# Action Plan for Establishing Local Strategic Partnerships Methodology

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<th><strong>Project Title</strong></th>
<th>SEE Science</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Project Number</strong></td>
<td>SEE/B/0048/1.3/X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Document Title</strong></td>
<td>Action plan for establishing local strategic partnerships methodology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Document Version</strong></td>
<td>7.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Document Origin</strong></td>
<td>PP7 - SEERC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Document Date</strong></td>
<td>21 December 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Character of Document</strong></td>
<td>One of the outputs of WP4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Related Document(s) (Origin Partner, Date)</strong></td>
<td>-</td>
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<td><strong>Target Group</strong></td>
<td>SEE Science Project Partners</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Developed by</strong></td>
<td>PP3-MUSE</td>
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1. Introduction

A strategic partnership (SP) is mostly understood as a formal alliance between two legal entities, which leads towards forming a legal partnership or, agency, or corporate affiliate relationship. Typically two companies form a strategic partnership when each possesses one or more business assets that will help the other, but that each respective other does not wish to develop internally.

For SC institutions the level of formality of a strategic partnership may vary with different (types of) stakeholders, from written agreements (e.g. sponsoring or cooperation contracts) to different forms of networking, e.g. through regular meetings, mutual exchange of information, etc. How to achieve mutual commitment and liability of a strategic partnership varies from stakeholder to stakeholder/different communication cultures etc. E.g. with a large company a written agreement might be appropriate, whereas an individual expert or a NGO might be put off by a more formalized approach.

The proposed action plan methodology for establishing strategic partnerships thus provides a framework, which can/should be adapted to the different local conditions, different types of stakeholders and diverse strategic aims of the respective SC institution.

According to the application form:

One of the key tasks of SC Agents will be to establish strategic partnerships through networking. Strategic partnerships enable SCs to enhance the effectiveness of cooperation with innovation actors and to increase the efficiency and significance of SC services offered. Such partnerships will also increase funding possibilities (business and public) for SCs, and the dialogue with stakeholders will contribute to creating supportive policy frameworks (in WP3). First, partnerships will be built at local & regional level. SC Agents will draft action plans on building strategic partnerships and will initiate contact and visit companies and public organisations in their local and regional area and will maintain contacts and cooperation throughout the project. Beside establishing professional connections for cooperation, strategic partnerships offer also the possibility of financial support to SCs within the framework of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). Cultural, educational institutions and initiatives that contribute to the cultural, societal and physical well-being of the public are often promoted by the business sector in the form of sponsorships and Strategic Partnership.

Having these aspects, the role of effective SPs becomes vital for the future of science centres (SC). Thus, understanding the role of SPs and learning the steps of how to perform SP should be included in the corporate culture of each science centre [1, 2]. Before proceeding to the next concepts, Figure 1 presents a general structure of the SP implementation in the framework of the SEE SCIENCE project. It is vital for the partners to understand the relationships between the different WPs of the project and more specifically, how they link together towards achieving a proper and project specific action plan.
The purpose of Figure 1 is to express the interconnectedness of the WPs among them. More specifically, when it comes to the actual application of this methodology, the PPs should take into account the outputs and inputs from the other WPs as well. For example, as an outcome of the CSR Training, the PP possesses certain knowledge of dealing with potential stakeholders and how to approach them. Additionally, the outcomes of the SWOT analysis performed in WP3.1 (the development issues) and the collected SC Services (WP3.2) can be used as drivers/motives for developing a strategic partnership. Consequently, the pilot actions (WP4.4.) are a good opportunity for involving strategic partners and make them committed through cooperation. On the other hand, several outcomes of the individual action plans for strategic partnerships can result in certain policy recommendations useful for WP3.3 as well as in visits to the stakeholders (WP4.3). Finally, when all the individual/local action plans will be finalized, a joint/transnational action plan will be devised based on the local experiences in terms of building local strategic partnerships. This
outcome will enhance the capacity of the science festivals and will enable an interconnected translational network of SC Agents with their stakeholders.

Transcending towards the actual usefulness of the SPs, several benefits for the SEE SCIENCE project goals are listed below:

- More skilled, innovative future workforce.
- Wider coverage of the institutional corporate social responsibility policy.
- Long term economic prosperity.
- Personal development – lifelong learning.
- Better identification of real problems by using real experts.
- The results of common work are greater than the one of individual work.
- Expanding the horizons – new areas of application.
- Enhanced scientific integrity, validity and reputation.
- Technological development.
- Active participation of more members/institutions in each others’ area of operation leading to better dissemination, knowledge sharing, cross-fertilisation and innovation capacity.
- Better internal policy recommendations.
- Goal alignment and knowledge discrepancy mitigation.
- Overall, better innovation capacity, enhanced future sustainability and financial prosperity.

Additionally, for the SEE Science project partners, strategic partnerships with local stakeholders may contribute to tackling several of the identified (transnational) development issues, namely (from WP3):

- Expansion of didactical expertise in non-formal education
- Measurement of achievements in informal learning and engagement in science
- Adaption to changes in educational system through education of explainers
- Development of regional profiles/clusters within the informal educational Ecosystem
- Development of new tailor made programs for special groups such as youth, women, migrants and disabled
- Education of staff
- Establishment of co-operations with researchers to actively involve them into development of the activities of the Science Center
- Establishment of co-operations with researchers to involve them as experts
- Development of new programs on education in co-operations with research institutions and companies
- Co-operation with business on projects, training and sponsoring
- Invitation into the circle of Science Centre friends to actively participate in development of the activities of the Science Center
- Building innovative co-operations on art and science
• Setting up an open grant program to finance science popularization, rate science popularization
• Setting up local advisory boards
• Co-operating with young people on common issue

2. Prerequisites for developing strategic partnerships

Every institution has its own prerequisites and requirements for developing a strategic partnership, however, general features described by [3] are useful to consider: strong leadership, trust amongst partners, an independent staff team, a common understanding/knowledge base, capacity to focus on overarching priorities, co-ordinated planning processes, integrated action plans across partners, integrated stakeholder community consultation, development, and participation strategies, increased synergy in accessing and deploying resources, mechanisms for review and evaluation, scope for innovation/cooperation/funding, parallel processes to build capacity within member organisations, etc. More details are given in section four.

Despite of these prerequisites, there are also several issues that are involved within building strategic partnerships. These aspects are also implied to be known by the institution that aims to launch a strategic partnership [4]:

• **Building and maintaining sustainable partnerships capacity** (how: bridge academia, industry and local authorities, launch persistent calls for collaboration, etc)
• **Being aware of the involved policies, concepts, topics and actions** (such as: intellectual property management, how to increase commercialization success, increase the number of partnerships, technology integration, involvement of governmental bodies, etc).
• **Personal/Social skills** (e.g.: good networking skills are required for the person which will initiate the strategic partnership (SC Agents), development of non-technical skills, promote multiculturalism, open minded character, etc).
• **Finding and understanding the stakeholders** [9]. It is always a necessity to know where to look for stakeholders. For example, Table 1 presents a potential list of sectors/places from which science centre stakeholders may arise:

| Associations of towns and municipalities; | Political institutions; |
| Associations of political parties; | Public authorities (national, regional, local); |
| Business sector; | Public employment services; |
| Chambers; | Regional development associations and management bodies; |
| Citizens’ initiatives; | Representatives of employees and employers; |
| Consultants; | |
| Education or/and training | |
organisations;
- Financial institutions;
- Government institutions;
- Innovator Agencies
- “Know-how” carriers;
- Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) /not for profit organisations (NPOs);

- Representatives of the civil society;
- Research institutes, universities;
- SMEs and large enterprises
- School boards;
- Social partners;
- Women’s spokespersons / gender mainstreaming experts.

Several examples of their own potential stakeholders proposed by each PP as an sub-task for preparing the CSR Training are the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>University of Debrecen</th>
<th>MANDACARU (business)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National Instruments Corporation (software)</td>
<td>Melinda &amp; Trentingrana (famous Trade Mark)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TEVA (healthcare)</td>
<td>Mondi (paper and packaging producer)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E.ON (Electricity)</td>
<td>T-Systems (telecom)</td>
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<tr>
<td>COOP (Supermarket)</td>
<td>A1 Telekom Austria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>British Telecom</td>
<td>Compuritas (ecological ICT)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The University and Scientific Research Department of Trento</td>
<td>3M</td>
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<tr>
<td>University of Trento</td>
<td>Loux (soft drinks company)</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Centre for Integrative Biology</td>
<td>Agrino (food)</td>
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<tr>
<td>FBK (research)</td>
<td>Microsoft Hellas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TrentoRISE (ICT research, education and business)</td>
<td>LUKOIL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TentinoSVILUPPO (sustainable development public agency)</td>
<td>Overgas Inc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trento Federation of Cooperation</td>
<td>M-Tel (telecom)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cei Trentino Business Innovation Centre</td>
<td>ECOPACK (recycling)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CFSI (international cooperation)</td>
<td>Danone (dairy products)</td>
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<td>Boussole CSR (European educational platform for CSR)</td>
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3. Building the strategic partnership

3.1 The Action Plan Methodology

The following methodology is designed for the overall needs of the SEE SCIENCE project and is based on the best practices from [3, 5]. To this extent, when applying this methodology for each PP’s institution the actual stages can be further specialized in order to meet the local needs.

Table 2 – The Action Plan Methodology for building strategic partnerships

Step 1: the purpose of the partnership based on the strategic goals

The strategic goals are established merging the SEE Science goals with the MUSE’s specific mission, and taking advantage of the SWOT analysis and CSR Training documents data and conclusions.

SEE Science Goals:

- Promote Innovation
- Achieve SC financial sustainability
- Public outreach
- Promote collaboration between SC and Innovation Actors
- Enhance the effectiveness and relevance of SC services
- Facilitate dialogue between stakeholders in order to contribute in building trustful relationships

1.1 The internal reasons/needs of the institution that points towards a partnership, according to the SWOT analysis:

- Citizens as pivotal reference point: Small Pilot Action and participatory activities (see Form 5, Human Capacities, Innovation)
Promote projects where citizens become active and essential part of the activity, taking advantage from the widespread consciousness of local citizens towards disadvantaged people. In the region there is a strong culture for voluntary activity benefitting many different communities and groups of people, therefore initiatives and events with such kind of associations could be developed. Citizens may also contribute directly to research, collecting data about environmental issues, as climate changes, energy consumption, garbage management, territorial risks, etc. A number of top research institutions are getting more and more attention by people, due to their successful results, therefore local population increasingly cares about the advantages science could provide, and might be willing to contribute to scientific activities that impact on daily economic management of individuals. On the other hand, scarce activity in the innovation field could be compensated by wide spreading the involvement of specific associations working in the territory, as for instance GAS (solidarity buying groups).

- **Exhibits showcase to show latest R&D companies’ prototypes or products** (see Form 5, Technical Capacities, Innovation)

The museum lacks workshop for exhibits manufacture could be compensated by means of strategic alliance with some institutions located in the area that will help the development of new exhibits thanks to their capable personnel and well equipped workshops. Among them, engineering department and science department are those whose interests are consistent with the museum’s mission. The cooperation will promote the settling of spin off companies, specialized in production of exhibits. Thanks to the specialist knowledge of these companies the museum will showcase the most innovative results of their work and become the trial arena for testing the latest development of their research. The ideal area to implement this alliance is stemming out from the cooperation with top research and development companies, that are interested in showing their utmost innovations and making them at hand for visitors, as it happens in Ars Electronica Centre Future lab, where the combination between edge research and most avant-garde technology provides the public with large opportunities to look into the future, putting their hands on it.

- **Increase the fundraising activity, in order to be less dependent from public financing** (see Form 5, Financing: SC special)

Build up a policy for fundraising in order not only to benefit the museum financial condition, but also to become capable to be less dependent on public financing. Local business also suffers from a great support granted by the government, therefore competition is limited and there is less need to look for independent economic revenues. Museum can offer companies the space for exhibiting their best products, and create an environment favourable to raise people’s interest in their applications. Some independent citizens associations that care for better life like AltroMercato, Slow Food, etc. can contribute, for instance, to support exhibitions dedicated to healthy food, or sustainable agriculture, while companies strictly connected to the food market can find a common interest in presenting their manufacture methods and products, and therefore become active partners in creating programs and initiatives for the public.
1.2 Future needs - MUSE specific goals requiring a partnership:

- To become locally the recognized agora for the communication of science
- To support participatory activities with citizens in many fields
- To settle and run the FabLab at MUSE (Small Pilot Action)
- To promote the new museum MUSE as showcase for innovation both for companies and schools
- To create a strong local network among companies to increase the fundraising activity, in order to be less dependent from public financing
- To build up a corporate membership program in order to create opportunities to design new initiatives and tailored activities together with companies.

1.3 Added value deriving from partnerships:

- Direct cooperation with innovative businesses and their R&D departments will provide new exhibits for MUSE, with strong focus on the local capacities and business. MUSE will become the showcase for researchers and developers and also a reference point for public and press interested in innovation. The added value are: to strengthen the connection with local economic tissue, to provide information and promotion towards new targets and promote the whole territory as home for environmental care, innovation and cultural welfare.

- Partnerships with public research and science communication institutions, universities, etc. will provide fruitful exchange of expertise between organizations. The added values are: to enlarge networks and support better services for citizens, to contribute to the promotion of the local environment as home for technology and innovation.

- Partnerships with research institutions and ICT expert communities will help MUSE to set up the FabLab (Pilot Action). The added values are: to build a participative environment, to boost familiarity with innovation and technology among citizens.

1.4 Get support from senior management:

- Submit the list to the senior management and consult with them about the identified goals
- Take advice about possible previous relationship with the identified stakeholder: did MUSE have some collaboration with them in recent years? Do we know some “door opener”?

Step 2: List of potential strategic partners and brief stakeholder analysis

2.1 List of potential stakeholder, referring to the list identified for the CRS Training
- The University and Scientific Research Department of Trento province
- Trento University
- CIBIO-Centre for Integrative Biology
- CIMEC- interdepartmental studies centre for Mind and Brains
- FBK Bruno Kessler Foundation
- TrentoRISE
- TrentinoSVILUPPO (Trentino Development)
- The Federation of Cooperation in Trentino
- CEii – European centre for business and innovation
- COOP Trentino
- CFSI – Training Centre for International Cooperation
- Mandacarù
- Melinda and Trentingrana

At the list we added:
- GBC Italia
- Habitech
- Algorab
- HSL

Meanwhile, we took advantage of our ASP, who suggested and began to contact some other entity, both for supporting the Small Pilot Action and for general interest of the institution (innovation)

According to their suggestions, the potential SH are:
- Linux Trent
- Trentino Trasporti
- Department for stages and placement of the Trento University
- Family Forum- Board for digital citizenship
- Liceo Scientifico Galilei
2.2 Brief stakeholder analysis

The University and Scientific Research Department of Trento province

The University and Scientific Research Department of Trento province carries out activities aimed at qualifying the System for High Education and Research in Trentino. It cultivates relationships with public and private organisations in the field of research and technology to promote their development, providing them as well with financial support.

The University and Scientific Research Department works in co-operation with the following advisory bodies of the autonomous Province of Trento:
- Committee for Research Evaluation
- Committee for Research and Innovation

Trento University

Founded in 1962, the University of Trento is a young, medium-sized university in a friendly city that offers an excellent quality of life. It hosts more than 16,000 students and 600 teachers and researchers.

The University of Trento, which has always aimed at achieving and maintaining high quality standards, has been able to create a solid policy basis over the years, aimed at delivering high quality services to its students and community. The result is a wide range of excellent courses, supported by a high-level of scientific research, which in some areas achieved important confirmations at an international level.

It is one of the few Italian universities to be inserted in the World University Rankings list, and it ranks in first position for the quality of its research and didactics in the MIUR ranking (MIUR is the Ministry of Education, University and Research).

CiBIO

The Centre for Integrative Biology – CiBIO – at the University of Trento will pursue the task of creating a suitable environment for merging classical cellular and molecular biology approaches with the new powerful tools of systems and synthetic biology, and with the contribution of chemistry, physics, informatics, mathematics, and engineering in an integrative view of basic biological processes and of their derangement in disease.

Research at CiBIO covers a number of topics all emphasizing experimental analysis at the various levels of biological organization, and roughly focused on three major research programs: Neurobiology Program, Oncology Program and Microbiology and Synthetic Biology program.

CIMeC (Centro interdipartimentale Mente/Cervello dell’Università di Trento a Rovereto) interdepartmental studies centre for Mind and Brains
is an interdisciplinary center, incorporating faculty from the departments of Cognitive and Education Sciences (DiSCoF), Physics and Information Engineering and Computer Science (DISI). The center studies the functioning of the brain through the analysis of its functional, structural and physiological characteristics, in both normal and pathological conditions. In order to investigate the neural correlates of behaviour, the center makes use of state-of-the-art neuroimaging methodologies. The CIMeC is made up of various neuroscientific labs dedicated to fundamental and applied research, computational and experimental psychology labs, and a PhD program in “Cognitive and Brain Sciences”.

FBK
Fondazione Bruno Kessler is a research organization of the Autonomous Province of Trento that promotes research in the areas of science, technology, and humanities. The foundation, with more than 350 researchers, conducts studies in the areas of Information Technology, Materials and Microsystems, Italian-German Historical Institute, and Religious sciences. Thanks to a close network of alliances and collaborations, FBK also conducts research in theoretical nuclear physics, networking and telecommunications, and social sciences (studies of public policy effectiveness).

The objectives of FBK are to conduct research that obtains recognition at an international level, to carry out applied research of strategic importance to the province, to publicize scientific results and promote economic development and to encourage innovation throughout the province.

TrentoRISE
Trento RISE is a single organizational body that connects several of the major actors in ICT research, education and business in the Trento region, including, among others, FBK and the University of Trento. It operates in a wide spectrum of scientific areas and human sciences, thus providing the ideal instrument towards the integration of education, research, and business. TrentoRISE aims at promoting research to drive the internationalization and innovation of the territory and at becoming one of the leading hubs in ICT sector in Europe. The motivation to establish this union is to create increasingly integrated system of research and higher education based on the principles of excellence and quality, thus creating added value for both components.

TrentinoSVILUPPO
Trentino Sviluppo (Trentino Development) is the agency set up by the Autonomous Province of Trento to foster the sustainable development of the Trentino system by taking action and providing services aimed at supporting the growth of business skills and the capacity for innovation.
The mission: “To foster the sustainable development of Trentino by taking action and providing services aimed at supporting the growth of business skills and the capacity for innovation in the province through the promotion of its competitive features, operating on the basis of a network system and in accordance with the principles of business skill, innovation, social cohesion and the quality of life, work and the environment, in order to build the Trentino of the future.”

The Federation of Cooperation in Trentino

The Federation of Cooperation in Trentino is the only official organization of its kind that represents, assists, protects and oversees the cooperative movement in the province of Trento. It gathers together 536 enterprises operating in various sectors (515 cooperatives and other 21 organizations), and 255,000 members. 181 people are employed in the Federation, of whom 81 women and 100 men. The Federation of Cooperation in Trentino promotes the development of cooperation, helps improve the organization of cooperative enterprises, coordinates the activity of cooperative enterprise, provides direction for cooperative action, especially towards marginalized groups, in the spirit of mutual cooperativeness within the community.

CEii - Centro europeo di impresa e di innovazione

CEii Trentino is a BIC – Business Innovation Centre – which was established in 1998 by the Association of Craftsmen and Small Enterprises of the Province of Trento along with the backing from the European Union. CEii Trentino has been assigned, by the Autonomous Province of Trento – Department of Industry, Crafts and Trade, to promote the handicrafts of the Trentino region.

CFSI – Training Centre for International Cooperation

The CFSI – Training Centre for International Cooperation is an organization dedicated to improving the knowledge and abilities of the individuals involved in international co-operation. The Centre offers training services, as well as creating networks and awareness designed to supply adequate tools to engage in international solidarity activities, while at the same time strengthening awareness and collaboration among individuals. The services offered by the Centre are open to all those who are active in community co-operation or interested in participating. The offer is particularly aimed at, but not limited to, the organized expressions of society such as Local Bodies, associations and Non-Government Organizations.

COOP Trentino

Coop is a system of Italian consumers’ cooperatives which operates the largest supermarket chain in Italy.
The first cooperative shop was established in Turin in 1854. As of 2010, Coop's system operates with 115 consumers' cooperatives, 1,444 shops and more than 7,000,000 members with annual revenue of €12.9 billion.

Trentino province has its own Coop Trentino, with a long history deeply rooted in the local context. Its efforts towards more sustainable products were registered by non-profit associations such as Greenpeace.

MANDACARU’

The Cooperative Mandacarù, established in Trento in May 1989, identifies the fair trade and sustainable finance as a way to combine ideal tension with concrete business choices. The Cooperative started operating in April 1990 with the opening of Bottega Mandacarù of Trento. Thanks to the efforts of the members, grew up in the years and is currently present on the territory of Trentino with 12 shops.

It is part of Altromercato, the Italy's largest alternative trading organization. Altromercato was founded 1988 in Bolzano, and includes more than 118 organizations which are responsible for the management of 230 shops throughout Italy. A partnership could be fruitful for common marketing initiatives, sponsorships, supplies for the bookshop.

MELINDA and TRENTINGRANA

Melinda and Trentingrana are two of the most famous trademarks of Trentino, both of them born from the long-time texture of cooperatives of the region. Melinda consortium unites all the producers of apples of the Val di Non, while TrentinGrana consortium regards the dairy farming production. Along with the Rotari, they are probably the largest marks present in this region.

GBC Italia

The GBC Italy, born early in 2008 in Trentino, is the association that is transforming the building market at a national level through the introduction of the LEED® standard in Italy. Shared interests are sustainability, environment, audience awareness on sustainability issues.

HABITECH

Habitech is a network of 300 companies focusing on exploiting sustainability to develop business opportunities and community improvements. A national excellence hub for green building, energy and sustainable mobility and catalyst for green-business development. The technological District for energy and environment recognized by the Italian Ministry for University and Research.
Habitech develops projects, offers services for innovation, technical and commercial support for enterprises and institutions. Habitech could put MUSE in contact with hundreds of companies, useful to fundraising and for finding subjects interested in presenting themself in the showcase for innovation to be set up at MUSE.

Algorab
Production of hardware and software for remote controlling.

HSL
3D printed lamp production, potential supply for the Fablab.

Linux Trent
Promotes and divulgates the free software.
A partnership will be desirable in running the Fablab, thanks to their expertise and network. They could benefit of the use of the laboratory.

Trentino Trasporti (Trentino transport Company)
Trentino Trasporti is the company that runs all the public transport of the Province of Trento. They could be interested in showing at MUSE their efforts in the field of sustainable mobility.

Department for stages and placement of the Trento University
The department for stages and placements puts in contact students and ex-students with companies and organizations, in order to help in matching job and stage seekers whit potential vacancies.

Forum delle famiglie-Provincia Autonoma di Trento tavolo lavoro cittadinanza digitale
In the framework of the programs to fight the digital divide and promote the safety of children online and digital citizenship, the Agency for the Family, in collaboration with Save the Children, has established a board which includes organizations, institutions, professionals and representatives of the Third Sector with expertise in the Province, which are already working on these issues.
The board collaborate with the Province in identifying strategies for awareness and training to promote a more conscious use of New Media. The Board is established as a network of experts who collaborate in carrying out initiatives spread throughout the Province.

2.3 Match the best Weakness-strength between MUSE and the stakeholders

In order to individuate good matches for a partnership, is a good start point to balance strengths and weaknesses between MUSE and potential partners, offering our expertise and abilities and asking for external capacities, funding or sponsorship in exchange.

We highlighted some points from our SWOT performed in WP3.

**Human Capacities:**

**Strenght**

Large and diverse staff in E&S

Positive investment in E&S for training

Capacity to digest modern science to public

**Weakness:**

To increase innovation we could involve more volunteers and students

Type/number of staff in B. is not enough

Too few investment in employee in Innovation

About Human Capacities, a good match could be with TrentoRISE, which has interest in reaching the youngster and the schools to promote scientific studies; their weakness is to only speak to scholars and researchers, wanting to enlarge the audience. A partnership could be useful for our lack of employee in Innovation and business. Also the University and FBK have the same goal in engage youngster.

University also could take advantage of our relationships with schools and provide help in founding volunteers and stagiares.

**Technical capacities:**

**Strenght**

Educational Labs ICT is very good
Educational Labs equipment is good
Some advanced equipment (e.g. S.E.M.)
Good internal networking infrastructure
General SC tech. equipment is good

Weakness
Tech. equipment on innovation is low
Workshop for exhibits creation is missing
Space for large events is not enough
ICT too dependent from external partners

In the future building there will be more space for large events, in the city centre, so that could be a good attractor for those companies, which want to reach a large public, in a prestigious context. That applies to Algorab, Habitech (300 companies and more), the Federation of Cooperatives, and more to find. They will provide exhibits and events about their latest innovative products and solutions.

Operational Capacities:
Strenght
School program is very extensive
Educ. activities schedule is very crowdy
Public special events are smart & original
Quite enough space in general in the SC
Interesting pilot activities

Weakness
Activities program for public only on weekends
Few activities organized by researchers.
Almost each potential partner could benefit from the MUSE’s ability in organizing special event, in the environment of the new SC.

Universities, FBK, Trento Rise could benefit from educational and divulgative activities for children and general public.

**Development opportunities:**

**Strenght**

Science mediators team is innovative  
Good know-how for SC sustainability  
Good international contacts for research  
Summer schools and science conferences  
Hosting Ecsite 2015 annual conference

**Weakness**

New projects on innovation should be find  
Decreased number of research projects

Ecsite 2015 can be a good attractor to partnership with companies interested in international visibility. The companies can provide collaboration for innovation showcase, prototypes, new product and activities proposal. The companies are the ones in Habitech and GBC consortium, COOP, Federation of Cooperative etc.

**Innovation environment**

**Strenght**

Positive environment in Public events department.  
E&S respective targets well reached  
Lively environment for innovation

**Weakness**

S&T environment not open to changes
Visitors are not involved in research

Circle of SC Friends underexploited

There is a project, to be developed in collaboration with Algorab, to involve visitors in research, letting them collect important data about environmental issues (trash tracking). Algorab will gain reputation and publicity.

**Financing**

**Strenght**

Financing efficiency index good for Education

Acquired finances for research projects

**Weakness**

Volunteers work could be improved

SC fundraising policy to be re-analyzed

SC financing efficiency on long-term

We could use the partnership with University and research centres to seek volunteers among the students, offering a formative experience for researches, experimenting and entering a working environment.

**2.4 What the partnership could be able to deliver as a group, added value brought to each partner**

**The University and Scientific Research Department of Trento province**

The University and Research Department is a MUSE natural ally, because of its mission in research and education and its consolidated local network. A partnership can provide to both institutions mutual publicity, external expertise, and being allies in promoting the territory.

**Trento University**
The University is a very important partner, as one of the main local actors in the field of research and education. A partnership with the university will provide to MUSE a high level credibility in research. Both institution can benefit from the other one’s expertise, the mutual publicity and the possibility to share initiatives and research projects. Muse can provide to the University an experimental ground in various branches of research and collaboration opportunities for the students.

**CIBIO-Centre for Integrative Biology**

**CIMEC- interdepartmental studies centre for Mind and Brains**

CiBIO and Cimec could be good partners, as a local research centre with specific expertise. They could supply knowledge, the partnership could provide mutual exchange of knowledge and provide relationship with the experts. MUSE could be ground for experiments and studies for the CIMEC.

**FBK Bruno Kessler Foundation**

FBK is one of the main research centres of the province; it has a valuable reputation and a consolidated network. MUSE can offer to the Foundation the visibility to reach the general public.

**TrentoRISE**

TrentoRISE can be a good partner to collaborate with, in organizing initiatives for the citizens (like the ICT days) and to participate in setting up the MUSE’s showcase for innovation and start-ups, getting a place in the new museum where divulgate its researches.

**TrentinoSVILUPPO (Trentino Development)**

TrentinoSVILUPPO can provide both services and advice for MUSE’s development and also can be a mean to reach a network of local actors in the field of innovation.

**The Federation of Cooperation in Trentino**

**CEii – European centre for business and innovation**

**CFSI – Training Centre for International Cooperation**

**COOP Trentino**
With the companies related to those cooperatives and consortium we could develop projects in production and we could represent for them a popular mean to reach clients and general public.

**GBC Italia, Habitech**

GBC and Habitech represent a big consortium of businesses in the field of sustainable construction and LEED certification; they can be the best partner for the showcase that will be built in the new MUSE.

**Algorab**

Algorab is a potential partner for a participatory activity that MUSE aims to implement. The activity will involve the citizens in collecting data for a participatory research project about environmental issues. The company produces devices for remote control and can sponsor the research, obtaining visibility, and space to display their most innovative products and services.

**Step 3: The vision of the organization and goals of the SEE Science project revisited**

3.1 After investigating the potential partners, the market (local needs), re-assess your needs to become realistic (try to focus on specific needs than can be clearly stated).

In order to identify the best stakeholders for our purposes, we started from the list prepared for the CSR Training, and added some new names. Until now we selected the following subjects; the selection is based on:
- shared mission and interests
- realistic possibility of a contact and collaboration based on settled MUSE’s goals
Some of the organizations in the list are already in the MUSE’s network. We also wish to add more names.

The local current political guidelines aim to promote a territory with high innovation capacity and strong concern on environment and sustainability. We recognize the need to boost local creativity and innovation-related initiatives.

We focussed on the achievement of the Small Pilot Action (building a Fablab) and on the launch of MUSE as a innovation showcase in the local businesses’ environment. The Fablab showcase could be a useful experimental workshop for small young local companies, artisans and professionalizing and technical schools. The showcase will provide publicity and new impulse to local business.

3.1 Develop the profile of the chosen stakeholders: get a clear picture (e.g. by internet research, reliable informants) about their products/activities/ potential strategic
interests, catchwords, communication style, CSR activities - in order to make a tailor-made proposition to them, both on the content and on the formal and communication levels (in the previous stage you identified a wide list of stakeholders, however, now you choose only those who you intend to make a partnership with).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stakeholder</th>
<th>Type of activity/products</th>
<th>MUSE’s Purpose-strategic interests</th>
<th>Catchwords</th>
<th>Contact (door opener?)</th>
<th>Already contacted?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Habitech</td>
<td>consortium of over 300 business involved in sustainable building</td>
<td>Reach a large number of local businesses</td>
<td>Sustainability, Innovation, creativity, network.</td>
<td>MUSE (personal)</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GBC</td>
<td>LEED Italy</td>
<td>Reach a large number of local businesses</td>
<td>LEED, sustainability, education.</td>
<td>MUSE (personal)</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trento Rise</td>
<td>ICT Research, universities, business</td>
<td>Education and research activities. Reach companies and students.</td>
<td>R&amp;D, change, education, citizenship.</td>
<td>MUSE (institutional)</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ceei</td>
<td>Business Innovation Centre</td>
<td>Reach a large number of local businesses</td>
<td>Innovation</td>
<td>MUSE (institutional)</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HSL</td>
<td>3D printed lamp production</td>
<td>Set up the Fablab (equipment)</td>
<td>Innovation</td>
<td>MUSE (institutional)</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linux Trent</td>
<td>Open source experts local community</td>
<td>Running the Fablab. Workshops and</td>
<td>Innovation opensource</td>
<td>ASP personal</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Social Service</td>
<td>Institutional</td>
<td>Note</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forum Famiglie</td>
<td>Local board for new media training and digital citizenship; Projects about the digital divide.</td>
<td>Workshops at FabLab, offer CSR activities, digital citizenship.</td>
<td>Education social service digital divide</td>
<td>ASP institutional</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trentino Trasporti</td>
<td>Local public transport; innovative means of transport</td>
<td>Innovation showcase</td>
<td>Innovation sustainable mobility</td>
<td>ASP institutional</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UniTn (stage and Placement)</td>
<td>Stage and placements students and graduated</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Education education</td>
<td>ASP institutional</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liceo Scientifico Galileo Galilei Trento</td>
<td>Secondary School, Scientific education</td>
<td>Workshops and community building at FabLab, reach a difficult target (teenagers)</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>MUSE</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.3 The final vision, also taking into account the vision of the prospective partners

The vision we would share with the stakeholders will be based in
- creativity and innovation
- participation and sustainability

3.4 The main directions for achieving that vision – devise a draft.

MUSE aims to become an agora for the contemporary society. Thanks to the collaboration with the local institutions it will become a trustful centre for divulgation and research in science and technology. MUSE will be the experimental ground for engaging the audience in meaningful
everyday life issues and engaging people in science with interesting and amusing activities. It will promote creativity in the territory also collaborating with local companies and innovation actors. That will boost the reputation of MUSE and of the whole territory as fertile ground for innovation, development and culture.

3.5 Potential monitoring techniques to assure that the draft idea will be on track

1. Develop a breakdown structure, with associated time schedule (gannt chart)
   - List of milestone to be reached
   - Set of deliverables to be scheduled
   - Contingencies plan (if needed)

2. Collaborate with Administration dept. to control the management system.

Step 4: Contact targeted stakeholders

4.1 Identify door-openers to help establish the first contact

- Identify the right person of the museum to establish the first contact with the stakeholder:
  a) for his/her working network, previous collaborations, type of activity
  b) for his/her institutional role: director, head of department etc.
  For instance, the SA D. Tombolato already had contacts with Habitech and GBC Italy. Algorab is also member of Habitech.

- Rely on the ASP advice and personal/institutional network for the contact with the provided list of stakeholders
  Our ASP have a large network within the Public Administration.

- Identify potential door-openers/right person in the institution we are willing to contact:
  a) for his/her working network, previous collaborations, type of activity
  b) for his/her institutional role: director, head of department etc.

4.2 Contact the targeted stakeholders with a brief abstract of your intention (could be over the phone, however meeting in person would be preferable).

We will contact the potential stakeholder directly by the phone and also providing a brief presentation of the object of the partnership presenting the institution as a place for developing creativity and innovation open to the whole community.
4.3 Organize a meeting to discuss the potential collaboration

We plan for the first months of year 2013 preview visits to MUSE and to the Fablab for potential strategic partners, as for instance the companies in Habitech consortium, COOP, TrentoRISE etc

4.4 Make sure that your visions are compatible – or if they can be re-adapted

Make sure to share with the senior management the non-negotiable points of the vision: which degree of re-adaptation is acceptable.

4.5 Devise a final list of common objectives to be achieved (in conjunction with your stakeholder’s interest

- Enhance visibility
- Enhance reputation
- Public engagement
- Public awareness of the work of each institution
- Promoting the territory

4.6 After the initial meeting re-contact the stakeholder to maintain a live contact (also make sure to arrange regular meetings)

Regularly update the group via phone, email, direct meeting to be held at least three times a year

Step 5: Devise joint schedule for strategic partnership

Management issues

(Devise a document – the description of the partnership)

5.1 Decide which activities to develop (by performing a brief feasibility check on each proposed activity)

The proposed activities by now are:
- set up a Fablab
- set up an “innovation gallery” with local business innovative products
- Co-production and display of prototypes
- funding initiatives
5.2 Map each activity with each strategic objective (defined in step 1).

Set up a Fablab:
- citizens as pivotal reference point: Small Pilot Action and participatory activities
- Promote Innovation
- Public outreach
- Promote collaboration between SC and Innovation Actors
- Enhance the effectiveness and relevance of SC services

Set up an “innovation gallery” with local business innovative products

Co-production and display of prototypes
- Promote Innovation
- Public outreach
- Promote collaboration between SC and Innovation Actors
- Enhance the effectiveness and relevance of SC services
- Achieve SC financial sustainability
- Facilitate dialogue between stakeholders in order to contribute in building trustful relationships

Funding initiatives
- Achieve SC financial sustainability

5.3 Define the partnership management board / steering committee.

Our members in the board will be the director and the science agent.

5.4 Establish the responsible persons for planning and delivery. (The SC Agent should be actively involved here or even be the coordinating person, both externally, towards stakeholders, and internally through knowledge sharing/knowledge management in your organisation).

The science agent is the responsible person for coordinating the activities for the Pilot Action; the SA is actively involved and shares the responsibility with the department that runs the activity.
5.5 Create a clear schedule with targets and milestones (refer to the monitoring tools developed at step 3.5).

5.6 Assign a monitoring and quality assurance person in order to assure the desired outcomes are in terms with the SEE SCIENCE project.

The role will be covered by the science agent

5.7 Define the joint and individual quality assurance standards.

5.8 Devise the recommendation making process based on the observed results. Draft possible corrective actions.

5.9 Discuss dissemination issues.

5.10 Regularly reassess and monitor the entire partnership. In case of problems – discuss them in the steering committee.

5.11 Devise a problem solving mechanism to assist the functioning of the partnership

To face potential problems, a mechanism can be devised based on the goals of the partnership and the observed results. It is important to face problems at a early stage (thanks to the monitoring activities) and re-asset expectations on current reality, by brainstorming and creating alternative scenarios.

The mechanism can follow the GROW methodology steps:  
Goal: the agreed object of the partnership  
current Reality: how far the partnership is from the goal  
Options (or Obstacles): clearly identify the obstacle in order to come up with the best options  
Way Forward: the options need to be converted in action steps to follow, to reach the goal

Step 6

Implementation of individual activities
6.1 Implement the activities according to the guidance emerged from step 5.

3.2 Partnership committees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Roles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scientists/Experts/Researchers from the science centre</td>
<td>- They deal with Step 1 and Step 2 from Table 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- They also implement the defined objectives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management board of the science centre, esp. the SC Agents</td>
<td>- They deal with Step 3 and Step 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- In some cases they work in conjunction with the Scientists/Experts/Researchers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management board / Steering committee of the partnership.</td>
<td>- They deal with steps 5 - 7.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- They will receive systematic feedback from the Scientists/Experts/Researchers and when needed, from the management board of the science centre.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.3 The contract

In case that you want to achieve a formal partnership agreement, the following aspects should be taken into consideration. The strategic partnership usually is being formalized into a cooperation contract which is signed by all parties involved. This contract should contain the following aspects (just for guidance, not compulsory): a brief introduction to the situation to be signed, partner’s institutional profiles and contact details, preamble, acronym list, specific objectives, key activities (join them in articles or well defined text blocks), roles and responsibilities, statement of confidentiality, intellectual property rights, internal problem solving mechanisms, monitoring and evaluation, operational dates, legal institutional representatives, signatures, etc.

4. Good and sustainable partnership in the framework of the SEE SCIENCE project and beyond

In order to be aware of the best practices in terms of building strategic partnerships, there are several aspects that need to be known [6,8,9].

- Assure full partner participation and commitment (make sure that the actual stakeholder is fully engaged in your common goals and that their work is totally focused).
• Devise easy to implement objectives and have a good established plan as well as schedule (do not be over-ambitious with your objectives and schedule – rather devise clear and easy to implement goals that can be also measured at the end).

• The partnership enjoys political, social acceptance and trust (make sure there are no conflicting issues between your organization and the stakeholder that would affect your goals. Build on the trust relationship by being totally transparent in your activities concerning your common project).

• Strong sense of ownership is evident as well as a win-win situation (give to the partnership committee a strong sense of ownership over their project in order to achieve a better result – rather than just giving them the sense of building product for somebody else).

• Promote idea diversity and equal opportunities (allow open brainstorming sessions and take into account as many different ideas as possible – try to balance the ideas proposed by your institutions with the ones of the stakeholders’).

• Keep a positive atmosphere within the team and always take into account the sustainability of your project (maintain constant communication with your partners, increase your visibility and include social events to celebrate your successes).

5. Case studies

In order to provide several examples of how building a strategic partnership works, we are going to present in more details three case studies that have been briefly discussed during the CSR Training of the science agents. These examples are presented in Appendix A and depict real case studies of different science centres that have built strategic partnerships for different purposes.

Conclusion

Overall, building local strategic partnerships involves a well established institutional research and analysis in order to be able to match the most useful partners. To the same extent, the steps that form the action plan for building local strategic partnerships must be carefully chosen in order to assure the desired outcomes for science centres: innovation, knowledge dissemination and financial sustainability. Figure 2 provides an overview of the action plan’s main steps.
Figure 2 – Action plan for building local strategic partnerships

Bibliography and further reading


[10] Science Centre Partnership: Outreach to Students and Teachers, Linda E. James et al., North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, 2006.

Appendix A – Brief Case studies

Case Study 1 – Ontario Science Centre
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Science Centre</th>
<th>Ontario Science Centre (OSC)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Partnership strategy/purpose (step 1)</strong></td>
<td>The Partnerships Strategy is to create a range of relationships that will deliver funds, technology, expertise, and human resources to create and sustain <em>Agents of Change</em>. These partnerships must satisfy the needs and interests of the OSC, our partners and our visitor/participants</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Potential strategic partners (step 2)** | Toronto District School Board (TDSB)  
Lucent Technologies Canada  
AT&T Foundation |
| **Setting common goals, implementing and monitoring the partnership (steps 3-7)** | In 1999, the Ontario Science Centre received a $600,000 grant from a corporate foundation to fund a new initiative called OSCClub. The program was initially a partnership between the Ontario Science Centre (OSC), the Toronto District School Board (TDSB), and Lucent Technologies Canada. Today, it is sponsored financially by the AT&T Foundation and involves school boards across the greater Toronto area. It is an annual program for 50 grade 9 and 10 students (aged 14–15), 10 pre-service and 10 in-service teachers, and mentors from business and industry. Students engage in experiences that highlight and demonstrate real-world applications of science, mathematics and technology, working with teachers and industry mentors.  
What does the program offer to the businesses that provide mentors? It enables them to develop long-term partnerships with educational institutions (schools, boards of education, OSC). It provides a development opportunity for their employees, who participate as mentors and develop improved communication skills, knowledge and understanding. OSCClub contributes indirectly to a more highly skilled and knowledgeable future workforce. And finally, in an era when many corporations are concerned with social responsibility, OSCClub provides an opportunity for community involvement.  
For the students there are also major advantages. They gain employment skills and are introduced to exciting career opportunities. They have the opportunity to see the applications of science, math and technology in business and industry. They develop relationships with peers and adults from outside their own school/community. They learn the benefits and challenges of working in a team.  
Finally, there are impacts for the in-service and pre-service teachers. OSCClub provides the opportunity to develop new teaching strategies. Teachers develop relationships with business and industry mentors. They have the opportunity to develop programs collaboratively with other innovative science teachers and to work with motivated and talented students. All of this can be carried back to their home classroom. |

**Case Study 2 - Carnegie Science Centre**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Science Centre</th>
<th>Carnegie Science Centre</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Partnership strategy/purpose</strong></td>
<td>This unique partnership between PPG Industries and the Carnegie Science Centre enhances the science and technology education of</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
purpose (step 1) students in the community while providing PPG with appropriate recognition. Outreach programming to local schools and communities using PPG technology is transported by vans with PPG logos and products displayed. The programs include films of PPG Scientists at work

Potential strategic partners (step 2) PPG Industries

Setting common goals, implementing and monitoring the partnership (steps 3-7) The first three programs directly related to PPG’s science and technology, “Great Colour Caper” – all about colour, light and perception; “Fractured Physics” – the physics of glass and “Ion Jones and the Lost Castle of Chemistry” – PPG chemistry – have been very well-received in South-western Pennsylvania and Ohio. The replication of the “Great Colour Caper” with Discovery Place in Charlotte, NC has also been very successful.

A fourth program, “Captain Green's Time Machine,” relating to energy and the environment was rolled out in 2009.

Case Study 3 – Science Centre of Singapore

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Science Centre</th>
<th>Science Centre Singapore</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Partnership strategy/ purpose (step 1)</td>
<td>To promote the importance of developing the love of science for the sustainability of future generations. The Shell SYSF has grown to become a key annual event in the school calendar.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potential strategic partners (step 2)</td>
<td>Shell Science Teachers’ Association of Singapore (STAS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Setting common goals, implementing and monitoring the partnership (steps 3-7)</td>
<td>Activities include the Shell Science Fair, SYSF Science Explorama, SYSF Stage!, the Teachers’, Students’ and the Public Seminars. These activities provide an avenue to showcase the creativity and innovation of the students and encourage students of very diverse backgrounds to come together with science as the common platform.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>On 17 May 2008 we celebrated Shell’s sponsorship of a five-year Climate Change exhibition at the Science Centre Singapore (SCS). This effort was a partnership between SCS, Shell Companies in Singapore and National Environment Agency.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Climate Change exhibition will see interactive displays educating the public sector on the various environmental issues that Singapore and the world face today. Highlights such as the mechanical Wayang Kulit show and Object Theatre Show called “The Climate Change Show” hopes to enlighten and entertain visitors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Climate Change Show is a 20-minute, multi-sensory experience that</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
drives home the serious issues of climate change in a humorous and exciting way, through visual and physical special effects. Narrated by Sheepie, a talking, animated sheep wearing rubber boots, this show will educate visitors on how and why our Earth is changing.

In 2003, the Chemistry Exhibition made its first appearance with the aims of exploring the fundamentals and other aspects of Chemistry through exhibits, models, graphics and a range of other interactive and innovative presentation techniques. It helps to further stimulate general interest in science and covers six main areas – i.e. fundamental chemistry, it’s a material world, phenomenal chemistry, reactive chemistry, chemistry in everyday life and chemical bar.