



Design 4 Innovation

Design Action Plan:
BCD Barcelona Design Centre,
Spain



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Regional Context

Partner organisation

BCD Barcelona Design Centre

Country

Spain

NUTS2 region

Catalonia

Contact person

Isabel Roig Llorca

Email address

iroig@bcd.es

Phone number

93 256 67 33



Catalonia

Policy Context

The Action Plan aims to impact

Investment for Growth and Jobs programme
and
Other regional development policy instrument

Name of the policy instruments addressed

The Catalonia Design Action Plan addresses two policy documents. First, the ERDF Operational Programme Catalonia 2014-2020, which is a regional Structural Funds operational programme. Second, a national policy instrument influenced during the project implementation, the Spanish State Finance Act 2018 - Programme 463B, Scientific and Technological Research Promotion and Coordination, which is not

a national or regional Structural Funds operational programme.

Policy instrument 1: Description and main features of the ERDF Operational Programme Catalonia 2014-2020

In line with EU2020 and Catalonia 2020 Strategy (ECAT2020), the ERDF Operational Programme Catalonia 2014-2020 aims to boost economic growth in the region of Catalonia and to help it contribute to Europe reaching its goals of smart, sustainable and inclusive growth for all. Over the 2014-2020 period, the ERDF centres its action on strengthening public policies on innovation and knowledge, entrepreneurship and green economy, in line with the Research and Innovation

Strategy for the Smart Specialization of Catalonia (RIS3CAT), which defines the framework for research and innovation policies in Catalonia for the 2014-2020 period.

ECAT 2020 identifies six priority areas for public policies aimed at promoting smart, sustainable and inclusive growth and advancing towards the Catalonia 2020 Vision. The areas of employment and education and social cohesion in 2020 ECAT help to promote inclusive growth. The areas of innovation and knowledge, entrepreneurship, internationalisation and green economy contribute to smart, sustainable growth. The ERDF, which accounts for 83.5% of European Union support for thematic objectives TO 1 (R&D&I), TO 2 (ICTs), TO 3 (SMEs) and TO 4 (Low-carbon Economy), is crucial to enabling Catalonia to advance towards the implementation of ECAT 2020 and achieving the 2020 objectives.

In accordance with the eleven thematic objectives set out in the first paragraph of Article 9 of Regulation (EU) No.1301/2013, the ERDF Operational Programme Catalonia 2014-2020 focuses on six out of those

thematic objectives and proposes the following distribution of ERDF support:

- 40.4% for TO1 Strengthening research, technological development and innovation
- 7.4% for TO2 Enhancing access to, and use and quality of ICT
- 18.8% for TO3 Enhancing the competitiveness of SMEs
- 15.9% for TO4 Supporting the shift towards a low-carbon economy in all sectors
- 16.3% for TO6 Preserving and protecting the environment and promoting resource efficiency

In accordance with the TO 3 selected for the development of this Action Plan, the ERDF Operational Programme Catalonia funding strategy focuses on three investment priorities: IP 3.1 Promoting entrepreneurship, in particular by facilitating the economic exploitation of new ideas and fostering the creation of new firms, including through business incubator; IP 3.3 Supporting the creation and extension of advanced capacities for product and service development; and IP 3.4 Supporting the capacity of SMEs to grow in regional, national and international markets, and innovation processes.

The two first actions included in this Action Plan are in line with the specific objective (SO) 3.4.1 under the IP 3.4, consisting of promoting the growth and consolidation of SMEs, in particular by improving their financing, technology and access to advanced support services.

Design driven innovation activities are not foreseen in the programme and this is what we planned to improve by implementing best practices learned through interregional cooperation. According to data collected in 2012, Catalan business ecosystem is made up of a 95% of micro-enterprises, followed by small and medium companies, with 4.3% of the total. It is then necessary to develop mechanisms and tools to facilitate the access of SMEs to finance, improving the competitiveness and development of innovative activities including design driven innovation methods.

The state of play in Catalonia

Catalonia has an industrial base and an open,

competitive and sustainable economy that combines talent, creativity, a diversified business fabric and has its own excellent research system within the framework of a dynamic, enterprising and inclusive society

Although Catalan industry and business ecosystem proves to be in good health according to the Regional Innovation Scoreboard (RIS) 2019, it is noted that in the component 'Design applications' Catalonia ranked 3 positions lower than in RIS 2017, and 28 positions lower in terms of 'SMEs innovating in house'. Besides, Catalonia appears as a moderate innovator with an innovation performance below EU average. The main weaknesses relate to low business R&D expenditures (0.2% of GDP in 2011) and to SMEs innovation in-house and innovative SMEs collaborating with others.

SMEs often do not have access to training or the necessary tools to adapt to a rapidly changing, ever more competitive environment. In response to this, the Catalan Government is promoting strategies to foster cooperation between companies in the framework

of clusters and strategic plans. Such initiatives enable firms to become oriented towards activities that generate greater added value and viable and sustainable future strategies. Thus, commercial or marketing innovation, based on improved design, packaging, positioning, promotion, price policy or sales channels, is strategic for increasing sales. For its part, organisational innovation, based on reducing administrative costs, improving job satisfaction and access to non-commercial goods, such as external, un-catalogued knowledge, or reducing supply costs, is essential for improving company performance.

Catalonia is a clear example of territory compromised with the investment in R&D and Innovation, so much from the public as private slope. For what it concerns to the Government, initiatives as the National Agreement for the Research and the Innovation (PNRI), the Strategic Agreement for the Internationalisation, the Quality of the Occupation and the Competitiveness of the Catalan Economy and Government's Plan are a good example of the spirit and the bet that Catalonia is realising to advance in this direction and to obtain a

top economy to European level in terms of research and innovation.

Finally, the research and innovation strategy for the smart specialisation of Catalonia focuses on the inheritance of the great Catalan industrial tradition and its key competitive factors, specifically stating: innovation, technology, design and education. Therefore, design becomes a key element to better contribute to the Government strategies for a competitive and sustainable Catalan economy.

Information of the project approach

We approached the project aiming to improve this policy instrument by integrating design driven innovation activities into its implementation strategy, the objective was to position design as an eligible cost and strategic activity within financial instruments such as loans, subsidies and innovation vouchers as well as potentially nonfinancial support such as knowledge transfer and capacity building.

During the phase 1 of the project, the interregional learning process has led to deeply analyse the financial and non-financial instruments present in Catalonia. This analysis has demonstrated that, in some particular cases, design is indeed included in the procedure criteria established by those instruments.

Design driven innovation concept has been adopted by some policy documents in Catalonia. This is given by the fact that both, the public and private sector in Catalonia, made innovation a priority with the Catalan Government actively supporting all kind of innovation enhancement programmes. Regional policymakers give design a cross-sectorial approach. As an example, the Research and Innovation Strategy for the Smart Specialization of Catalonia (RIS3CAT) mentions design when referring to the inheritance of the great Catalan industrial tradition and its key competitive factors i.e. innovation, technology, design and education.

Despite of the cross-sectorial references of design as an innovation factor in some policy documents, evidence shows that role of design is yet applied as a styling

add-on instead of being broadly incorporated as an economic factor which role is to integrate functional, emotional and social utilities. This vision involves a concept of innovation as a complex phenomenon, with a systemic relationship with economic value creation and added value. In systemic innovation, design plays a key role at the very outset, as an integration of performances and emotions to provide the best experience wanted or needed by users. In this line, the 'Innovation Barometer in Catalonia 2017' shows a 14% of companies that collaborate with users for their products development and services delivery, while actually in 2015 it was 18% of these companies within the same analysis framework. Therefore, over the last few years Catalonia lost 4% of companies innovating with users.

Within the above scenario, promoting design in the ERDF Operational Programme Catalonia 2014-2020 becomes even more relevant and supposes a key element for promoting growth and consolidation of SMEs, in particular, by improving its financing mechanisms and the access to advanced support services. Although design is included and considered in

the above measures, evidence shows that the number of companies presenting design driven innovation projects to be financially supported is very low. One of the reasons underlying this low performance is limited awareness about the possibility to submit this type of projects and therefore have access to the financing mechanisms.

Policy instrument 2: Description and main features of the Programme 463B, Scientific and Technological Research Promotion and Coordination within the Spanish State Finance Act 2018

This instrument is the Programme 463B, Scientific and Technological Research Promotion and Coordination approved by the 2018 Budgetary Plan for the Kingdom of Spain. The body responsible for this policy instrument was the State Secretariat for Universities, Research, Development and Innovation within the Ministry of Science, Innovation and Universities, which managing the Programme 463B, aims to guarantee an adequate, sustained level of investments in research and innovation, and reinforce their governance at all Government levels.

The Ministry of Science, Innovation and Universities, is the Department responsible, among other functions, for the proposal and execution of the Government's policy in matters of universities, scientific research, technological development and innovation in all sectors. This Ministry has, as a higher and managing body, the State Secretariat for Universities, Research, Development and Innovation with powers addressing the national awards in research, innovation and design, i.e. the National Innovation and Design Awards.

Over the last few years, this policy instrument has focused on providing the necessary support to the National Innovation and Design Awards. The main activities set out by this instrument have been advisory, definition, dissemination and delivery, as well as preparatory activities for the selection procedure and actions to improve promotion mechanisms. Although actions addressing design as a social factor and an innovation driver have been also foreseen by this policy measure, they have been limited to a very general and broad communication.

However, in accordance with the State Secretariat objective, there is an opportunity to extend the activities foreseen and conduct an analysis on design contribution in the innovation and competitiveness sphere. Obtaining results in qualitative and quantitative terms leads to an assessment of challenges and needs as well as to identify growth and consolidation opportunities for the sector and for the innovation field in the territory.

As a result, the design sector, and not only freelance design professionals, service design companies, design associations and professional colleges, but also other key actors like design schools, design promotion centres, companies which demand design and policy makers, may benefit from the study outputs. All the information collected may be used to define strategies for companies support, internationalization, training programmes and design research.

Information of the project approach

During the second year of the project implementation, the dissemination activities and the learning events were not only addressed at a regional level but also at

a national level, transferring knowledge and lessons learnt in the Design for Innovation project to the Ministry of Science, Innovation and Universities as well as the State Secretariat for Universities, Research, Development and Innovation.

Because the engagement and the knowledge transfer to the Ministry, lessons learnt in the first semester of the project implementation about Design Ecosystem methodologies were integrated in this policy instrument. An agreement was established to conduct work on defining and characterizing the Design Sector in Spain. Considered as an ambitious study, it would attempt to complete the identification and regionalization of design system agents in the country, both in the supply side such as designers, schools and research, and in the demand side such as users, support and promotion, including administrations responsible for the development of design policies and financing instruments.

Ultimately, it is a professional sector study at a national level in order to collect and gather qualitative and

quantitative information, with the aim of establishing the basis for the development of policy instruments in the design sphere.

Below, the link between the change occurred in this policy instrument and the activities organized within the project is explained.

The Design for Innovation project initiated in January 2017, included seven workshops throughout the knowledge exchange period, which cover different topics aiming at a logical learning process. They were provided as follows: 1st.- Mapping Design Ecosystems; 2nd.- Exploring Operational Programmes; 3rd.- Identifying good practices in financial support; 4th.- Identifying good practices in non-financial support; 5th.- Developing Design Action Plans. 6th.- Building capacity among business support organisations; and 7th.- Investigating impact indicators.

Because the experience in the very first workshop about Mapping Design Ecosystem, the Design Ecosystem definition and its methodology learnt and implemented during the first partners meeting and later, locally with

stakeholders, was shared with this policy instrument managing authority. From the beginning of 2018 conversations and meetings with public officers of the Ministry of Science, Innovation and Universities in Spain were conducted in order to transfer knowledge regarding the above mentioned.

Consequently, in order to implement the questionnaire and the template to define and map the Design Ecosystem in Spain, the concrete methodology set out by the Design for Innovation project was definitely crucial to develop and execute the activities agreed with the managing authority. All the activities focused on developing the Spanish Design Ecosystem map were led by the Barcelona Design Centre team ensuring that the lessons learnt regarding the involved actors' classification and the analysis of the ecosystem were developed correctly and effectively. Therefore, dedicated meetings with public officers, design professionals and Spanish Design associations happened before and after the financial support agreement in December 2018.

Government and policy changes

It must be noted that because the new Government term, which began in January 2020, the organic structure has been subject to Government changes and the Ministry of Science, Innovation and Universities has been set as two different Ministries (Ministry of Universities and Ministry of Science and Innovation). Despite of this, the action foreseen is still feasible to be carried out under the framework of this policy instrument.

Actions



Action 1

Awareness raising and knowledge transfer for designers and other SME's in the creative sector to define open innovation processes

1. Background

During the interregional learning process, opportunities concerning design driven innovation were identified coming from the good practices shared with partners and from the analysis carried out in Catalonia where the Operational Programme is applied. Those opportunities are actually considered as gaps in the innovation field of this region. In order to boost design as a driver for innovation, competitiveness and sustainable growth, it is necessary to work on these gaps.

According to information published and available on-line by the Trade and Investment Agency of the Government of Catalonia, both the public and private sector in Catalonia have made innovation a priority with the Catalan Government actively supporting all kind of innovation enhancement programmes. With

fewer than 24.1% of state spending, Catalan enterprise still accounts for 22.1% of companies responsible for innovation with the figure even higher among SMEs. Special focus is above all on the pharma industry, biotech, biomedicine, medical technologies, ICTs, multimedia and audio-visual sectors.

This action will pay attention to some of those specific sectors, particularly to ICTs, multimedia and audio-visual sectors. The main work will be done on creating a link between technological innovation and technology itself with the creative process, specifically the incorporation of new digital and industrial technologies into the design activity oriented to communication and marketing processes. Performing together it will allow to capture new data and relate them to artificial intelligence applications to capture effective leads, increase sales and improve the user experience.

For a long time, design was considered as an add-on process, taking place after technology development. Under this perception, design was limited to styling. The 2005 edition of the Oslo Manual addressed the systemic dimension of innovation, dedicating a chapter to innovation linkages and their measurement. The OECD no longer perceived innovation as a linear phenomenon beginning with technology development, but as a complex and systemic phenomenon. Under this perception, the focus shifts towards an emphasis on linkages and integration. In this context, the economic contribution of design understood as the integrator of functional, emotional and social utilities becomes critical. Design is a key factor at the very outset of innovation and becomes fundamental to increase the economic value of markets, business productivity and the creation of quality jobs.

As it happens in the technological world where most of time they assume design at the end of their ideation process and as a stylish added value for their product, nowadays, most of the creative processes do not

either integrate technology from the beginning and not even think about its contribution to achieve a more attractive result for users and for the market in general. In fact, technology dimension is not integrated in the design process itself. Communication, marketing and other industrial professionals, who use design as their main tool to create and produce, may consider new technologies once the product or the service has been already designed. Therefore, integrating artificial intelligence, internet of things applications or other advanced technological features at the almost-final stage in the creative process becomes difficult and expensive. That is the reason why making new technologies accessible to the world of design, communication and marketing becomes crucial, hence, making them viable in technical and economic terms in the productive and communicative processes of companies.

One of the conclusions coming out from the above explained situation is that the two worlds are still too distant from one and another. There is an opportunity, and therefore, a gap to be covered by

the public programmes intended to increase business competitiveness.

This action in particular will bring a new 'protocol of creation' based in open innovation processes for designers to use new technologies with a strong user centred approach. It will suppose the transfer of knowledge and awareness building with respect to the potentialities of design based companies applying new technologies in their own creation processes. Although the concept of design driven innovation has been broadly used by companies and public institutions, the dimension and possibilities offered by a strong alliance between design -as an integrator factor- and technology is not yet obvious in the professionals' and institutions' minds. The limited awareness about that powerful combination is one of the reasons why the number of technology and designed based projects, which are being co-financed by public instruments, is very low. At once, this leads to the conclusion that those instruments actually do not reach potential beneficiaries who could be preparing projects and submitting proposals to the financial calls.

Relevance to the policy instrument

This action is clearly aligned with the specific objective (SO) 3.4.1 under the IP 3.4 of the ERDF Operational Programme Catalonia 2014-2020, as it includes:

- Programmes of support for growth and consolidation of SMEs, in particular by improving their financing, technology and access to advanced support services.
- Programmes intended to establish mechanisms and actions to improve SMEs competitiveness, specialization, or the development of innovative activities.

Specially, this action contributes to improve the ERDF Operational Programme Catalonia 2014-2020, involving awareness and knowledge to companies so as to access to public instruments through financial calls, as it is explained below:

- In Catalonia, particularly, these calls are managed by the Catalan Institute of Finance (ICF as local acronym) through which they offer Eurocredit loans.

These loans are the instrument defined to deploy the specific objective 3.4.1 of our ERDF Operational Programme, and are addressed to small and medium-sized companies that want to finance investments or working capital needs in order to grow, open new markets, make new developments or strengthen the company's operations.

- As stated in the regulation of these Eurocredit loans, they are going to be available until May 2023, or otherwise, until the funds are depleted.
- The ICF will be invited to participate in awareness raising sessions addressed to design, marketing and communication based SMEs for them to know about the existing Eurocredit loans.
- The latter, together with the new protocol of creation based in open innovation processes, will result in a better position for companies to be beneficiaries. Therefore, this action will trigger more innovative projects to be submitted and co-financed by instruments under the ERDF.

This action will include identification of key elements to define an open innovation process in order to enhance the capacity of potential beneficiaries, not only from the marketing and communication sectors but also from the creative and design areas, to elaborate technology based projects and present them to calls. Since the clarification of a new open innovation process and the identification of a protocol of creation will open cross-sectorial opportunities influencing on all applicants to calls co-financed by the ERDF (such as the Eurocredit loans), eventually, this action will improve the OP not only having an impact on SO 3.4.1. but also having a crosscutting impact in the whole OP.

Relevance to the Interreg project

The good practice related to the programme 'Connect' presented by KEPA, the partner from Greece, became an initial inspiration for this action. The programme focused on bringing different tools and methodologies to professionals and SMEs present in the design and creative sector with the objective to reinforce their skills

and capabilities to innovate and create new products based on design thinking and user-centred strategies.

The project, 'Connect', was a pilot programme aimed at a limited number of companies and designers and focused on quality and in-depth learning rather than quantity. The programme had double purpose: On the one hand, to help companies understand basic user centred design principles, build confidence and help them get closer to their customers by providing them with design thinking tools and techniques on how to engage with their clients and put their needs in the centre of moving their business forward. On the other hand, to support local designers to develop their skills, expand their knowledge and connect with innovative companies.

As it was done in the project Connect, this action intends to bring knowledge and open innovation tools for SMEs and professionals in the design world for them to integrate technological features and applications into their creation processes. The experience shared by KEPA served as inspiration to realize that sometimes

the knowledge transfer needs to be done, firstly, in the design sector in order to collect references on how to combine design and technology and get better products and services for users. Because, secondly, insights coming from previous references will have a cross-sectorial impact involving other actors apart from those already impacted in the first place.

2. Action

- Develop an open innovation protocol of creation for professionals and SMEs. It will consist of creating a link between technological innovation and the creative process, specifically incorporating new digital and industrial technologies into the design activity oriented to communication and marketing processes.
- Definition of key competences required for professional profiles (designers and creatives) subject to participate in the elaboration and definition of the open innovation protocol of creation.
- Organize meetings with the managing authority responsible of this instrument, the General

Directorate for Economic Promotion, Competition and Regulation of the Government of Catalonia.

- Organize meetings with the Catalan Institute of Finance (ICF) with respect to the Eurocredit loans i.e. an instrument co-financed by the ERDF that they offer. The ICF will be approached by this initiative for them to learn about the open innovation protocol of creation.
- Organize an awareness and capacity building session with the Catalan Institute of Finance to explain the Eurocredit loans to the design and creative community.
- Provide companies with appropriate knowledge to become potential beneficiaries of the Eurocredit loans, resulting in a higher number of companies accessing to financial support set out by the ERDF. Likewise, more innovative projects will be activated and potentially co-financed by this public instrument.

3. Players involved

- Managing Authority of the ERDF Operational Programme Catalonia 2014-2020, the General Directorate for Economic Promotion, Competition and Regulation of the Government of Catalonia.
- Catalan Institute of Finance (local acronym ICF).
- Creactivitat S.L, as SME experts in ICT, design, web programming, mobile solutions, smart marketing and digital transformation based in Catalonia since 1998. It is an ICT leading company in the region.
- Eurecat, the Technological Centre of Catalonia that provides the industrial and business sector with differential technology and advanced knowledge to respond to the innovation needs of companies and to boost their competitiveness. They will provide the state of the art, features and functionalities of different technological solutions, as well as their conceptualization, design and development of prototypes.
- Barcelona Design Centre will work as the main agent in the design and creative sector to build connections with the community regarding this action main features.

4. Timeframe

The following timeline is an estimation subject to changes

March 2020 to December 2020:

- Organize meetings with the managing authority responsible of this instrument, the General Directorate for Economic Promotion, Competition and Regulation of the Government of Catalonia.
- Organize meetings with the Catalan Institute of Finance (ICF) with respect to the Eurocredit loans.

July 2020 to February 2021:

- Identify professionals and SMEs in the creative and design sector that can be potentially subject to apply the new protocol of creation and at the same time are potential beneficiaries for the ERDF co-financed instruments.

January 2021 to June 2021

- Develop an open innovation protocol of creation for professionals and SMEs.

June 2021 to November 2021

- Organize an awareness and capacity building session with the Catalan Institute of Finance to explain the Eurocredit loans to the design and creative community.
- Provide companies with appropriate knowledge to become potential beneficiaries of the Eurocredit loans, resulting in a higher number of companies accessing to financial support set out by the ERDF.

5. Costs

The total budget identified is 99.296,40€ for the activities to be implemented in order to (1) define a methodology for the open innovation process, (2) develop an open innovation protocol of creation for professionals and SMEs incorporating new digital and industrial technologies into the design activity, (3) identify professionals in the design sector to contribute in the protocol definition and lead communications with them, (4) dissemination tasks.

6. Funding sources

It is 47% co-financed by the Barcelona Design Centre and 53% by ACCIO the Catalonia Agency for Business Competitiveness.



Action 2

Identify synergetic areas such as circular economy, and opportunities for design support in that area.

1. Background

The Montreal Design Declaration in 2017 defines design as “the application of intent: the process through which we create the material, spatial, visual and experiential environments in a world made ever more malleable by advances in technology and materials, and increasingly vulnerable to the effects of unleashed global development.” Expressing that idea in other words, as Ellen MacArthur foundation states, design is the way we create products, services and systems, and is the mechanism by which we shape the environment to meet people’s needs and desires.

When something is designed, whoever is in charge of doing it, crucial decisions are made that impact how it will be set or manufactured, how it will be used, and what will happen when it is not needed or wanted

anymore. In this context, once these decisions are made and put in practice, is extremely difficult to go back and correct harmful effects resulting from those decisions. From a holistic perspective, design, as the way to create products, services and systems, becomes crucial at the very beginning of that process to make sure that decisions are not later found to produce undesirable consequences. Therefore, design plays a key role within circular economy as it presents a socio-economic model that aims at a more responsible and efficient production and consumption.

During the interregional learning phase of the Design for Innovation project it was showed that awareness and knowledge are key aspects and priorities so as to develop design driven innovation, going from business and professionals’ awareness to institutional and social understanding where the human factor

perspective, brought by a user experience approach, becomes crucial. Accordingly, actions to steer the policy instrument towards the increasing of awareness and knowledge in the sphere of design applied in the circular economy area, are very relevant.

This measure intends to realign our main policy instrument towards building the capacities and raising awareness of SMEs and professionals in the Catalan design ecosystem, formed by approximately 4.000 companies and design schools and universities that are educating around 6.000 future professional designers a year.

Relevance to the policy instrument

This action is intended to arise awareness and to promote the implementation of circular initiatives in the design sector as well as to accelerate the adoption of design strategies in industrial sectors that are currently applying or are going to apply circular economy strategies, such as the textile and beverage sectors. As a consequence of this two-fold strategy, this action will

improve the ERDF Operational Programme Catalonia 2014-2020, having a strong impact on SO 3.4.1 as it helps to increase business competitiveness through greater efficiency in the use of resources, and the production of more sustainable goods and services that generate value, wealth and jobs.

The relevance of this action, as for its effects over the Operational Programme, is given for the fact that it basically addresses one of the impact indicators of the investment priorities (IP 3.4), the OP indicator EO20 'Number of companies impacted by awareness raising actions'. Since the managing authority will be able to improve the results evaluation, this enhancement involves a better governance of the Operational Programme. The activities foreseen hereby will focus on the number of companies participating of the awareness raising actions. Additionally, it will approach circular economy based actions under the ERDF framework, so as to have upgraded projects by introducing design elements and positively affect the OP's results.

This action will intend to bring the design ecosystem to be present at cross-sectorial initiatives previously identified. Particularly, the following initiatives have been pointed out, for the moment, considering the 'Action Plan for the textile and beverage sectors in Catalonia', promoted within the CircE Interreg Europe Project "European Regions Toward Circular Economy":

- Under the Action 2 it is intended to create a Circular Economy Agreement in the textile sector to be signed by companies and stakeholders found in the textile value chain in Catalonia. This agreement represents an opportunity to create cross-cutting impacts in the Catalan textile value chain since it holds significant stakeholders such as designers, industrial producers, manufacturing and tailoring companies, among others. Therefore, the action described hereby in this Design Action Plan is focused on taking part of the stakeholders group that will participate in the deployment of the Circular Economy Agreement in the textile sector.
- Under the Action 3 it is intended to raise awareness and to promote the adoption of circular initiatives

in economic sectors and the beverage sector in particular, by disseminating circular economy tools and best practices. This is going to be done by the production of guidelines and the implementation of one workshop to encourage the application of circular economy tools. In the above context, our action focuses on promoting circular design as a vision to enhance the possibilities to reach circular economy objectives.

As a consequence of all the above, the managing authority will gather relevant data with respect to the programme application and the results obtained thereby, which implies a better impact indicators management, and accordingly, an improved Operational Programme's governance.

Relevance to the Interreg Project

During the interregional learning process of the project Design4Innovation, the different workshops and presentations from other regions have contributed

with inspiration and references. Particularly, the action 'Identify synergetic areas such as circular economy, and opportunities for design support in that area', was inspired either by lessons learnt during the fifth partnership meeting in Riga (Latvia) on 29-31 October 2018 and by the Design Finland Programme and the Design of Latvia 2020, which are the Finland and Latvia design action plans respectively set in 2013 and in 2017.

During the partnership meeting in Riga different exercises were implemented, becoming lessons that constitute the basis for the development of this Action. First, to review strengths and weaknesses of the own regional Design Ecosystem elaborated first semester 2017, including the identification of a weakness to be addressed through the action plan, and finally followed by a second exercise consisting of reviewing existing action plans in European regions.

As a result of the Design Ecosystem revision, an opportunity was identified because new sectors stand out as a potential fit with design for the generation of new business models in Catalonia as well as the

identification of industrial sectors, with growth potential, was set as a proposal to be improved in the region. Additionally, during the above-mentioned meeting, representatives of the Ministry of Culture of Latvian Design presented their design action plan referred in the document 'Design of Latvia 2020'. Since it holds a holistic design policy approach, it became useful to be inspired of when defining synergies between design and other areas such as circular economy to support the encouragement of the use of design in products of different industries to increase their economic value and strengthen their competitiveness.

Furthermore, the Design Finland Programme and its identification of green economy as potential competence area to gain a competitive advantage from the use of design (Design Finland Programme, page 47) became a reference for this Action development.

2. Action

- Organize meetings with the General Directorate for Environmental Policy within the Ministry of Sustainability and Territory of the Government of Catalonia.
- Organize meetings and conference calls to keep ongoing communications regarding the two initiatives identified under the Action Plan for the textile and beverage sectors in Catalonia, promoted within the CircE Interreg Europe Project "European Regions Toward Circular Economy".
- Organize an open event addressing engagement and knowledge transfer in the field of circular economy applications having design based methodologies as a key factor to close the loop from the origin and facilitate regenerative and more sustainable systems.
- Collecting data and information with respect to the number of agents participating in the aforementioned event, as well as the results obtained from the awareness raising activity for design to be integrated in the two initiatives identified under the 'Action Plan for the textile and beverage sectors in Catalonia'.
- Organize meetings and inform the managing authority responsible of this instrument, the General Directorate for Economic Promotion, Competition and Regulation of the Government of Catalonia, about the data and information resulting from the above mentioned activities.

3. Players involved

- Ministry of Sustainability and Territory of the Government of Catalonia, including the General Directorate for Environmental Policy.
- Managing Authority of the ERDF Operational Programme Catalonia 2014-2020, the General Directorate for Economic Promotion, Competition and Regulation of the Government of Catalonia.
- Barcelona Design Centre team and the Design Cluster (hosted and led by BCD), will be main actors to conduct the actions above mentioned.

4. Timeframe

The following timeline is an estimation subject to changes:

March 2020 to December 2020:

- Organize meetings with the General Directorate for Environmental Policy within the Ministry of Sustainability and Territory of the Government of Catalonia.
- Organize an open event addressing engagement and knowledge transfer in the field of circular economy applications having design based methodologies as a key factor to close the loop from the origin and facilitate regenerative and more sustainable systems.

June 2020 to September 2021:

- Organize meetings and conference calls to keep ongoing communications regarding the two initiatives identified under the Action Plan for the textile and beverage sectors in Catalonia, promoted within the CircE Interreg Europe Project "European Regions Toward Circular Economy".

- Collecting data and information with respect to the number of agents participating in the aforementioned event, as well as the results obtained from the awareness raising activity.
- Organize meetings and inform the managing authority, the General Directorate for Economic Promotion, Competition and Regulation of the Government of Catalonia, about the data and information resulting from the above mentioned activities.

5. Costs

Since the implementation costs are subject to the number of activities that will be eventually implemented, an estimation cost is calculated around 30.000 €.

6. Funding sources

For now, Barcelona Design Centre budget will cover costs resulting from this action.



Action 3

DESIGN ECOSYSTEM: Conduct research on design sector, design use in businesses and measure the impact of design.

1. Background

As explained above in the policy context section, during the implementation of the Design for Innovation project, Barcelona Design Centre was in close contact with the Ministry of Science, Innovation and Universities of the Spanish Government, exploring the feasibility of financial and technical measures to ease data collection and transfer within the design sector at a national level.

The policy instrument underlying the above-mentioned context was the Spanish State Finance Act 2018 - Programme 463B, Scientific and Technological Research Promotion and Coordination; and the Managing Authority of the Programme influenced is the State Secretariat for Universities, Research, Development and Innovation within the Ministry of Science, Innovation and Universities.

The result of the previous actions, was an agreement to implement the definition and characterization of the Design Ecosystem in Spain. This study completes the identification and regionalization of design system agents in the country, both on the supply side such as designers, schools and research, and the demand side such as users, support and promotion, including administrations responsible for the deployment of design policies and financing instruments, as well as design promotion activities, design based policies applied, public funding instruments and research activities

Ultimately, it is a professional sector study at a national level in order to collect and gather qualitative and quantitative information, with the aim of establishing the basis for the development of policy instruments in the design sphere.

The Design Ecosystem definition and its methodology learnt and implemented during the project was shared with this policy instrument's managing authority. From the beginning of 2018 conversations and meetings with public officers of the Ministry of Science, Innovation and Universities in Spain were conducted in order to transfer knowledge regarding the above mentioned.

The sources of inspiration have been as above explained the ecosystem approach adopted by the project and also the Irish design study presented at the 5th partners meeting in Riga.

The outcomes of this study, and therefore, the effects of this policy change, are below described according to the specific results arising from the activities established in the financial support agreement and implemented during 2019:

- Definition of the Design Ecosystem in Spain using the methodology learnt during the D4I project implementation. As a result, the following elements were analyzed and identified in detail considering each administrative region in Spain ('Autonomous

Communities'): designers i.e. the supply side in the sector; support instruments -financial and non-financial-; design promotion activities; all the actors involved in the design ecosystem representing more than 60 associations and design-related entities; design based policies applied; public funding instruments; research activities; and education centres offering design related degrees.

- A quantitative study defining the type of companies and SMEs offering design.
- Identification and definition of the main challenges in the design sector.
- A web-based repository/library of design sector based studies.
- An interactive on-line platform set to allow all the actors involved in the Design Ecosystem, first identified, to interact with.

2. Action

In the above described context, Barcelona Design Centre will be monitoring and following-up the data coming up from the design ecosystem interactive on-line platform, as well as BCD will work on the web-based repository to keep the design sector studies provided by other regional agents up to date. Besides, since this project, resulting from the first policy change, led to an exhaustive study over the design sector supply side, the idea is to find the way to keep developing studies in detail, considering, not only the supply side, but also the demand side, companies that integrates design as part of their development, manufacturing and innovation processes. In a second stage, the idea is to extend this detailed study to the other components set in the Design Ecosystem methodology, such as support instruments, policy, funding, education, and research.

The following activities will result from this action:

- Organize meetings with the public body responsible of this instrument, the State Secretariat for Universities, Research, Development and Innovation

as well as the other national entities deeply involved to carry out the Spanish Design Ecosystem study, i.e. the National Institute of Statistics and the Spanish Network of Design Associations.

- Organize meetings and conference calls to keep ongoing communications with all the regional design contact points in the national territory that contributed to the Design Ecosystem implementation, which are mainly design actors such as design associations and few design promotion centres. This constant contact will provide updated information to be introduced in the platform and in the design ecosystem map to keep it up to date.
- Identify, collect and organize new studies about the professional sector and relevant design data to keep an annual update of the platform content and further development of the challenges proposed by the regional design contact points.
- Organize meetings with the Spanish Network of Design Associations and the Ministry of Science, Innovation and Universities to explain and provide material to understand design as an innovation driver to be included into the Spanish National

Strategy on R+D+I.

- Develop internal work towards the implementation of a 'Design Ladder' question in the Spanish Community Innovation Survey (CIS), which question would collect data regarding design integration into the companies' innovation and development processes in order to quantify the design value within these companies. In the same way it has been done at the European level through the Innobarometer survey.
- Organize meetings with the National Institute of Statistics to provide results from the previous work and collaborate together for including a 'Design Ladder' question in the Spanish Community Innovation Survey in order to obtain comparable data within the EU.

3. Players involved

- Ministry of Science, Innovation and Universities (TBC) or the Ministry which will be in charge of the Innovation Policy for Spain in the new governmental term.
- National Institute of Statistics
- Spanish Network of Design Associations
- National stakeholders and regional agents from the Design Ecosystem will contribute with updated content and proposals.
- Barcelona Design Centre is the entity in charge to lead the Ecosystem Platform management for the next 2 years (2020-2021).

4. Timeframe

The following timeline is an estimation subject to changes:

March 2020 to November 2021:

- Organize meetings with the public body responsible of this instrument.
- Organize meetings and conference calls to keep ongoing communications with all the regional design contact points in the national territory that contributed to the Design Ecosystem.
- Identify, collect and organize new studies about the professional sector and relevant design data to keep an annual update of the platform content.
- Develop internal work towards the implementation of a 'Design Ladder' question in the Spanish Community Innovation Survey.
- Organize meetings with the National Institute of Statistics to provide results from the previous work and collaborate together for including a 'Design Ladder' question in the Spanish Community Innovation Survey in order to obtain comparable data within the EU

January 2021 to September 2021:

- Organize meetings with the Spanish Network of Design Associations and the Ministry of Science, Innovation and Universities to explain and provide material to understand design as an innovation driver to be included into the Spanish National Strategy on R+D+I.

5. Costs

Since the cost of the tasks and activities implemented under this action will be covered internally by the staff budget allocated by Barcelona Design Centre, a specific amount is not possible to be determined for this particular measure, however an estimation cost is calculated around 20.000 €.

6. Funding sources

Barcelona Design Centre will fund the costs resulting from this action.



**Barcelona
centre
de Disseny**

Project Team

Alba Obiols Sales
Eugènia Martí Torroella
Isabel Roig Llorca

Barcelona Design Centre

**Design 4
Innovation**
Interreg Europe



European Union
European Regional
Development Fund