DELIVERABLE D.T2.4.1

MANUAL AND FUNCTIONAL MODEL FOR RIS OBSERVATORIES – PART 1

Results and outputs   **11 2019**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Table of Pictures

TABLE OF ABBREVIATIONS

A2B	Academia to Business
B2B	Business to Business
e.g.	for example
EEN	European Enterprise Network
Etc.	et cetera
EU	European Union
ie	id est
PoC	Proof-of-concept
RIS	Regional Innovation Strategy
RO	Regional (Support) Organisation is used as a synonym for RIS observatories
R & D/I	Research and Development/Innovation
SME	Small and Medium Enterprise
S3	Smart Specialisation Strategy of the European Union
WP	Work Package
V	version

Document Control Sheet

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A. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The document is intended to provide a manual for a functional model of an ideal and modern Business Support Organisation (BSO). The aim of this document is to describe the possible mission of such a BSO, its functions and its values. The design and structure of such an ideal model of a BSO are laid out in the operational model. We aimed to describe such a model of a BSO that on the one hand can offer a tailor-made support to businesses and at on the other hand can provide the regional (state) policy makers with valuable information on local economy, its businesses as well as their demand for specific support tools.[1] For a better handling and for the management of such BSOs; to achieve the aims; there is a checklist so that existing BSOs can analyse their situation compared to the ideal of a model BSO. Finally, there are some suggestions for improvement following the analysis. However, it is important to consider each and every BSO individually, since they know their respective region, companies, policy makers etc. best.

The manual and the model of a BSO was designed based on a series of pan-European activities aimed at studying the functioning of a variety of BSO that focus on several smart specialisation domains, the recognition of business demand in respective BSOs' and an in-depth analysis of selected best practices from Austria and Italy.[2] An ICT platform with the set of tools has been created to map the competences of approx. 100 BSOs in Central Europe as well as to allow several learning features for their network.[3]

We built the functional model on the analysis of the studied BSOs across the Central European regions. The focus is set on their performance design and provision of tailored tool set (services, competences). It allows us to identify a variety of models used by BSOs. Here, we look for the inspiration of an ideal BSO that aims at satisfying end users with services and policy makers with feedback on the condition of the business at the same time.

What we find unique is that the functional model of a BSO could be identified thanks to several audited organisations and that it is ready to be widely executed, even though the services vary due to the fact that the regions differ, the character of activities and the roles of the BSO as well as expectations of their beneficiaries are different. Nevertheless, the BSO functional model once

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[1] About future steps and strategies for the further development and improvement of the RO but also for the Smart Specialisation Strategy as such.

[2] The documentation explaining in details of the methodological approaches used and the results as collected per region / land can be obtained directly from SMART_watch project Lead Partner or via the project website.

[3] ICT Platform = the competence map being an online system enabling users to find out about services offered and market needs and the benchlearning system enabling the learning in between the BSOs.

implemented properly, can contribute to sustainable growth of the Central Europe regions in Smart Sectors.

The functional model of a BSO itself is laid down in a matrix system to better handle the complex issue of branches, functions and activities. Here, we try to provide the reader with a "mapping tool" allowing to better understand and learn on the BSOs services' complexity. It is necessary since every country or even region performs on and requires their own set of functions and activities that are spatially- and industry-specific.

Nevertheless, the functional model of a BSO has to be first thoroughly overviewed by means of a Business Model Canvas, in order to make the whole environment clearer like its key partners, its key clients, its value propositions etc., but also considering sustainability issues like its social (inclusive) and environmental impact. These sustainability issues will become more and more important and have to be considered in all events.

The main goal of this document is to describe the functional model of Business Support Organisations. Business Support Organizations offer services to the economy, especially to companies within a region or a state. Under the term BSO there are several, quite different organizations acting on the market. The following types of organizations can be named here:

- Funding organizations (often regional- or state owned) who offer funding for companies in different areas like R&D, qualification, etc.

- Networks/Clusters, development agencies who offer mostly non-monetary service for companies from the same branch like the "Wood Cluster Styria"

- Technology-transfer organizations who are liaisons or who sell their know-how to companies. Universities and different types of research organization can be named here.

- Other organizations that provide variety of support actions to business, including chamber of commerce, guilds of artisans, etc.

We understand the modern role of BSOs as those serving their communities (business and social) and offering both free and paid service / data to their customers. In order to strengthen the meaning of their involvement into the local / regional / state economy and show their institutional potential to interact with the ecosystem, the name Regional Observatory is used. In other words, BSOs perform the role of chances providers and knowledge gates. As the ecosystem needs the knowledge on the economy of the place and its actors, ROs are also responsible for the flow of information in the ecosystem. Due to their original nature, they can be either technology / markets based or policy-linked.

The Silesian regional network of ROs has served as one of the sources of inspiration for the SMART_watch project to allow the identification of further 60+ BSOs with the functions described here.

The structure of the document is as follows. First, the most important findings from the analysis of 60+ audited ROs is compared with the findings from the demand side of businesses engaged in their ecosystems. Then, a n insight into the sources of inspiration is made. It aims at defining the functions of the BSO / RO based on the best practices (2 from Austria as well as 2 from Italy). A brief presentation of best practices follows. Here comes, the core part where you can find tools for a description of the functional model of a modern BSO. The functions of a good or presumably ideal RO are discussed with its roles to the clients and to policy makers. Here we outline and discuss the specificity of the BSO functions by means of the two approaches. On the one hand, it is the matrix system that is a mere suggestion how to handle a complex issue BSO. On the other hand, it is the BSO's Business Model Canvas. Finally, we offer a guide for the management staff how to best observe the aims of being as close to the ideal model of a RO as possible.

B. General - modern BSOs in the frame of the S3 strategy Styria

The Smart Specialisation Strategies (S3) assists regions to grow economically by implementing tailor-made business support strategies. They focus on identifying niche areas of competitive strength, solving major societal challenges, bringing in a demand-driven dimension, fostering innovation partnerships emphasizing emphasising greater co-ordination between different societal stakeholders and aligning resources and strategies between private and public actors of different governance levels.

The actors who normally create and implement the S3 strategies are the triple helix actors, including regional governments and a variety of BSOs in the regions.

Modern BSOs should have as an "ideological background" towards the S3 strategies include in their service portfolio support measures that contribute to the implementation of the strategies. These measures could be:

- support mechanisms for technology and knowledge transfer processes,

- information about business and funding opportunities in order to be able to support the targeted SMEs,

- support offer for management issues or

- innovation support and intellectual property protection.

Furthermore, modern BSOs have a function of widely understood communication. They should offer access to and involvement in research and innovation projects. It is absolutely vital that they offer access to networks, B2B as well as B2A and vice versa. With B2B we mean communication with other companies, especially direct cooperation or access to networking with big size companies is a value-adding offering. B2A means communication, contact and cooperation with universities and research bodies at the regional level and at the national level for research, knowledge- and ideas exchange etc.

Involvement in research and industrial development projects funded by EU and regional funds and involvement in specific clusters at the regional level (Innovation Hubs) are as important as a free-of-charge advice for founders and entrepreneurs.

C. FEEDBACK TO THE AUDITED ROs (BSOs)

Future offerings that should be provided by an ideal RO (BSO)

According to the audits that were done in the frame of the SMART_watch project the following services could be offered by an ideal model of a Modern BSOs:

- Knowledge sharing and networking e.g. about Regional Innovative Networks'

- informing companies; about technologies' and markets' future developments;

- fostering cooperation in developing common products, services or markets (improving networking, also through formal agreements between companies

- offering access to dedicated/specific services like additive manufacturing, simulation software, etc.?);

- offering access to personalized information (about, e.g., opportunities, grants, calls, etc.);

- support the involvement in large-size European-level projects (regional projects should not be a priority);

- offering training, also certification of learning/training outcomes (especially on areas of common interest by the Regional Innovative Networks' participants, so-called "cross-training");

- offering markets' benchmarking; support to (also company-level) strategies development;

- supporting to "intellectual property" access and implementation; communication for business development (outside the Regional Innovative Networks);

- supporting to products' certification (when certification is relevant and/or compulsory for the final markets/clients or for intermediate suppliers: e.g. for energy/environmental products/services);

- organizing workshops; general B2B meeting;

- offering budget (promotion, participation, monetary bond), orders;

- supporting in recruiting of specialists;

- online branch platforms boosting cooperation opportunities between science and business as well as search facilities for potential partners who want to collaborate on product development / services; economic missions,

- advice in writing applications for co-financing

Datasets and services wanted by business, hence not available

Datasets that are actually missing are the following:

- data about EU/international funding opportunities (for research, projects, etc.) – involvement of EEN; companies/other organisations participating in each Regional Innovative Network (details, profiles, characteristics, etc.);

- companies/other organisations potentially interested/to be involved in the Regional Innovative Networks or in specific projects/cooperation; a platform to make knowledge transfer processes services easily accessible; qualitative reports and policy recommendations;

- list of all possible reports financed by EU projects on one place to get easier data and trends on one place (e.g. https://ub-cooperation.eu/index/casestudies);

The following services are missing as well in ROs as also in BSOs:

I.   Communication and promotion services:

- no established forms or stated services among the toolbox of the audited ROs to boost the communication between the SMEs and the research institutes

- lobbying (on both technical and political side);

- communication/promotion support

II.   Networking services

- operational networking;

- knowledge sharing;

- competences' sharing

- cooperation in developing products, services, solutions or markets (improving networking, also through formal agreements between companies

- access and involvement in large-size European-level projects (regional projects should not be a priority);

- regional Innovative Networks are actually very weak in terms of internal organisation (management and development structure) and formalized operating processes (this is due to their being generally young)

- the initial involvement of companies in the Regional Innovative Networks, largely formal, must be turned into a substantial, active and continuous involvement

- The involvement of big-size companies in each Regional Innovative Network

- services aimed at supporting cross-contamination between Regional Innovative Networks which operate on contiguous or related issues/areas/themes

- initiating cooperation between entities

III.   Special tailor-made documents, reports, strategies

- strategies/scenarios' regular updating/definition;

- qualitative Reports and policy recommendations are not common offerings

- RIS strategy should not be only "on paper", it should be online special database of best-practices and services from all countries to be used for all RO's (we designed such a system for Ministry of Industry and Trade);

- capacity to address explicit requests coming from companies. The goal is to offer more in-depth and targeted strategic analysis to companies (more detailed and of quality);

- studies on new, developing markets that are open to cooperation (both in the field of scientific and business collaboration);

- industry studies from the borderline of medicine and IT;

- business and technology mapping and recommendations

- expertise on profitability of medical and manufacturing projects (also for industry) with the use of 3D printing

IV. Education and training services

- free business training;

- educational services

- mentoring support

V. Expert services

- technological knowledge and exchange support;

- support for developing common labels/brands (e.g. in one sector);

- free brokerage services (including initiation of cooperation) in establishing contacts with business and scientific partners, cooperation between entities in using infrastructure, key products and solutions

- external contracting of specific / non-standard obligations resulting from agreements with entities financing research (e.g. wider access to the service of travel);

- legal consultations on business activity (in the field of changing regulations, entering the foreign markets, property rights protection e.g. GDPR);

- expertise on writing the application for co-financing

- transfer of knowledge about legal requirements and standards regarding the co-financing

- guidance on how to enter markets and the services supporting learning on formal and legal requirements;

- services of matching manufacturers with customers with the use of an online platform or application

- searching for service providers for the medical industry, searched clinical trials and products launched on the market

- services which reduce burdens and risks for the company

VI.   Information services

- funding dedicated to innovation and development;

- support by public institutions

- a contact person for all questions

To sum up, the success of the modern BSO depends both on the amount and the quality of the provided service. They typically include funding for companies, skillful staff and good career paths. BSO's solid operational and business model usually combine broad ownership and collaborative mechanisms. The strategic approach oft he BSO takes over financial support, regular monitoring of the strengths and the development of the region, strategic focus on networks and internationalisation as well as professional communication at all levels, i.e. internal (management – staff) and external (RO towards customers, stakeholder and policy makers, other Modern BSOs in networks).

D. Analysis of the best practice BSOs / ROs

The functions, meaning the services, were taken from the four selected best practice organisations, two from Austria and two from Italy. Those were taken as best practice from all the organisations that had carried out the audit in the SMART-watch project and so they were asked to serve as best-practice examples during the ROs' networking events in Austria and Italy.

SFG - Styrian Business Promotion Agency (Austria) - services offered:

The SFG is wholly owned by the state of Styria in Austria. As the regional business promotion agency, the role of the SFG is to grow and consolidate the Styrian economy. The role of the SFG is to attract new business to the region with a view to encouraging industrial expansion. New company formations are intensively supported in the areas of site selection, incentives and local formalities. The SFG also works in partnership with the region's existing companies offering a broad range of services free of charge. These range from general information, advice on grants

and financing to internationalisation. The SFG acts as a link to Styrian technology and innovation centres as well as to networks and clusters.

SFG offers services in the following fields which can be summarized and understand as a functional model of the SFG

- Location development and management
- Support for innovation
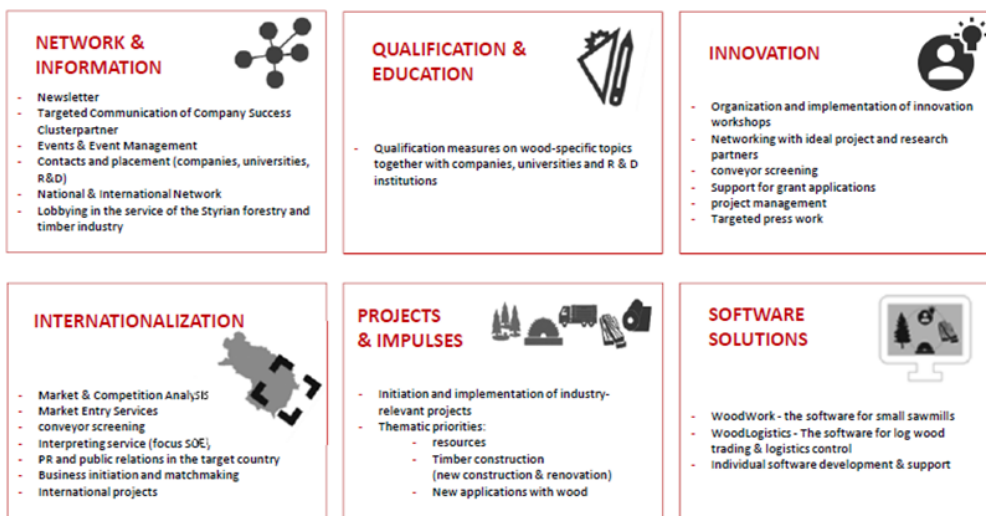- Entrepreneurship and growth of young enterprises

SFG - Styrian Business Promotion Agency (Austria) - services offered:

Picture 1 Services from SFG,
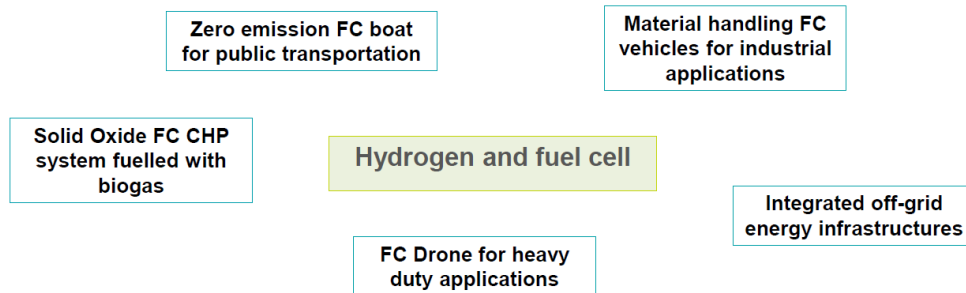
Styrian Wood Cluster (Austria) – services offered:

Picture 2 Services from Wood Cluster, AT
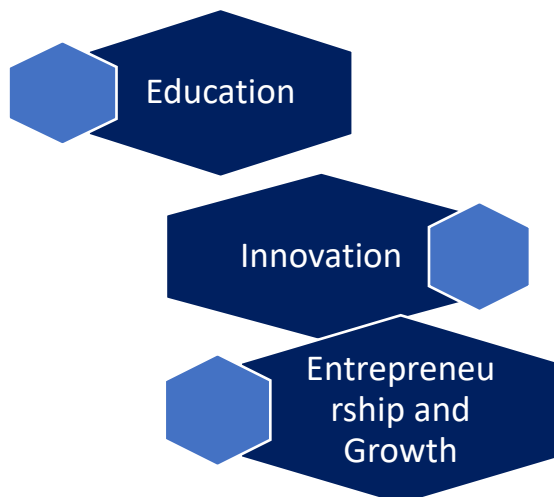
Environment Park Clever (Italy) - services offered:

Picture 3 Services from Clever Cluster, IT

UNISG - University of Gastronomic Sciences of Pollenzo (Italy) - services offered:

Picture 4 Services from UNIG, IT

UNISG of Pollenzo represents excellence for everything concerning Agri-food in Italy. Concerning its functional and model, UNISG uses an original, innovative teaching model whose aim is to support gastronomy and culinary with the target group of students, enterprises and research centres but also farmers (2.0). Over the years it has also developed an excellent reputation:

✓ to develop important networks in the academic and non-academic fields;

- to have strengthened its third mission over the years;

- to have contributed to innovation in the field of agri-food;

- to have created an innovative development tool for the entire area in which it insists.

E. THE IDEAL FUNCTIONAL MODEL OF A RO/ BSO

The mission of a Regional Observatory is in general to serve as a collaborative actor of the triple-helix. It means that ROs work closely with the businesses and collect, gather and analyse market and technology data in order to - on the one hand - generate and provide diagnostic and evaluation information to the business and on the other hand to regional stakeholders aiming at regional development policies. The latter function not only helps to monitor and evaluate the implemented policy but it also proceeds the newly formed/updated development policy by means of the constant learning effect.

The functions set to the above Observatories should in particular enhance:

1. the improvement of the quality of strategic planning and operating activities in the region,

2. the creation of a flexible system for gathering and aggregating data for the benefit of the BSOS/ROs' users,

3. the development of standards and data exchange between the Government and the Local Government,

4. the dissemination of knowledge on regional development to the business,

5. the creation of a system for the rapid and efficient flow of information between entities responsible for policy development,

6. increased interest in strategic thinking about development at national, regional and subregional levels,

7. initiation of debates on the strategic directions of regional development.

ROs are, therefore, responsible for the flow of information between major public bodies involved in the implementation of development at regional levels, in order to monitor and perform an evaluation having a territorial impact.[4]

[4] Combes, P., P. Lafourcade, M., Competition, Market Access and Economic Geography: Structural Estimation and Predictions for France. Regional Science and Urban Economics, 41(6) (2011) 508-524

In order to a describe e goof practice model of a RO/BSO we use the Business Model Canvas. Business Model Canvas is a strategic management tool for developing new or documenting existing business models

Business Model Canvas for a good practice Model of a RO / BSO
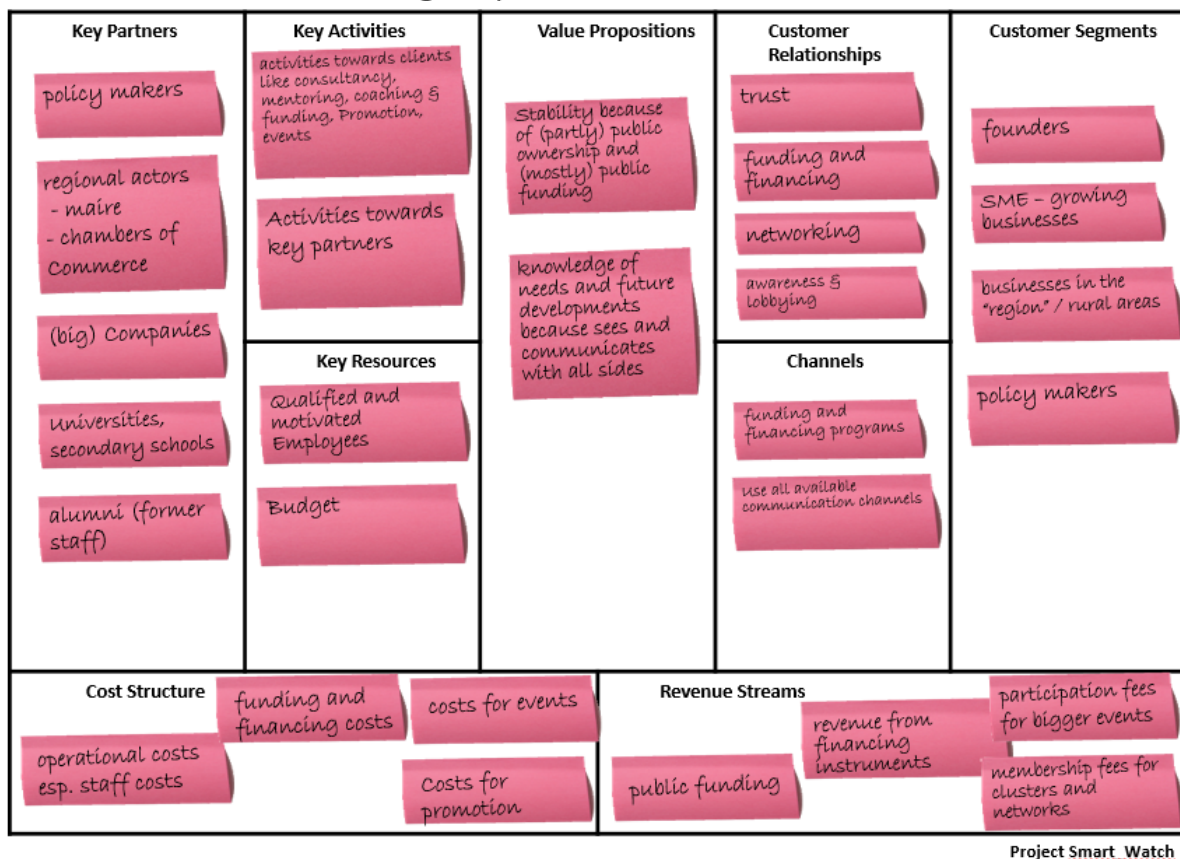
Picture 5 Business Model Canvas for a model of a RO / BSO

Business Model Canvas for a good practice Model of a RO / BSO - extended

http://www.businessmodelgeneration.com

KEY PARTNERS are those that will help the RO with the implementation of S3 startegies. The partners can be seen as part of the triple helix model, so policy makers, interest groups on the policy side, universities, schools on the educational side and businesses. However, we would like

to add another group of key partners that is often not considered but important: former employees. Since staff in such an organisation is closely in touch with all sorts of companies it is quite common for employees to change their job and work for one of these companies. These alumni can play an important role for future activities especially if a good off boarding process is in place and the ties with the RO can be upheld somehow.

The KEY ACTIVITIES can be grouped as operational activities that are mostly supportive, activities towards clients like funding and financing activities and consultancy, coaching, mentoring, training, expert analysis as well as networking and promotional activities. And lastly, there are activities towards stakeholders and partners, where it is also ensured that they learn about future needs and developments. Ideally, these areas should not be separated too much or at least have good communication processes in place to ensure cooperation because skills and knowledge is the key for success.

KEY RESOURCES are twofold: on the one hand it is for sure the staff of a RO, so human resources, on the other hand, the financial means are vital, therefore a solid budget. This involves not only money for funding and financing instruments, also infrastructure like regional business centres, money for promotion and to organize big events with top speakers etc.

VALUE PROPOSITION answers the question what the RO is offering. This will be support by all means for its clients, funding and financing programs, consultancy, mentoring, coaching, networking but also lobbying. This will also be information and feedback to policy makers and stakeholders about what is needed in the future, what is or works well and what is not.

CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIP describes how the RO will communicate with their customers, that are entrepreneurs of all types like start-ups, spin offs, growing companies, especially in the selected fields. These are also policy makers on the other hand.

CHANNELS show the ways how customers will be attracted and how the measures will be delivered to them and to a wider public. Channels have to be informative, quick, and efficient, that means that (updated) webpages, social media accounts and e-mails are very popular. Face to face remains important so also Innovation Hubs and their managing bodies play an important role.

CUSTOMER SEGMENTATION will be necessary because it is impossible to support each and every company in a country/region.

The COST STRUCTURE shows the kind of costs that the implementation involves, the available budget. This has to correlate with the REVENUE STREAMS that make clear where the money comes from.

The extended version, and we think this has to become more and more important, also considers the SOCIAL & ENVIRONMENTAL COSTS and BENEFITS. Sustainability has to be thought of in every respect, so the model RO itself will set a good example itself and in addition will support particularly with a focus on these aspects as well.

Services of a ideal model of a RO/BSO

The functional model of a RO/BSO describes an organisation that provides SMEs (as a main feature) with knowledgeable **information** or even more comprehensive **support offers**, meaning some additional help like funding programs, in the following fields:

- business and funding opportunities

- management issues / strategic issues (also audits like innovation audits)

- communication issues

- innovation support

- intellectual property protection and its implementation

- involvement in R& (D) I projects – should also done via operational model

- access to international and national/regional networks, B2B as well as B2A, clusters etc.

- involvement in research and industrial development projects funded by EU and regional funds and involvement in specific clusters

- proof-of-concept funding

- funds for building prototypes, conducting commercial feasibility testing and for demonstrating mitigation of risk

- access to the innovative infrastructure, technology, solutions

- educational and training services

- expert services

- information services, reports developed on an individual order

- internationalization support (support for entering foreign markets like international fairs and economic missions)

- mentoring support

Again, the focus of these fields should be – like in a matrix – within the S3 strategic focus of the region, see as an example . A good digitalisation strategy is important as well since a cross-

Government digital platform ensures efficient and effective work inside and outside the Government.[5]

As to the **content of all the offering**, that depends on the respective region: its strengths (leading companies, educational sector offering …). It is important to try to strengthen the strengths further and to develop a real USP than trying to soften weaknesses or just to copy strategies from other regions that are not comparable at all or where competition is extremely strong.

In the following figure, the branches have been selected randomly, since each RO itself has to determine its respective branches – areas of competence.

Matrix of functions of a model RO / BSO

	Traffic	Green and Eco	Health	Tourism	….	…
R & D & I	Activities	Activities				
Internationalisation	Activities	Activities				
Business, funding & financing opportunities	Activities					
Infrastructure						
Networks						
…						

In each of the branches like traffic, eco, health … with regard to the fields like R & D & I, Internationalisation … specific activities to be taken have to be defined and later implemented. Internal is also communication, networking …

Picture 6 Matrix of the possible functions of model of a RO /BSO

The format, how to bring these actions towards companies are primarily consultancy, but also information events, trainings and conferences are viable paths. The most important thing is not how but that the interventions secure the best value for the taxpayer.[6]

Apart from that, the preferred information and communication channels have to be informative, quick, and efficient, meaning of course digital. That means that (updated) webpages, social media accounts and e-mails are very popular. However, also Innovation Hubs and their managing bodies

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[5] https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/functional-model-for-more-efficient-and-effective-government, 24.10.2019,3.

[6] https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/functional-model-for-more-efficient-and-effective-government, 24.10.2019, 3.

are commonly used channels. That means that face to face support still is, and will also in the future, be important. In this context, the common language plays a crucial role, as the innovation aspect, S3 areas, funding opportunities should be perfectly understood by all actors within the quadruple helix.

On top of the above-mentioned functions of a RO, really meaning additionally if capacity is available in the respective RO, it is advisable that some – maybe new - format is created where companies can be approached on a level playing field, so to speak on eye level. A communication format that can even be rather informal, in a relaxed atmosphere, where knowledge is shared about Regional Innovative Networks' participant companies about technologies' and markets' future developments or whatever is on the agenda. This would lead to competences' sharing, cooperation ie in developing products, services or markets, improving networking, also through formal agreements between companies at the very same time. This format is not a must have but rather nice to have, but it would help building trust and sustainable relationship between RO and companies. For that, you also need experienced staff that is continually employed at the RO, because those things heavily rely on personal contacts

F. CONCLUSION

To sum up, there is not one for all best practice model but just a toolset that has to be adapted to local and regional strategies. Furthermore, changes also have to come with some time since things keep developing and needs and companies themselves change over the years as well. This poses quite a task for the management because it always has to adapt, evaluate, improve and change things. For a Checklist and Suggested Measures to the outcome see the Annex.

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I. Annexes

A.1. Annex 1 Checklist for a model of a RO/BSO

This checklist intents to help the management of existing BSO/RO to improve their performance as well as to assist the management of future BSO/RO to set up a good BSO/RO. This is just an add-on that has been developed to better connect the C-map with the operational and functional model. Furthermore, to keep it short and simple, we selected 10 points only that are the most important ones to us. So this is not a comprehensive tool but – hopefully - a quick support for those who are interested.

The management of such an ideal model of a RO/BSO has therefore to do the following:

1. Ownership Structure of the RO/BSO

We suggest a PPP model, ideally a 50/50 ownership structure between private and public.

Ideal RO/BSO: 50/50 [in the middle]

Q: What does your ownership structure look like?

A: 100% public ......50/50 ....100% Private

2. Last audit or assessment of the region

What are the strengths in terms of companies / education fe big players in the automotive sector and a university courses in the respective fields

Ideal RO/BSO: 3 years is best, 10 is not so good – not every year with regard to use of resources.

Q: When did you carry out your last assessment of the region?

A: 3 years or less, 4 to 6 years, 10 years or longer ago

3. Acquiring, controlling and monitoring of budgets

One big issue for the management is to acquire budget from the political parties for their work. That is also where a PPP structure and participation becomes important because they can help with the "lobbying" / promoting of the importance the ROs/BSOs and its activities have.

Ideal RO/BSO: all points (More budget is usually – but not automatically – better.)

Q: How is your budget / resources situation?

A: Very Good – Good – Ok – bad.

4. Implement a given change process to be able to adapt the structure of the RO/BSO accordingly

Ideal RO/BSO: all points - to provide for a change process is essential. The management has not only to set up such a process but also to implement it regularly

Q: Do you have quality management processes in place, also for change / innovation processes?

A: Yes, good ones. Partly. No or not good ones.

5. Implement a good HR strategy part I: recruitment, career programms, on- and off-boarding process)

Ideal RO/BSO: all points. There is a HR strategy in place, with good onboarding, offboarding and also retention/career program in place.

Q: Do you have a HR strategy that provides also for on- and offboarding processes as well as for retention/career measures?

A: Yes, good ones. Partly. No.

6. Implement a good HR strategy part II: staff fluctuation

Ideal RO/BSO: Fluctuation of staff should be ok (max. 10% per year, including maternity/paternity leaves, retirements etc.). No fluctuation can be negative as well because new people also bring in new perspective.

Q: Do you monitor your fluctuation, if yes, is it: very high (30% or more), high (between 15% and 29%), ok (between 10% and 14%) or low (lower than 5%).

A: No, not at all. Very high (30% or more). High (15% to 20%). OK (6% to 14%). Low (5% or less)

7. Process for a continuous communication in all directions: stakeholders, Policy makers, enterprises, owners.

Ideal RO/BSO: all points Communication is done actively in all direction, it comprises information, quality reports, promotion activities towards everybody, including staff (alumni).

Q: Do you communicate actively in all direction, comprising information, quality reports (transparency), promotion activities towards everybody, including staff (alumni).

A: Yes, we cover all. We do it partly. No, we do not communicate or only into one direction (fe only towards enterprises, only towards policy makers).

8. Processes for the involvement of stakeholders and participation (national, regional)

Ideal RO/BSO: all points provides solid processes / possibilities for involvement of stakeholders, interest groups, etc.

Q: Does your RO provide for solid processes / possibilities for involvement of stakeholders, interest groups etc.?

A: Yes, we cover all. We do it partly. No, we do not involve such groups or not very actively.

9. Provide for services, support and funding/financing

Ideal RO/BSO: all points provides for a maximum of support, including information, consulting but also for funding and financing for their target group, especially start-up/founders, growing companies.

Q: Does your RO/BSO provide for a maximum of support, including information, consulting but also for funding and financing for their target group, especially start-up/founders, growing companies?

A: Yes, we cover all. We cover services only/ we cover funding/financing only. No, we do not support companies in such ways.

10. Involvement in international networks, projects or expert groups

Ideal RO/BSO: all points provides for a strong involvement in international networks, projects or expert groups.

Q: Is your RO/BSO strongly involved in international networks, projects or expert groups?

A: Yes, the RO/BSO is involved in international networks, projects and expert groups. Partly, we cover one or two. No, we are not engaged internationally at all.

A.2. Suggested Measures for ROs/BSOs to approach the ideal model suggested in this document (project):

1 Try to get a broader ownership structure, if that is not possible maybe to have a broad structure in advisory/steering or similar boards.

2 Evaluation is key, make sure that you carry out analysis or assessments whether the strengths of your respective region develop towards a good (S3) direction or not or whether new opportunities have opened up others diminished.

3 It is very difficult to give advise here. The broad ownership and the evaluation that shows results should help but generally it is very hard to secure resources and it means also stay constantly in touch with stakeholder and policy makers, enforce your communication etc.

4 Implement a good change process, inform and train your staff regularly to make the importance clear and create understanding for that. Show development over time, success stories etc.

5 It is time to implement a HR strategy, with good onboarding, offboarding and also retention/career programs in place. Involve your staff, they will give you plenty of ideas. Also a good consultant can be helpful there.

6 Maybe your processes/programs are not good enough. If budgets are restricted think of other incentives like flexible working hours, events you organise for employees …

7 Good communication towards all directions are essential. Get a good consultant for that or dedicate a person / part of a person to it. Think about possible ways, also look at other ROs/BSOs how they do it (C-Map). ROs/BSOs themselves should closely collaborate with chambers of commerce/economic chambers and technology parks that are relevant for the region. That means that it is advisable that the regional structure is also reflected in the organisational structure of the RO/BSO as well (ownership, boards ..).

8 ROs/BSO should offer access to and involvement wherever possible. Digital media like social media provide possibilities for that but be careful: you need competent and dedicated staff to be successful there. ROs/BSOs themselves should closely collaborate with chambers of commerce/economic chambers and technology parks that are relevant for the region. That means that it is advisable that the regional structure is also reflected in the organisational structure of the RO/BSO as well (ownership, boards ..).

9 ROs/BSOs should include in their service support with respect to technology and knowledge transfer processes, give information about business and funding opportunities in order to be able to support the targeted SMEs. Also, support offers for management issues as well as innovation support and intellectual property protection should be given, particularly to SMEs.

ROs/BSOs should offer access to and involvement in research and innovation projects. It is absolutely vital that they offer access to networks, B2B as well as B2A. With B2B we mean contact with other companies, especially direct cooperation or access to networking with big size companies is a value-adding offering. With B2A means contact and cooperation with universities and research bodies at the regional level (and also at the national level) for research, knowledge- and ideas exchange etc.

10 ROs/BSOs should be engaged in offer and offer access to international networks, research, business and innovation projects and in expert groups.