Online S3

Newsletter

ONLINE S3 Consortium   **Mar-17**   [Edition 1, Volume 2

The Online Consultation

Online S3 has consulted on the usefulness of the methods selected for development as applications serving the design and implementation of Research and Innovation Strategies able to promote Smart Specialisation (RIS3) across Europe. The full description of each method is available online (https://consultation.onlines3. eu). This newsletter reports on the initial results of the targeted interviews/questionnaires, workshops and social media campaign Online S3 has conducted to capture the views and opinions of the stakeholder community on these methods and the online tool adopted to consult more widely with the public.

Targeted interviews and questionnaires

First piloted as a series of interviews with selected academics, then as a questionnaire survey, these target the Guidance Notes available to underpin research and innovation as a process of entrepreneurial discovery and helices of Smart Specialisation. The results of the interviews and questionnaire surveys indicate the following:

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75% find the RIS3 Key Guide either extremely, or very helpful, because it mobilizes all the stakeholders who are best able to champion research and innovation under the Triple Helix (TH) model of regional innovation systems. 75% also find it very important for the scientific, knowledge and creative sectors to be the champions of such a regional innovation system. 60% find it very important for these sectors to cluster together as enterprises able to leverage technological breakthroughs across regions. 70% also propose these technological breakthroughs should be adopted as the priorities of any Smart Specialisation strategy;

60% say that it is either very important, or important for any such technological breakthrough to be the subject of a governance regime, which is acceptable to all stakeholders.

75% also say it is very important the joint board make a clear statement about the future challenges the research and innovation strategy has to meet. 75% of those surveyed are confident their regions have the scientific knowledge and creative skills to meet these challenges;

70% see the TH as a marked improvement on previous models of research and innovation, strong in terms of linkages between university and industry, but with weaker connections to government;

70% suggest the public should have greater influence over the governance of a broad-based research and innovation policy, but suggest the rate of entrepreneurial discovery in Europe may not be sufficient for civil society to sustain this.

With regards to the inclusion of civil society in this process of entrepreneurial discovery, 70% believe this is done to meet the grand challenges Europe faces and achieves this by extending research and innovation into the education sector, business, government and public institutions of a Quadruple Helix (QH). That is by pulling up demand to a level whereby Smart Specialisation strategies are able to bridge technological gaps in research and innovation and gain the public trust which is needed for civil

society to sustain this. There is also 50/50 split on the virtues of such an inclusive growth strategy, but general agreement on this being the only way for research and innovation to broaden participation as part of a Smart Specialisation strategy that is comprehensive enough to meet the grand challenges (smart, sustainable and inclusive growth) of entrepreneurial discovery; **70% suggest the QH offers a more coherent governance system for Smart Specialisation** and **60% are familiar with the 29 methods Online 3 selects to promote this**. The majority see this coherence as being linked to the broadly participative nature of the methods and because they are connected to the RIS3 steps those stakeholders involved in research and innovation are already familiar with.

Workshops

The workshops found the 29 methods Online S3 propose to be broadly participative in supporting Smart Specialisation as a process of entrepreneurial discovery. The average score for the methods is 4.5/5, with only 35% of the methods commanding a higher score and 32% falling below this figure. This suggests everyone is generally supportive of the methods. Any criticism of the methods is of the tendency they have to be: "full of technical jargon and excessively lengthy". Notwithstanding this comment, those attending the workshops made the following observations:

- currently there are too many methods and the descriptions tend to be technically over-specified and too complex to work with;
- they could also be clearer as to who they are for and stress the added value to the users, either in scientific and technical terms, potential for wealth creation, investment in and commercial exploitation of innovations to meet the grand challenges;

- it might be better to write the method descriptions from the perspective of the user and in this respect:
  - keep the technical matters in the "back office";
  - push what you want the method to communicate up into
  - the "front-of-shop", where it can be both seen and heard;
  - shift attention away from the problem and towards the solution;
- any such user-centric message also requires the methods not to be so text-heavy, but offer a rich multi-media experience, vis-a-vis better balance between the written text, visual image and symbols available to communicate the value-adding potential of the solution each of the methods offers;
- any wider dissemination should seek to streamline the methods so the critical nature, and pivotal status of them as social innovations, can be seen as not only being smart in terms of the priorities they set, but how these preferences sustain an inclusive growth of the entrepreneurial discovery process.

Social media campaign

The social media campaign utilises both LinkedIn and ResearchGate and echoes the value of the method's broadly participative nature. In particular, the way they support the potential such a bottom-up and user-centric strategy for Smart Specialisation has to restore public trust in the priorities this sets and pull up the level of demand needed for any democratization of the entrepreneurial discovery process to meet the grand challenges. With over 8,000 reads, likes and comments, this is the main message to be taken from the social media campaign.

The Online tool

As a web space, Medium allows everyone to publish individual ideas and perspectives on the research and innovation strategies of Smart Specialisation. The software offers open access to such material, underpinned by an advanced visual editor, supporting the integration of photos, audio and video. Figure 1 captures the consultation process Online S3 has entered into using Medium.
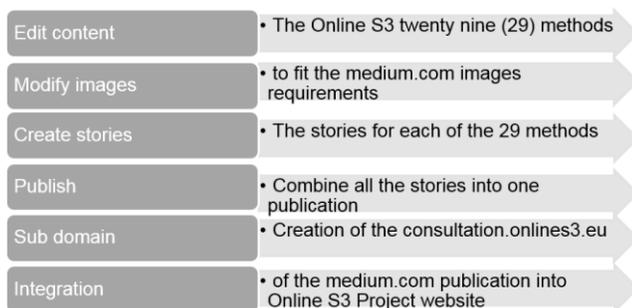
Edit content	• The Online S3 twenty nine (29) methods
Modify images	• to fit the medium.com images requirements
Create stories	• The stories for each of the 29 methods
Publish	• Combine all the stories into one publication
Sub domain	• Creation of the consultation.onlines3.eu
Integration	• of the medium.com publication into Online S3 Project website

Figure 1. Open consultation of the Online S3 methods (https://consultation.onlines3.eu).

The comments published on this platform relate to each of the 29 methods. The following captures some of the comments received on the RIS 3 Phase 2: Analysis of Context, 2.2 Method: Research Infrastructure Mapping: "when mapping the research infrastructure of various countries, data about overall yearly budget spent on supporting programmes by each institution is something which should also be included. Other than this, the research infrastructure method looks fine, particularly when the profiling is conducted in combination with the R&TD infrastructure. As a state-of-the-art, the description is acceptable, but if these methods are to do more than function as design strategies, the practical value of this material is questionable, as the methods are described very theoretically and not for application".

As such these comments serve to echo many of the statements made by those participating in the workshop events.

Join the Online S3 Community

The open consultation on Medium will continue to run until the end of the project and we would be glad to hear your thoughts and opinions about the methods we have developed. Moreover, we will be presenting the results of the Online Consultation during the 10th International Conference for Entrepreneurship, Innovation and Regional Development (Thessaloniki, 31st August - 1st September 2017). This is a great opportunity to join the Online S3 community, meet our team and discuss the development of Smart Specialisation Strategies across Europe.

ONLINE S3 project aims to develop an e-policy platform augmented with a toolbox of applications and online services, which will assist national and regional authorities in the EU in elaborating or revising their smart specialisation agenda, in terms of policies and strategy.

ONLINE S3 Project

http://www.onlines3.eu