Good Practice template

* All Good Practices identified by an Interreg Europe project and reported in the progress reports have to be submitted to the Programme.
* In order to submit a practice, you will have to register in the Interreg Europe website. Online submission will be available the first semester of 2017.
* NB: in orange: 2 optional fields. All other fields are compulsory.

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| 1. **General information** | |
| **Title of the practice** | **Innovation Vouchers of Usti Region** |
| **Does this practice come from an Interreg Europe Project** | *NO* |

In case ‘yes’ is selected, the following sections appear:

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| ***Please select the project acronym*** |  |

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| **Specific objective** | 1.2 Improving innovation Delivery policies  Rural SMEs to consolidate and overcome barriers to their growth and competitiveness | |
| **Main institution involved** | Usti Region  Innovation Centre of Usti Region | |
| **Location of the practice** | Country | Czech Republic |
| NUTS 1 | *CZ 0* |
| NUTS 2 | CZ 04 Severozapad (Northwest) |
| NUTS 3 | Usti nad Labem |

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| 1. **Detailed description** | |
| **Detailed information on the practice** | The “Innovation Vouchers of Usti Region” programme (hereinafter the "Programme") supports cooperation among business entities of the Usti Region with research organizations in the Czech Republic. Financial support motivates companies to establish contacts with research organizations. The aim of the program is the first mutual acquaintance eventually growing into a lasting partnership.  Innovation voucher (hereinafter "voucher") is a one-off grant which can receive a business entity for the acquisition of services provided by a research organization. Companies can leverage the knowledge or capacity they themselves do not have, and thus upgrade their products, processes or services.  Innovation vouchers improve the competitiveness of enterprises of the Usti Region. They simultaneously support collaboration of the research sphere with the application area.  The knowledge gained through the voucher will be used for innovation in products, processes or services.  Knowledge provider can be any research organization in the Czech Republic. An applicant for a voucher and the recipient can be any individual business that has employees or company (joint stock company, limited liability company, general partnership, limited partnership or similar entity), hereinafter referred to as the "applicant".  Eligible activities include: - Diagnosis, testing, measuring, analyzes, validation, calculations - such activities are eligible only under the condition that are necessary and will be used for the introduction of innovation (product, service, process, etc.). - Proposals of new systems, designs, types of equipment, materials and methods. - Development of software or hardware. - Development of material, equipment, components of the system prototype, test blank, functional sample. - Optimization of processes, methods, parameters, use of materials with the aim of increasing efficiency or cost reduction. - Modeling, simulation processes, processes, systems, operations. - Application of new materials, methods, technological processes, software. - Design of new products - industrial, product.  Ineligible activities include: - Research, market research, economic analysis, sales, export promotion. - Training and education for employees and management. - Internships for students. - Grant, economic, legal advice and services. - Commonly recurring services (tax and accounting services, sales activities, etc.). - Services in the field of marketing and promotion. - Production of semi-finished products or conventional. - Other activities that are not listed among eligible. |
| **Resources needed** | 70 000 € per year (the amount and periodicity depends on the capability of the grant provider). Maximum support for one project: approx. 4 000 €.  The budget for the programme is provided by the Usti Region. |
| **Timescale (start/end date)** | January 2015 – ongoing (one call for proposals announced a year) |
| **Evidence of success (results achieved)** | The evidence of achieved success of this practice is provided mainly by the enhancing number of submitted projects and observed improved and recurring cooperation between the business and research spheres. |
| **Difficulties encountered/ lessons learned** | It may be hard to distinguish among projects and to grant support to those with highest level of potential innovation. |
| **Potential for learning or transfer** | *[1000 characters] Please explain why you consider this practice (or some aspects of this practice) as being potentially interesting for other regions to learn from. This can be done e.g. through information on key success factors for a transfer or on, factors that can hamper a transfer. Information on transfer(s) that already took place can also be provided (if possible, specify the country, the region – NUTS 2 – and organisation to which the practice was transferred)*  *[Technical: A good practice be edited throughout a project life time (e.g. to add information on the transfers that have occurred)]* |
| **Further information** | www.icuk.cz |
| **Contact details** *[Technical: the contact details will be visible only to “Policy Learning Platforms registered members”* | |
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| **Expert opinion** | *[500 characters] [****Technical: to be filled in by the Policy Learning Platforms experts****]* |