the scheme, and should also have distinctive and consistent branding, which will enable greater brand awareness. Finally, targeted email campaigns and/or social media efforts could also help to raise awareness about the schemes.

### Ensure smooth transitions through all phases of a multi-phase support programme.

For example, several SMARTCymru participants were frustrated by the time taken to progress through all stages of the programme. It is important that any blockages do not develop to the detriment of achieving targets or managing the profile of private sector funding.

### Define robust plans for inclusion of cross-cutting measures.<sup>25</sup>

SMARTCymru found it challenging to address its horizontal themes of sustainability, equality, and diversity despite them being part of its remit. This is because their approach to include these elements within participant plan evaluations was eventually deemed to be too weak. The programme had difficulties collecting cross-cutting themes' indicator data due to the decentralised nature of its collection via 'Innovation Specialists' who provided initial contact and support to potential applicants. Ultimately, there was a lack of targeted support for projects addressing the horizontal themes, which meant cross-cutting impacts were rather low.



## 8. Equal Opportunities

Several schemes focused their designs on fostering equal opportunities in entrepreneurship for groups underrepresented in parts of the workforce, including women, migrants/refugees, people with disabilities, youth, and senior citizens.

### 8.1 Case Study Schemes

→ **CAPSULE** is an Erasmus+ programme aiming to support around 100 female entrepreneurs aged 18-28 from Romania, Croatia, and Hungary, nurturing an international community over 18 months from 2023 to 2025 via a free programme of skills development and mentoring for successful applicants. 'Impact Hubs' in Bucharest<sup>26</sup>, Zagreb<sup>27</sup>, and Budapest<sup>28</sup> organise entrepreneurial support by providing workspaces, business development and incubation programmes, as well as a career services organisation called 'Career Shift'. CAPSULE particularly encouraged applications from young mothers looking to develop their own businesses, as well as female migrants and refugees. Participants experience five e-courses developing digital, creative, and entrepreneurial skills, join three communities of practice, attend five international mastermind sessions, and develop their idea through three incubation weekends with support from chosen mentors and coaches.

→ **Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs**<sup>29</sup> matches aspiring young entrepreneurs with a more experienced entrepreneur in another European country for one to six months, during which they can learn the skills necessary to start and/or successfully run a small business via on-the-job training at the host entrepreneur's SME. Most host entrepreneurs have coached more than one young entrepreneur. Since being launched in 2009, there have been over 11,000 exchanges across 45 countries.

→ **Innotech Student** was already described in more detail earlier in [Section 4](#), including its own dedicated focus on young entrepreneurs in Romania.

### 8.2 Recommendations for schemes focused on Equal Opportunities

**Precisely targeted schemes can have a wider reach.** Because CAPSULE has a tight focus on assisting a selected group of young female entrepreneurs, it can combine mentorship, incubation, skills development, and networking, thereby offering a more rounded support scheme. Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs, meanwhile, has attained impressive longevity and geographic diversity by being targeted to one specific activity, namely matching newer entrepreneurs with more experienced ones in a different country.

### Being clear about programme eligibility and activities sets expectations and defines level of interest.

The Innotech Student scheme has made clear which exact sectors are relevant for its incubation process, which bodies are eligible to apply to be grant managers, and what the students must do to receive funding. This clarity and the interest generated by the scheme has led to an almost sevenfold increase in the scheme's budget. Likewise, CAPSULE's organisers set clear expectations for successful applicants by clarifying who is eligible to apply, by laying out a full calendar of events, and by each organising Impact Hub listing their respective sets of ambassadors supporting their part of the scheme.

## 9. Overall Recommendations for SME Support Schemes

Beyond the tailored recommendations in the sections above, there are several general recommendations for designing effective regional SME support schemes which could be particularly relevant for successful initiatives within JTF territories, including:

**Delivering additionality:** Without a clear picture of the available schemes within a given region, new schemes could suffer from low application rates. Therefore, schemes should be designed in such a way that they bring added value, complement existing offerings and do not (excessively) overlap with them.

**Targeting precisely:** Scheme design should account for the diverse needs of SMEs in various stages of maturity, and precisely define the target group. Startups and established SMEs have different needs, business goals and mindsets that need to be respectively addressed and guided. Schemes should be designed in a needs-centric way that tailors to the goals of the targeted group.

**Offering variety and optionality:** Precise targeting does not need to mean that schemes have only a narrow remit. Indeed, SpinLab specialises in particular company types and provides access to thematic innovation hubs. Meanwhile, ICUK provides three different consulting and advisory services depending on the level of input desired by the SME.

**Providing accessible information:** Whilst proximity to the institutions operating the scheme is always preferable, advisers and resources should at least (also) be easily reachable online or via telephone. The risk of digital exclusion needs to be mitigated where possible, and new schemes should be well and widely advertised to maximise reach. Entrepreneurs often share that the hardest part about receiving support is to find information about the support options.

**Processing applications quickly:** The time gap between applying for support and receiving it should be as small as possible to ensure certainty for the businesses applying. Furthermore, experience has shown that preceding financial support with business consulting activities helps a scheme involving disbursement of funds to attain better outcomes (for instance longer survivability of enterprises assisted). In other words, grants should only be provided following an underlying analysis of needs, but still within a timely manner.

**Sustaining support:** Unfortunately, most schemes end without sufficient consulting on what comes next, how to apply for further funds, and so on. Establishing a foundation for businesses to understand what next steps follow the end of the immediate support, capacity-building, or funding is important for more sustained and impactful success.

**Evaluating success:** Schemes should ensure that they are adequately monitoring and measuring performance against their targeted goals and outcomes. This could involve a third-party undertaking evaluations, as has been referenced for several of the case studies discussed in this toolkit. Another methodology is to evaluate impact using a control group and a treatment group, with (for example) the former not receiving support from the scheme and the latter doing so. One can then evaluate whether the scheme improves outcomes for SMEs compared to those not on it. In any case, as was mentioned in an earlier section, care should also be taken to identify the proper indicators to monitor and evaluate.

## 10. Additional Resources

- EU Coal+ Knowledge Products such as the Sustainable employment and welfare support toolkit<sup>30</sup> provide additional information on how to re-skill former fossil fuel activity employees.
- Projects highlighted by the Just Transition Platform<sup>31</sup> such as the Just Skills Hub provide further avenues for developing the most helpful support schemes for your region.
- WEgate<sup>32</sup> is a network focussed on supporting female entrepreneurs. It has a huge database of EU-wide and country-specific resources for starting, growing, and supporting new businesses which could provide avenues for collaboration for your region's support scheme.

This document was prepared by researchers at Guidehouse having conducted desk research, interviews and surveys. Any information and views contained in the present document do not reflect the official opinion of the European Commission. Reuse is authorised provided the source is acknowledged.

This document is part of a series presenting information and lessons learned on policy approaches at national, regional or local level supporting a just transition to a climate-neutral economy. The Just Transition Platform (JTP) assists EU Member States and regions to unlock the support in this transition. Visit the [JTP website](#).

## Endnotes

- 1 McKinsey & Company, 2020 [Europe's start-up ecosystem: Heating up, but still facing challenges](#)
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- 3 European Court of Auditors, 2014 [Has the ERDF successfully supported the development of business incubators?](#)
- 4 Next Step Challenge, 2023 [Scale-Up Denmark](#)
- 5 Interreg Europe, 2018 [Scale-up Denmark](#)
- 6 SpinLab, 2023 [SpinLab The HHL Accelerator](#)
- 7 UBI Global, 2023 [The UBI Global World Rankings of Business Incubators and Accelerators 2023](#)
- 8 The HHL Leipzig Graduate School of Management
- 9 RootCamp, 2023 [Homepage](#)
- 10 Smart Infrastructure Hub Leipzig, 2023 [Homepage](#)
- 11 The Better Entrepreneurship Policy Tool, 2022 [Innotech Student](#)
- 12 A programme to help Romanians to find a job, improve education and skills, and reduce poverty and social exclusion. See [here](#) for more.
- 13 De minimis aid refers small amounts of funding exempt from State Aid controls and given to an enterprise. By law, they cannot exceed EUR 200,000 over three fiscal years. These rules are set to expire on 31 December 2023, according to the [European Commission](#).
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- 16 COWI, 2019 [Midway Evaluation of the Danish Regional Fund](#)
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- 21 Ynovate, 2023 [Homepage](#)
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- 23 ICUK, 2023 [Business Ambulance and ICUK Experts](#)
- 24 Welsh Government, 2016 [End of Programme Evaluation of the SMARTCymru RD&I Financial Support for Business Programme](#)
- 25 Note that a cross-cutting theme here means that all projects supported by that scheme should cover that theme, even if there are other conditions or foci which only apply to particular project types.
- 26 Impact Hub Bucharest, 2023 [Capsule](#)
- 27 Impact Hub Zagreb, 2023 [Capsule](#)
- 28 Impact Hub Budapest, 2023 [Capsule](#)
- 29 Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs, 2023 [Homepage](#)
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