

BEYOND

Deliverable 5.2
Policy Learning Plan



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V0.3	20/12-23	Internal review	Sanyu Karani (FBR)
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BEYOND PROJECT

BEYOND aims to achieve a more interconnected European business acceleration industry in between 'modest' or 'moderate' and 'strong' or 'leading' acceleration ecosystems in Europe, and therefore directly contribute to fostering the rise of investment flows from net contributor regions (leaders) towards 'modest' and 'moderate' regions as net beneficiaries, which might provide one effective solution against the above referred undesired geographical gap.

BEYOND project will focus on:

1. Testing a Self-Sovereign Digital Identity scheme (funding passport) that start-ups get no matter what accelerator they join. Through the funding passport start-ups can document their journey and get access to additional funding.
2. Building a joint platform for the core acceleration enabling online acceleration and a joint framework for how start-ups are most efficiently developed;
3. Sharing specific offers from the different project participants and resources to increase the value for start-ups;
4. Developing an incentive structure where all partners benefit from providing high-quality start-ups and develop their services;
5. Creating a cross-region marketplace for raising funding for start-ups so start-ups are not as dependent on the local investor landscape.

These 5 elements constitute the backbone of BEYOND's Virtual Accelerator Marketplace (VAM) a trust framework to support joint business acceleration activities that will contribute sustainably to enhance a balanced interconnectedness of private investment flows and thus, contribute to dramatically improve quality and outreach of business acceleration services in developing innovation ecosystems. The VAM will be tested through 2 editions of a joint acceleration program co-designed by 5 business accelerators backed on their own VC Funds, representing moderate (BG, LT, PL) and leading regions (DK, ES), that will select and support 2 cohorts of 20 Startups that will receive access to mentoring and VC investors.

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Abbreviations

EC: European Commission
DoA: Description of Action
GA: Grant Agreement
SME: Small and Medium Enterprise
AI: Artificial Intelligence

ACC: Accelerace
FBA: FundingBox Accelerator
ISDI: ISDI
OVK: Overkill Ventures
XLR: XL Radar
FBR: FundingBox Research

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Executive Summary

This deliverable showcases a strong engagement model, highlighting the steps to properly reach Innovation Agencies alongside a Pitch Deck displaying the strengths of the project marketplace, core outcomes of the joint acceleration program, the overall mission of the project and the team behind, working every day to establish a more interconnected European business acceleration industry in between 'modest' or 'moderate' and 'strong' or 'leading' acceleration ecosystems in Europe.

Starting with a clear walkthrough of the related activities and the overall goal of properly involving Innovation Agencies to discover new pathways to evolve their innovation policy mix to make more favourable environments in the startup ecosystems.

Followed by a section describing why a Policy Learning Plan is the proper way to structure how to identify, engage, attract and encourage Innovation Agencies to join forces with the BEYOND project. Elaborated in detail through the engagement model specifically focusing on sourcing, making the initial outreach, and setting up informational meetings, before follow-up and relationship-building takes place. All ending with formalising the cooperation and ongoing support between the project and agencies.

The Pitch Deck builds on the outcomes of the BEYOND project and the many achievements so far, highlighting the ambition of creating a more interconnected Europe for startups, through capital flows built on trust, sharing of resources, sharing methodology and creating an incentive structure that is drawing parallels with UEFA, proposing a Europe League Fund (ELF) to co-invest with local accelerators, providing follow-up funding and syndication opportunities.

BEYOND is building the infrastructure for a connected Europe.

Table of Contents

1 Introduction	4
2 Purpose of a Policy Learning Plan	7
3 Engagement Model	10
3.1 Sourcing	10
3.2 Initial Outreach	10
3.3 Informational meetings	10
3.4 Follow-up and relationship-building	10
3.5 Formalising the cooperation	11
3.6 Ongoing support	11
3.7 Engagement Model Summary	11
4 Pitch Deck	12
5 Conclusion	18

List of Figures

Figure 1 - Partner Countries' Innovation Region	4
Figure 2 - BEYOND KER #2	5

List of Tables

Table 1 - Notable outcomes of the first Joint Acceleration Program of BEYOND	8
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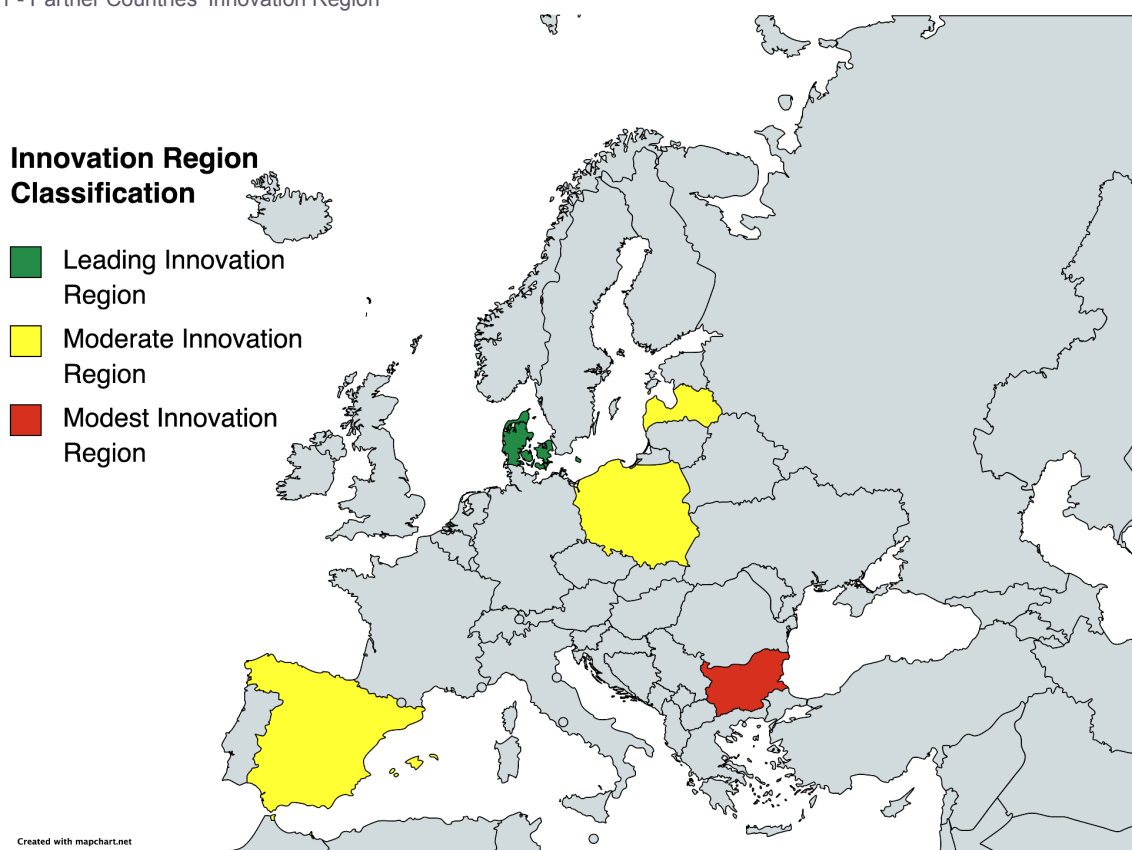
1 Introduction

A part of WP5 Expanding Impact beyond the consortium countries. This deliverable seeks to create a **Policy Learning Plan** comprising a **Pitch Deck and Engagement Model for Innovation Agencies** that will be based on the market insights gathered by all partners.

This closely relates to the goal of properly involving Innovation Agencies to discover new pathways to evolve their innovation policy mix to make more favourable environments for better interconnectedness among net contributor regions and net beneficiary regions of private investment.

As mentioned, all partners will take an active part in this process, which is closely connected to the Project's Specific Objectives and more specifically, SO3. *To expand the impact of the project beyond the consortium by engaging a broad and diverse spectrum of local actors and stakeholders in developing ecosystems as early adopters*, with the related KPI: *No of Innovation Agencies engaged in project activities: At least 5 (1 per consortium country) being Denmark, Poland, Spain, Latvia and Bulgaria.*

Figure 1 - Partner Countries' Innovation Region



The partners are all Local and National Accelerators deeply rooted in the local ecosystem with an already well-established connection to the other major players in their surroundings, including the Innovation Agencies. Therefore, they have already established relationships and strong contacts that can be used when approaching them during the next stages of the project. Among others

concerning the 2nd Acceleration Program of BEYOND running from late February to late March 2024, ending with Investor meetings and pitching opportunities to raise investment until the end of August 2024. Various external stakeholders will be involved to expand the pool of experts, mentors and investors and the Innovation Agencies can potentially play a significant role here.

As a result of the outcomes of this deliverable, namely the engagement model and pitch deck, a meeting with all partners will be set up to explain and guide them on how it is intended to approach and engage the Innovation Agencies in their particular area and ecosystem to take part in the BEYOND project. Partners will be responsible for mapping and approaching the proper interlocutors in their respective regions and encouraging them to link up with BEYOND. Based on the pitch deck they will try to promote the project outcomes and awaken the interest, to start a conversation about how their specific agency can connect to BEYOND and how they will benefit from such a relationship.

A related follow-up activity to this will be the organisation of a roundtable with policymakers to be held within the dissemination actions foreseen in T.5.5., aiming at influencing regional innovation policy mix in the countries involved in the project and beyond, as per the dissemination of project results. Showcasing successful cross-border investment cases and highlighting the benefit of joining forces across country borders to attract startup programs without limiting resources, such as access to mentors, training and investors to local geographical areas.

Hopefully, this will influence the decision-makers in the local ecosystems in the evolution of the ecosystems going forward impacting some of the well-known barriers like too diverse national regulations and unattractive policy mix for private investment in emerging regions.

This deliverable also relates closely to the Key Exploitable Result (KER) #2 of BEYOND, which is the policy learning paper, that focuses on how the project learnings can be used to formulate specific policy recommendations that can impact the innovation policymakers to improve the policy mix and thereby attract foreign investment. It also mentions the connection to EURADA where FundingBox is already a member and well-connected in the community, as a channel to reach even further than the partner’s ecosystem, to spread the word of BEYOND and hereby attract additional attendees to among other activities the roundtable with policymakers.

Figure 2 - BEYOND KER #2

KER #2. Policy learning paper (Exploitation partner: FBA)				
Main Uses (What)	Target Users (who)	DissChannel (where)	ExploitationChannels (how)	Follow up (KPIs)
Policy recommendations to improve policy mix to attract foreign investment	Innovation Policy Makers	EURADA project website community space	on-line Event for representatives of Innovation Agencies Social media campaign	Regions registered in event N° of Downloads Participations in roundtables/events

A final part of this deliverable is the connection to the other activities in the work package and especially D5.1 Plan for the dissemination and exploitation of results (D&E Plan) created in M18 (October 2023) that builds on **O5.2** To define in detail a sustainability model based on the incentive structure. The D&E Plan presents this incentive structure of BEYOND with the ultimate goal of creating a kind of UEFA for startup accelerators. This incentive structure is based on the assumption that the attractiveness of a startup accelerator in the eyes of a startup, is closely connected to its ability to help startups raise funding at a better valuation than what they would be capable of by themselves.

Overall the D&E plan focuses on 2 points to ensure the long-term sustainability of the project and its outcomes. The first involves a more informal collaboration, focusing on the specific learnings and valuable interactions shared among all partners. Examples include the exchange of deal flow, co-investments, and mentorship that continues after the project ends.

The second option entails a more formalized collaboration, centered around the concept of establishing a UEFA for startup accelerators, leveraging the infrastructure developed within BEYOND. To succeed in the second option it is crucial to involve and convince the additional stakeholders in the ecosystem to support and join the work and activities of BEYOND. which is to core outcome of this deliverable to present a strong, exciting and attractive engagement model and pitch deck that can meet the objectives of **O5.3**. To create awareness among **Policy Makers and Regulators** to improve the framework conditions for the systematic implementation of joint activities across developing acceleration ecosystems.

2 Purpose of a Policy Learning Plan

As the previous section of the introduction drafts the overall intention of this deliverable, connecting it to the specific activities taking part as the basis of the content including the relation to other tasks, KERs, KPIs and Objectives this section seeks to elaborate why a Policy Learning Plan is the proper tool to structure the execution of these overall intentions.

There are many ways to engage external stakeholders and ensure they properly understand the ideas behind BEYOND as a project and attract them to participate in creating an even more viable project in a thriving and sustainable ecosystem.

However, a Policy Learning Plan can ensure that proper preparations are made in advance for the more formal outreach. The plan also ensures that all partners are aligned and understand exactly what they are supposed to be doing when approaching the local interlocutors to make the most out of the conversation and follow up with their involvement. The partners will also take part in the mapping of the regional innovation agencies resulting in an extensive list of potential stakeholders to be addressed.

The innovation agencies may be involved differently depending on their activities and strategies. Some of them are perhaps spreading the word about the project and promoting the outcomes, whereas others will endorse the marketplace and make use of some features themselves. Ultimately, the VRM can be used by them as a white labelling tool executing their activities with the use of existing resources such as training courses, ATS or data rooms. Innovation Agencies have a great capacity to reach many of the other stakeholders in a startup ecosystem and involving them in the planning of local events is intended to attract a larger pool of audience.

The engagement model will define several aspects of involvement that can be proposed to the innovation agencies. Suppose some agencies are less keen on jumping into the full use of the platform itself. In that case, it is important to have an alternative, such as their support in promoting the project and marketplace among the members and in their local communities. With the levels of involvement, it is foreseen that all innovation agencies can contribute somehow to the promotion of BEYOND and the expansion of its network and community.

Therefore the plan suggests several options to involve the agency at the level fitting them the most. Through the plan, partners will have several options when in dialogue with the agencies and trying to establish agreements and commitments between them and the BEYOND project.

A strong Policy Learning Plan will ensure that the right steps are taken and that all aspects of what is presented in a pitch deck are aligned with the story that BEYOND wants to tell, to attract the attention of Innovation Agencies, and make sure that they become interested in joining the journey of a more interconnected startup ecosystem across Europe. An ecosystem breaking the barriers of geography and certain areas being less attractive or more challenging to raise investments in.

The success stories of the two rounds of the BEYOND joint acceleration program are crucial to emphasise that this is possible and that mobilising resources over borders can benefit both startups and investors. Below the most notable outcomes and linked investments of the first batch of the joint acceleration program can be seen. These will of course be included as success stories paving the way for attracting the right stakeholders to join BEYOND.

D5.2 Policy Learning Plan

Table 1 - Notable outcomes of the first Joint Acceleration Program of BEYOND

Name & Website	Short Pitch	Growth with BEYOND
<p>Gyfted https://www.gyfted.me/</p>	<p>Gyfted are 3 immigrant founders who stem from Stanford, Bloomberg, Microsoft Research, and OpenGov. Gyfted's building an AI Career Assistant for talent and recruiters, to ease recruiting in an unbiased, frictionless way. Their tech is powered by ML, behavioural science, and psychometrics with significant user-generated data. Google Cloud wrote about them.</p>	<p>This startup is on a rocket trajectory! With 156,000 EUR in funding, including a 113,500 EUR fund and backing from angels at Canva and Google, they're gearing up for a patent filing with the US PTO in November. Boasting 130k+ organic users/month (51% growth since March) and expanding pilots with EPAM and the London Stock Exchange, they've surged from 15k to 137k+ active users/month since May 2023. Successfully finished all 3 BEYOND camps. They are invested an additional 50,000€ from Accelerace Invest II.</p>
<p>MediNav https://medinav.eu/</p>	<p>MediNav is the digital medical assistant that will change the way doctors interact with healthcare systems. One of the major challenges in healthcare is the fact that doctors spend roughly half of their daily time filling in medical forms on old-school systems. That is 80 hours a month for each doctor. By listening, transcribing what it hears, and extracting medical information, MediNav can reduce up to 70% of that.</p>	<p>MediNav opened a new branch in Italy. Connecting them with major hospitals in the region. They targeted Italian investors and were part of over 12 Italian Demo Days since May 2023. Closing a €150,000 investment from a VC and has commitments of €40,000 from an angel investing platform. Successfully finished all 3 BEYOND camps. They are invested 50,000€ from Accelerace Invest II (through Vita Accelerator).</p>
<p>FoodObox https://foodobox.com/</p>	<p>Marketplace similar to Too Good To Go. Secured 3 B2B active partnerships and 10 in the pipeline. Prepared a comprehensive report to meet EU regulatory requirements on reporting employee well-being.</p>	<p>Gathered 150K euro by a mix of investors, both VCs and angel investors, from the network of BEYOND. Successfully finished all 3 BEYOND camps. They are invested an additional 50,000€ from Accelerace Invest II.</p>
<p>Climatica https://www.climatica.ai/</p>	<p>Climatica is revolutionising insurance by harnessing the power of cutting-edge machine learning models to build a new product category: parametric insurance. Our innovative solutions provide protection against a range of weather-related scenarios, including heavy rainfall, closed ski slopes or insufficient sunlight. Designed for weather-sensitive industries such as travel and renewable energy, our products offer peace of mind to customers or SMEs while targeting a 12bn USD market.</p>	<p>In touch with around 40 VCs, a few more serious (incl. Depo, Prana and Blackwood) and had soft commitments for 100k EUR. Already launched first weather protection, improving the travellers' holiday satisfaction. Supported by their partnership with Hannover Re, a leading reinsurer, they have established an MGA in Germany to further scale their market presence. Activating ITAKA sales channels, resulting in a 6% penetration in the direct channel. ITAKA, Poland's premier travel agent with one million customers. Successfully finished all 3 BEYOND camps. They are in discussion of getting an additional 50,000€ from Accelerace Invest II.</p>

These results alongside, a marketplace that can become the driving force in the creation of a single startup ecosystem in Europe built on the incentive structure of BEYOND centred around the concept of establishing a UEFA for startup accelerators explained in detail in D5.1 Plan for the dissemination and exploitation of results.

This deliverable aims to create an engagement model that structures the necessary steps in mapping, reaching and establishing agreements with strong players in the startup ecosystems across Europe, starting with the Innovation Agencies. Backed by a pitch deck comprising the full story of BEYOND including the success stories, mission, incentive structure, business model and unique value proposition convincing them that a united model similar to UEFA can benefit every player within the ecosystem creating fairness and equal opportunities.

As part of WP5 and the related subtasks the Policy Learning Plan is closely related to D5.3 Virtual Accelerator Marketplace and the sustainability of the BEYOND Marketplace. Creating a marketplace with incentives and a basis for continuation beyond the project duration and funding period is crucial for long-term success and the successful attraction of external partners. They need to buy-in on the long-term perspectives and idea of the BEYOND VAM becoming a reference point and vehicle for a united startup ecosystem across the entire Europe, not ending with the EC funding period.

The work carried out in the BEYOND project will be further continued in the OnePass Project (101102657) which is the EBSI compliance SSI and Blockchain solution for 'SMEs Financing EBP's Use Case. The project started in September 2023 and will take advantage of the learnings and activities already completed in the Beyond project but add the EBSI-compliance features.

The entire relation to the OnePass project can be read in D5.3 Virtual Accelerator Marketplace. The continuation through another Horizon Europe programme ensures the sustainability of the BEYOND project. Especially the learning and legacy continues into the OnePass Project and acts as the foundation of the project.

3 Engagement Model

3.1 Sourcing

In the sourcing phase, a comprehensive mapping exercise will be conducted by consortium partners in Denmark, Poland, Spain, Latvia, and Bulgaria. Utilization of local networks and knowledge will be pivotal in identifying the most relevant and influential innovation agencies within these regions. The focus of this mapping will be on the scale, scope, and historical track record of these agencies in fostering innovation, as well as their potential for future impact. The targeting of agencies will be based on their active pursuit of enhancing policy mix and openness to adopting new strategies for improved regional interconnectedness. Initial outreach to gauge interest and capability will be conducted, aligning the engaged agencies with the overarching goals of fostering a more favourable innovation environment.

3.2 Initial Outreach

Initiation of direct contact with representatives of the innovation agencies is crucial in the next phase of engagement. Personalised communication, primarily through email or LinkedIn messages, will be tailored to each agency's context and interests. The introduction of the consortium, its mission, and its collaborative nature will be highlighted at the outset of this communication. A concise outline of the benefits offered by BEYOND for the local innovation ecosystem will be provided. The communication will be crafted to resonate with the specific goals and challenges of each agency. A professional yet engaging tone will be maintained, aiming to open a dialogue and spark interest. The inclusion of a brief overview of insights gathered during the first acceleration batches will provide a glimpse into the value and relevance of the initiative for their organisation.

3.3 Informational meetings

Organization of meetings or calls with the Innovation Agencies represents the subsequent critical step. These sessions will be structured to present a tailored Pitch Deck that encapsulates the essence and vision of the BEYOND Programme. The aim of the programme, which is to create a more interconnected Europe for startups, will be underscored. The presentation will be designed to inform and inspire, drawing parallels with the football ecosystem to illustrate the vision of a "UEFA for startups." A dialogue will be engaged with the agencies, leading them towards desired outcomes such as involvement in promotion, endorsement, collaboration, or organizing mutual local events.

3.4 Follow-up and relationship-building

Post-initial meetings, a structured phase of follow-up and relationship-building will be crucial in maintaining momentum and deepening engagement with the Innovation Agencies. Regular, targeted communications will be employed to keep the agencies informed and involved in the development of the BEYOND Programme. The establishment of a schedule for follow-up calls or virtual meetings will be prioritized, each with a clear agenda to discuss progress, address concerns, and explore collaboration areas. Implementation of a feedback mechanism will be incorporated, allowing agencies to voice their opinions and suggestions regarding the program.

3.5 Formalising the cooperation

Conversion of relationships with the Innovation Agencies into formalized forms of cooperation represents a final crucial step. Preparation and presentation of various formal agreements, such as Letters of Intent, contracts, or partnership agreements, will be undertaken. These documents will clearly outline the roles, responsibilities, and benefits for each participating agency. The process will be transparent and collaborative, with feedback and adjustments to ensure mutual satisfaction and commitment. Formal engagement in the program will be emphasized as directly contributing to fostering a more interconnected European business acceleration industry.

3.6 Ongoing support

Continuous and dynamic ongoing support for the Innovation Agencies will be provided, tailored to their evolving needs and the changing landscape of the European business acceleration industry. Regular strategic consultations will be offered to help agencies align their objectives with the broader goals of the BEYOND program. Access to a suite of resources, including training materials, best practice guides, and research reports, will be provided. Additionally, the program will facilitate peer-to-peer networking opportunities, encouraging learning, growth, and a sense of community among the agencies.

3.7 Engagement Model Summary

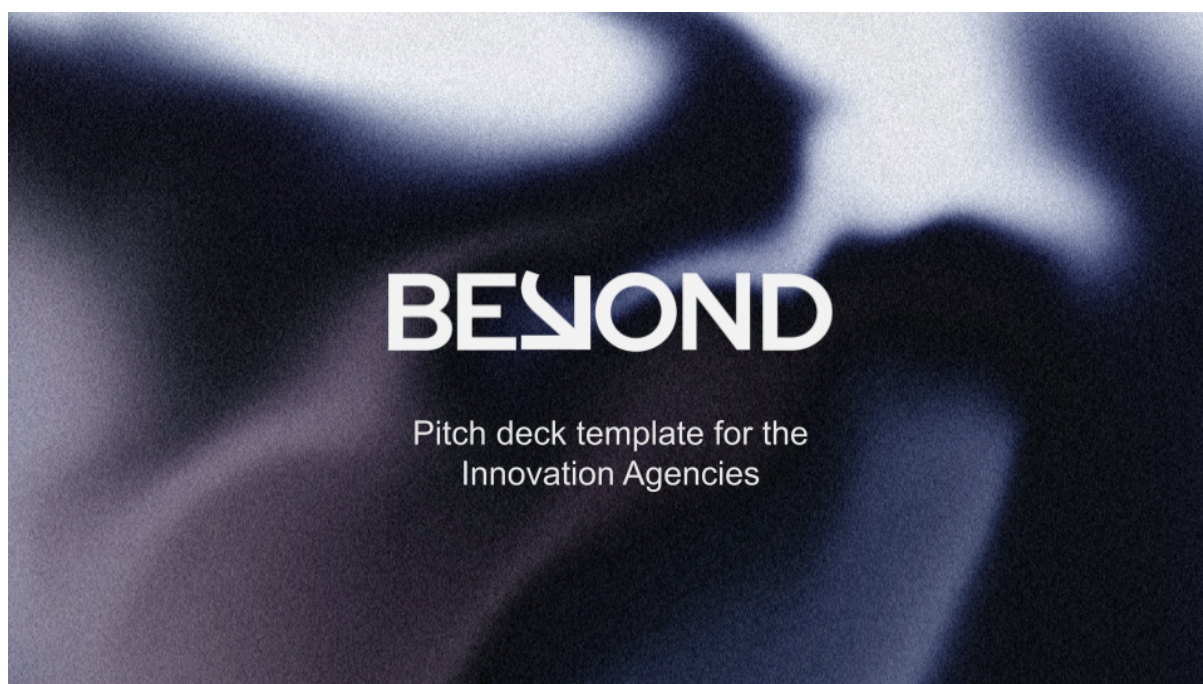
1. **Mapping Exercise:** Conduct a comprehensive mapping of innovation agencies in Denmark, Poland, Spain, Latvia, and Bulgaria through consortium partners.
2. **Initial Outreach:** Engage agencies with personalized communication to establish contact and set up initial meetings.
3. **Informational Meetings:** Organize meetings or calls to present a tailored Pitch Deck, illustrating the BEYOND Program's vision and objectives.
4. **Follow-Up and Relationship Building:** Maintain momentum through regular communications, follow-up meetings, and a feedback mechanism to deepen agency engagement.
5. **Formalizing Cooperation:** Transitioning relationships into formal agreements, defining roles, responsibilities, and mutual benefits.
6. **Ongoing Support:** Provide continuous support via strategic consultations, resource sharing, and facilitating networking opportunities.

4 Pitch Deck

The BEYOND project, driven by a visionary approach and inspired by UEFA, serves as the foundation for a compelling pitch deck. This deck is strategically tailored with individual knowledge from diverse partners, ensuring a customized and appealing narrative for maximum interest.

The engagement model specifically targets identified innovation agencies, aligning with their goals and needs. This combination of a visionary project, UEFA inspiration, partner expertise, and tailored adaptations creates a powerful pitch that captures the attention of targeted innovation agencies, fostering strong interest and engagement.

Before addressing the Innovation Agencies, additional input is to be added by the individual partners in the slides marked with [], leveraging their specific knowledge of the agencies in their respective regions. The tailored adaptations ensure that the pitch aligns precisely with the unique needs and priorities of each targeted innovation agency. This strategic approach creates a powerful and customized presentation that resonates with the identified agencies and optimizes engagement.





BEYOND



The challenge

- Accelerators and innovation agencies require lots of resources to properly manage open calls, applications, and connections
- Even if they are successful, they are still mostly limited to their local ecosystem
- There is a strong need for a unified solution to streamline these processes, that would establish a unified, efficient, and inclusive platform - reshaping the landscape of European business acceleration

BEYOND 

THE AMBITION

Creating a more interconnected Europe for startups.

"Every startup has the same opportunity – not matter where they come from and no matter the quality of the local ecosystem". Only quality matters.

We will do this by:

- Capital flows built on trust
- Sharing of resources
- Sharing methodology
- Creating an incentive structure

BEYOND is building the **infrastructure** for a connected **Europe**.



BEYOND 

INSPIRATION

Football is an ecosystem built on:

- Champions League
- Solidarity Certificates
- Financial Fair Play

In other words, **an infrastructure**.

What if we could create a UEFA for startups, so inspiring and economically fair that all would strive to become a part and, through that, continuously improve local quality.



BEYOND



Benefits for Your organisation

- [this slide is to be personalised for each Innovation Agency, in order to properly resonate with the specific goals and challenges of each agency]

BEYOND



Benefits for startups and local ecosystem

- [this slide is to be personalised with real-world data about the state of the local innovation ecosystem, emphasizing the most desirable outcomes that could be achieved with BEYOND]

BEYOND

WHAT WE HAVE DONE SO FAR

Application+OnePass

Collaborate scoring+selection

Mentor incentive structure

Online mentor onboarding

Pitch Deck heaven

Joint acceleration curriculum

Investor curator

Syndication framework

Investor engagement

Investor dataroom

Built the pieces to the puzzle and tied it together using each partner and hand holding.

BEYOND

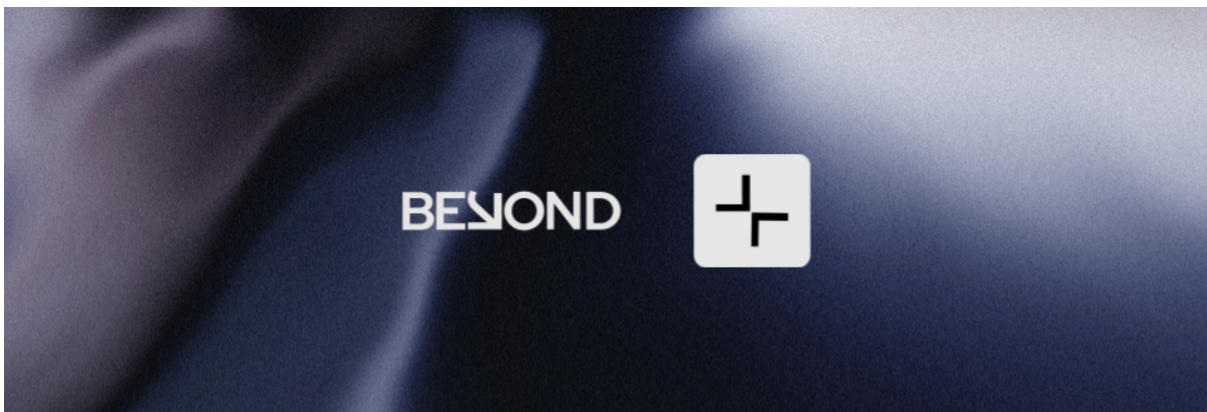
Adoption strategy

- [this slide is to be personalised with the custom adoption strategy, prepared for each Innovation Agency. It could involve activities like promotion, events, close partnership, and/or active participation in the BEYOND programme, together with the proposed timeline and planned action items/milestones.]

BEYOND 

Call to action

- [this slide is to be personalised with the custom call to action that emphasises the next steps that are expected to be undertaken by the Innovation Agency]



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5 Conclusion

The activities outlined in the Policy Learning Plan are essential for the success of BEYOND as a project. The Policy Learning Plan ensures a structured approach to engaging innovation agencies, fostering flexibility in their involvement, and creating a collaborative network. With a pitch deck aligned to the project's narrative, the Policy Learning Plan aims to capture the interest of innovation agencies and convey the vision of a unified European startup ecosystem. Emphasizing long-term sustainability, the Policy Learning Plan connects to the Virtual Accelerator Marketplace and sets the stage for the continuation and expansion of the OnePass Project, ensuring the enduring impact of the BEYOND initiative.

This engagement model, together with the presented Pitch Deck outlines a structured approach to cultivating robust partnerships with European Innovation Agencies. It is designed to foster a more interconnected startup ecosystem, enhancing the regional flow of investments and resources. Through this collaborative effort, the BEYOND Program aims to establish a unified, efficient, and inclusive platform akin to a "UEFA for startups", thereby reshaping the landscape of European business acceleration.