

DELIVERABLE D1.3.1

Funding agencies ready to join the Innovation Express Call (IEC) identified

Description

At least 3 funding agencies from project partner and programme regions confirmed their interest in joining the IEC. They are in charge with programmes that can be synchronizes as precondition of the IEC

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DELIVERABLE DESCRIPTION

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Quality of information

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<https://www.alpine-space.eu/project/innobiovc/>

@InnoBioVC, 2023



TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of abbreviations	2
1. Introduction	3
2. Activities implemented to attract Alpine Space regions and beyond	3
3. Funding Partners confirmed to join IEC24	5
4. Annexes:	7

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

B2B	Business to Business
BizUP	Business Upper Austria
CBE	Circular Bioeconomy
IEC24	Innovation Express 2024
IECS	Innovation Express Call Scheme
LGCA	Lombardy Green Chemistry Association
PLA	Polylactic Acid
SAT	Sustainability Assessment Tool
S3	Smart Specialization Strategy
TRL	Technology Readiness Level
VCG	Value Chain Generator
VCG.AI	Value Chain Generator AI



1. INTRODUCTION

INNOBIOVC (Innovation Express for Bioeconomy Value Chains) project specific objective was the implementation and rollout of a **cross-regional synchronised funding scheme** (IECS) for circular bioeconomy value chains (CB-VC) development that embeds the Value Chain Generator.ai (VCG.ai) tool for **smart partner matching** and quantifies **sustainability gains** reached by regions involved through the Sustainability Assessment Tool (SAT). This deliverable belongs to the project activity A1.3 “Roll out the enhanced Innovation Express Call Scheme (IEC) for establishing cross-regional value Chains”.

This activity comprised:

- Identification of regions that are interested to synchronise regional funding schemes for circular bioeconomy development and to participate in the upcoming Innovation Express Call.
- Setting-up a joint Innovation Express Call Secretariat to coordinate the call.
- Informing interested partners to apply for the call.
- Mutual implementation of the call.
- Promotion of VCG for partner matching & embedding the Assessment tool in the application process.

D.1.3.1 “Funding agencies ready to join the Innovation Express Call (IEC) identified” means:

1. in short activities implemented to inform regional authorities, programme owners and funding agencies on the planned setting up and rollout of IEC24 - a joint call for proposals implemented within the frame of the INNOBIOVC project by synchronizing existing regional funding schemes in the Alpine Space and beyond.
2. it informs on the funding partners and programmes confirmed to join IEC24 as well on obstacles why other regions were not able to participate.

2. ACTIVITIES IMPLEMENTED TO ATTRACT ALPINE SPACE REGIONS AND BEYOND

Based on the learnings of Innovation Express 2022 which was developed and implemented in the frame of the Interreg Alpine Space Project [ARDIA-Net](#) (2019-2022)

- the first steps focused **on awareness raising on how the Innovation Express Scheme works** and that INNOBIOVC prepares the launch of the Innovation Express Call 2024.
- secondly project partners, Alpine Space regions and regions beyond were asked **to identify potential regional and/or national funding programmes** available to support regional circular bioeconomy.



A **FACTSHEET** targeting regional authorities, programme owners/consultants, funding agencies and business support organisation was established informing on and inviting to join the “INNOVATION EXPRESS CALL 2024” for Circular Bioeconomy Value Chains. It summarises:

- What SYNCHRONIZING of existing regional funding programmes under the IEC2024 means
- The benefit for the IEC24 partner regions
- The services IEC24 coordination office

The factsheet for the regional authorities is included at the end of the document in **Chapter 4 – Annexes**.

Further several **IEC2024 - Information Meetings | Webinars for regional authorities, programme owners and business support organisations** were organized (19.12.2023, 17.01.2024, 08.02.2024) to inform on the preparation of INNOVATION EXPRESS CALL 2024 (IEC24) - a synchronized call that facilitates the development of cross-regional circular bioeconomy value chains.

Following target groups were invited:

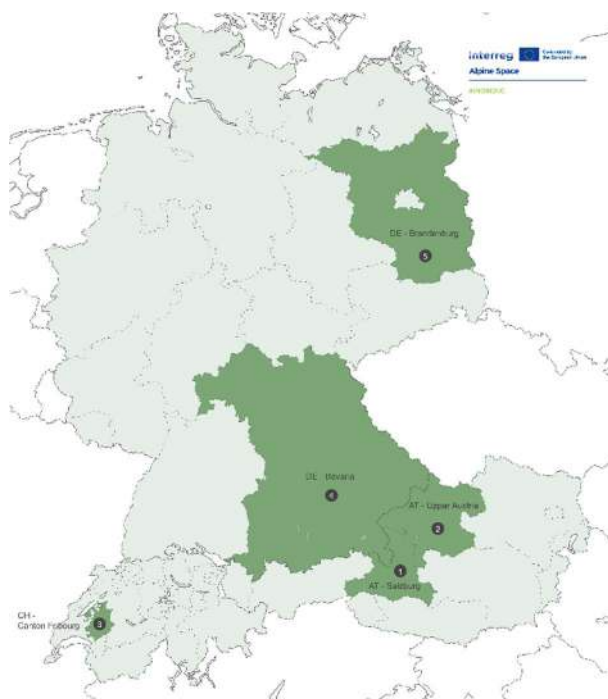
- policy makers, programme owners, public funding agencies (the administrative / governmental level responsible to design, publish and fund calls)
- RDI stakeholders, intermediaries, business support organisations, clusters of Alpine Space regions and beyond which
- already confirmed their participation to IEC24
- were close to participate the IEC2024 and
- were interested to join IEC2024 but needed to learn more about this funding scheme

Whilst the first webinar focused on **basic information and on creation of a common understanding** on how it can work and what is understood by synchronizing funding schemes within the Innovation Express Scheme the later ones focused on the joint definition of call topics and duration. Additional to the information webinars also **bilateral (online) meetings** with representatives of interested regions and/or programme agencies were hold for clarification of open questions in ‘trustful’ atmosphere.

Lastly, the call was launched by **March 2024**, with the **KICK-OFF Webinar** being held on 13.03.2024.



3. FUNDING PARTNERS CONFIRMED TO JOIN IEC24



Innovation Express Call 2024 (IEC24) partner regions:

- *AT / Salzburg*
- *AT / Upper Austria*
- *DE / Bavaria*
- *DE / Brandenburg*
- *CH / Canton Fribourg*

Figure 1: Graphic of regions confirmed joining the IEC24

Overall, 20 regions showed interest in the Innovation Express scheme and/or participated the IEC24 webinars. In total, five regions (three project partner regions, one additional Alpine Space region and one region from beyond the Alpine Space) participated with six funding programmes in the IEC24 call. Letters of Intent were received from each participating region. The intention of this Letter of Intent was to highlight the region’s commitment from the interested funding partners as well as the indication of the funding programme they are willing to contribute with.

Table 1 gives an overview of the partner regions and the related funding partners which are in charge with programmes that confirmed their interest in joining the Innovation Express Call 2024 (IEC24):



Table 1: Overview of regions and funding programmes interested in participating in IEC24

PARNTER REGION	FUNDING PARNTER	PARTICIPATING NATIONAL / REGIONAL FUNDING PROGRAMME	TYPE OF APPLICANTS	TYPE OF ACTIVITIES
AT / Salzburg	Regional Government Office of Land Salzburg, Department Economy, Tourism and Municipalities	WISS FTI-Förderprogramme www.salzburg.gv.at/wirtschaft_Seiten/fti-foerderung.aspx	SME, companies & Research Institutions	Applied R&D
AT / Upper Austria	Regional Government Office of Upper Austria, Directorate for Regional Planning, Economic and Rural Development Department of Economics and Research	Unternehmens- und Forschungskooperationsförderung 2024 - 2026 (Business and research cooperation funding 2024-2026) www.land-oberoesterreich.gv.at/526010.htm	SME, big companies, R&D organisations (only in combination with an SME in Upper Austria)	Applied R&D, industrial research, experimental development; Technology projects & technology based organisational innovation projects
CH / Canton Fribourg	School of Engineering and Architecture of Fribourg	Fund for application-oriented research and development	School of Engineering and Architecture of Fribourg (HES-SO) researchers and institutes	Research and Development
	Confederation and Canton of Fribourg	New Regional Policy - Collaboration projects	Research institutes, companies	Applied R&D. Focus on pre-competitive collaborations.
DE / Bavaria	Bavarian State Ministry of Economic Affairs, Regional Development and Energy	BayBioökonomie Scale-up (Bioeconomy-Scale-Up) www.stmwi.bayern.de/foerderungen/biooekonomie-scale-up/	Start-Ups; SMEs and big companies	Production facilities for the utilisation of biogenic resources
DE / Brandenburg	Ministry of Economic Affairs, Labour and Energy State of Brandenburg (MWAE)	ProFIT Brandenburg 2023 - Programm zur Förderung von Forschung, Innovationen und Technologien Programme to support research, innovation and technologies www.ilb.de/de/wirtschaft/zuschuesse/profit-brandenburg-2023/	SME. Big companies and R&D organizations only in combination with an SME in Brandenburg	Applied R&D, industrial research, experimental development; projects should develop a new or improved product, process or service

Potential obstacles of interested regions to not join IEC24:

Most Alpine Space regions and beyond plan or run regional/national funding programmes to support innovative collaborative projects within the domain of circular (bio)economy, fostering sustainable practices that contribute to environmental conservation, economic growth, and social well-being. Most of the regional research and innovation strategies also focus on internationalisation.

In total, 20 regions were interested in participating in the IEC24 with one of their regional funding programmes. Despite these regions' interest to engage in cross regional partnerships with their upcoming or already running regional/national funding programmes, following reasons were given as obstacles:

- Start of the potential regional funding programme is discontinued / or the start postponed for at least 6 months e.g. because of budget restrictions
- Shift of priorities within regions, e.g. due to environmental disaster (flooding in Slovenia in 2023)
- Timing does not fit: call for projects within the suitable funding programme ends too early or starts too late and cannot be changed
- Missing resources for promotion of IEC24 to innovation stakeholders or business support organisations and therefore to potential project applicants
- Transregional cooperation not possible within the available programme without changing legal frameworks

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- Innovation Express funding scheme not known before and more time would be needed to explain the benefits and frameworks to the responsible funding programme authorities

Even though several regions were not able to join the IEC24 due to the different reasons stated above, have shown great interested in the participation in a synchronised funding scheme and stated an interest in participating in future Innovation Express Call activities.

4. ANNEXES:

- Letter of Intents: Bavaria, Brandenburg, Canton Fribourg, Salzburg, Upper Austria
- IEC24 Factsheet



IEC24 Factsheet for regional funding programmes:

“INNOVATION EXPRESS CALL 2024” for Circular Bioeconomy Value Chains!

Circular bioeconomy value chains development becomes more prevailing but is more challenging to support due to their cross-regional nature.

Within the EU-project “INNOBIOVC” the “INNOVATION EXPRESS CALL 2024 (IEC24)” - a synchronized call that facilitates the development of cross-regional circular bioeconomy value chains - is implemented.

What does SYNCHRONIZING of existing regional funding programmes under the IEC24 mean?

- Regions participate in the IEC24 with their own, existing regional funding programmes.
- The IEC24 offers the following advantages:
 - **No new funding programmes have to be established.**
 - **No new legal frameworks have to be developed.**
 - **No cross-regional transfer of funds.**
 - **Participating regions remain in full control of their administrative procedures, financial management of the call as well as the decision-making process.**
 - **Funding and eligibility rules apply according to the regional funding programme of the applicant’s regions.**

INNOBIOVC project partners embed

- the **Value Chain Generator (VCG)**, a hands-on tool that helps to find partners along circular bioeconomy value chains and
- the new developed **Sustainability Assessment Tool (SAT)** which allows regions and companies to measure social, economic and ecological sustainability gains into the **Innovation Express Call Scheme (IECS)** - a widely acknowledged solution to facilitate cross-border cooperation by synchronizing existing regional funding schemes.

Innovation Express Call 2024 allows partners to

- **find out about funding opportunities,**
- **match with best partners,**
- **measure sustainability gains of circular products and services.**

That way INNOBIOVC helps companies to jointly develop new circular products and business models.

Factsheet 01: INNOVATION EXPRESS CALL 2024



What is INNOVATION EXPRESS CALL 2024 (IEC24)?

- IEC24 is a joint call for proposals for cross-border circular bioeconomy projects funded by synchronizing **existing regional/national funding programmes**.
- The call design builds upon positive experiences & lessons learned of several previous Innovation Express Calls, like in 2021, in which regions like Salzburg (AT), Brandenburg (DE), Baden-Württemberg (DE) and Canton of Fribourg (CH) participated. Such calls resulted in new RDI partnerships between partners that had not previously collaborated before.
- IEC24 focuses on cross-regional circular bioeconomy value chains, key resources and sectors in **agriculture, food and beverages, chemistry, polymers, and energy**.
- Interested regions participate with their own, existing funding programmes.
- There is no need to modify any administrative procedures of existing regional funding schemes.
- The call is open from march to the end of July 2024.

The IEC24 coordination office

- is operated in co-operation between Business Upper Austria (PP) and WFG Heilbronn (PL) within the INNOBIOVC project and serves as a central point of contact for questions and communication.
- promotes the IEC24, informs interested applicants and manages the IEC24 website www.IEC24.info.
- supports participating regions in the application and implementation of IEC24.
- arranges coordination meetings (if required) between the respective programme managers.
- organises several (virtual) events to present the call, network potential applicants and support project development. (dates: see www.IEC24.info)
- Contact: Iris Reingruber/Business Upper Austria, iris.reingruber@biz-up.at

IEC24 partner are REGIONS which

- plan to implement their own funding scheme supporting innovation and research and development in the field of circular bioeconomy.
- are interested in getting engaged in cross-regional partnerships with their own (regional) funds, without cross-regional transfer of funds.
- Are eager to boost local circular products and business by applying innovative new ways: the Value Chain Generator (VCG), the Sustainability Assessment Tool (SAT) and the Innovation Express Call Scheme (IECS).

[INNOBIOVC project partners](#) are happy to answer your questions!

Follow us on [LinkedIn](#)





INNOVATION EXPRESS for Circular Bioeconomy Value Chains (INNOBIOVC)

Circular bioeconomy value chains development becomes more prevailing but is more challenging to support due to their cross-regional nature.

Therefore, INNOBIOVC partners have prepared the **INNOVATION EXPRESS CALL 2024 (IEC2024)** - a synchronized call that facilitates the development of cross-regional circular bioeconomy value chains.



LETTER OF INTENT

(The intention of this Letter of Intent is to gain a certain kind of commitment from interested regional funding partners as well as an indication of the funding programme they are willing to contribute with.)

Funding Partner organisation: Bavarian State Ministry of Economic Affairs, Regional Development and Energy

Country and Region: Germany Bavaria

Regional funding programme: BayBioökonomie-Scale-Up

is willing to participate in the **Innovation Express Call 2024**.

The eligibility check and the final funding decisions will be made by the partner organisation according to national/regional procedures and regulations.

All information related to the projects will be kept confidential and not used for any other purpose than evaluation of the application, making a funding decision and monitoring of the project.

For this collaborative activity Mr./Mrs. Dr. Maika Gruber will be our contact person; contact data (name, e-mail): maika.gruber@stmwi.bayern.de

Legally authorised representative (Signature): Brodbeck Philipp Dr. Digital unterschrieben von Brodbeck Philipp Dr. Datum: 2024.03.08 09:49:09 +01'00'

Name/Function: Dr. Philipp Brodbeck, Head of Unit Bioeconomy

Date: March 08 2024



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Funding Partner organisation: Ministry for Economic Affairs, Labour and Energy State of Brandenburg (MWAE)

Country and Region: Germany, Federal State of Brandenburg

Regional funding programme: ProFIT Brandenburg 2023

is willing to participate in the **Innovation Express Call 2024**.

The eligibility check and the final funding decisions will be made by the partner organisation according to national/regional procedures and regulations.

All information related to the projects will be kept confidential and not used for any other purpose than evaluation of the application, making a funding decision and monitoring of the project.

For this collaborative activity Mr./Mrs. Annett Schwan will be our contact person; contact data (name, e-mail): annett.schwan@mwae.brandenburg.de

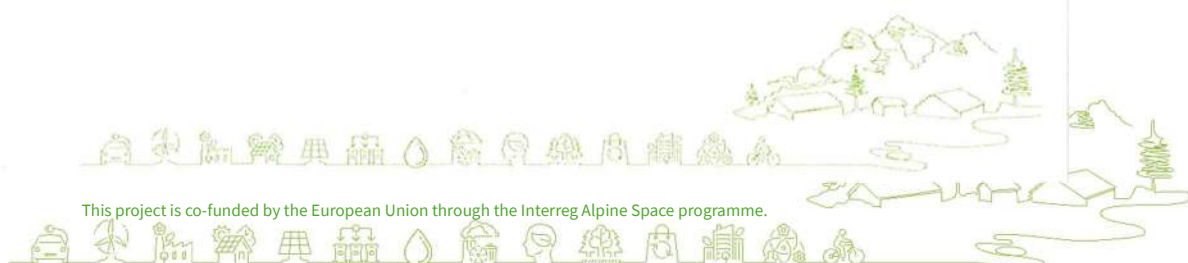
Legally authorised representative (Signature):



Name/Function: Torsten Fritz, Head of Department „Economic Development, Digitization“

Date:

27/3/2024



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Funding Partner organisation: School of Engineering and Architecture of Fribourg

Country and Region: Switzerland, Canton of Fribourg


Regional funding programme: Fund for application-oriented research and development, School of Engineering and Architecture of Fribourg

is willing to participate in the **Innovation Express Call 2024**.

The eligibility check and the final funding decisions will be made by the partner organisation according to national/regional procedures and regulations.

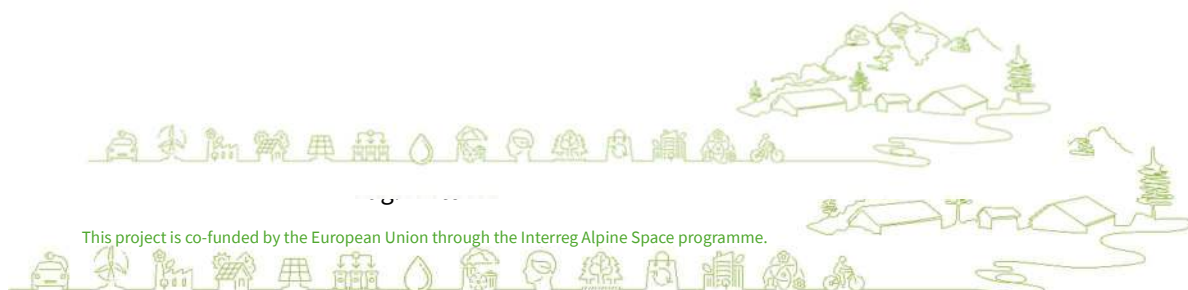
All information related to the projects will be kept confidential and not used for any other purpose than evaluation of the application, making a funding decision and monitoring of the project.

For this collaborative activity Mr. Michael Keller will be our contact person; contact data (name, e-mail): Michael Keller, Michael.keller@hefr.ch

Legally authorised representative (Signature): 

Name/Function: Michael Keller / Senior Academic Associate aR&D Directorate

Date: 18.03.2024





INNOVATION EXPRESS for Circular Bioeconomy Value Chains (INNOBIOVC)

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LETTER OF INTENT

(The intention of this Letter of Intent is to gain a certain kind of commitment from interested regional funding partners as well as an indication of the funding programme they are willing to contribute with.)

Funding Partner organisation: Land Salzburg

Country and Region: Austria, Salzburg

Regional funding programme: "Stärkung der FTI-Kompetenzen und -Strukturen" and "Kooperative und einzelbetriebliche FTI-Projekte"

is willing to participate in the **Innovation Express Call 2024**.

The eligibility check and the final funding decisions will be made by the partner organisation according to national/regional procedures and regulations.

All information related to the projects will be kept confidential and not used for any other purpose than evaluation of the application, making a funding decision and monitoring of the project.

For this collaborative activity Mrs. Maria Wirnsperger will be our contact person; contact data (name, e-mail):

Maria Wirnsperger;

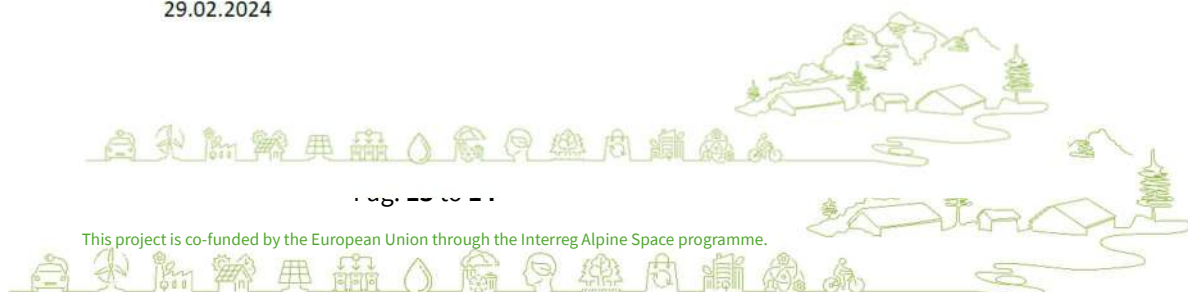
mail: maria.wirnsperger@salzburg.gv.at;

phone: +43 662 8042 3847

Legally authorised representative (Signature): _____

Name/Function: Mag. Astrid Mayr, head of research funding

Date: 29.02.2024



INNOVATION EXPRESS for Circular Bioeconomy Value Chains (INNOBIOVC)

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LETTER OF INTENT

(The intention of this Letter of Intent is to gain a certain kind of commitment from interested regional funding partners as well as an indication of the funding programme they are willing to contribute with.)

Funding Partner organisation: **Amt der Oö. Landesregierung**, Direktion für Landesplanung, wirtschaftliche und ländliche Entwicklung Abteilung Wirtschaft und Forschung (Land OÖ)

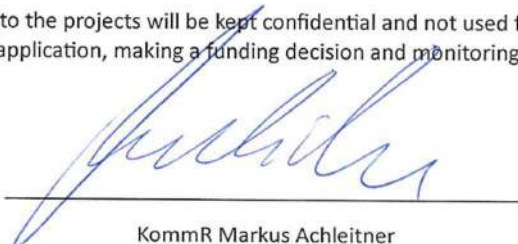
Country and Region: **Austria / Upper Austria**

Regional funding programme: „**Unternehmens- und Forschungskooperationsförderung 2024 - 2026**“ / „**Business and research co-operation funding 2024 -2026**“

is willing to participate in the Innovation Express Call 2024.

The funding decision to support an Upper Austrian partner based on the funding program “Unternehmens- und Forschungskooperationsförderung 2024 - 2026” is made by the responsible bodies of the state of Upper Austria.

All information related to the projects will be kept confidential and not used for any other purpose than evaluation of the application, making a funding decision and monitoring of the project.



KommR Markus Achleitner
Minister of Economy of Upper Austria
State Government of Upper Austria

