Interregional innovation investments for biofertilizers and circular bioeconomy solutions for a sustainable agriculture

Call: I3-2023-INV1

Action: I3-PJG

Grant Agreement No. 101161143

Deliverable 6.1

Capacity building programme on internationalization, investment readiness, financial advisory

April 2026

V1

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List of acronyms

CBE-JU	Circular Bio-based Europe
EIC	European Innovation Council
EIT	European Institute of Innovation & Technology
EU	European Union
FSTP	Financial Support for Third Parties
IC	Investment Case
IFA	International Fertilizer Association
KSA	Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
R&D	Research & Development
SME	Small and medium enterprises
TRL	Technology Readiness Level

1. Introduction

I3-4-BIOFERTILIZERS is a transformative EU-funded project (2024–2027) that promotes interregional cooperation to scale up, demonstrate, and commercialize innovative biofertilizer solutions across Europe. With a total budget of €9.1 million—€6.9 million co-funded by the EU—the project brings together 18 partners from 12 European regions, including SMEs, research centres, innovation agencies, clusters, and public authorities.

As Europe moves toward more sustainable and resilient agricultural practices, biofertilizers and biostimulants offer a promising alternative to chemical fertilizers. They enhance soil fertility, improve crop productivity, and support climate-resilient farming, all while reducing environmental harm. I3-4-BIOFERTILIZERS aims to position these solutions as key drivers of the circular bioeconomy and sustainable food systems. A cornerstone of the initiative is its emphasis on interregional collaboration, fostering knowledge exchange, shared innovation strategies, and the creation of regional innovation valleys.

Figure 1: I3-4-BIOFERTILIZERS consortium

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The project identifies high-potential business cases through in-depth needs assessments and provides both technical and financial support to SMEs along the biofertilizer value chain. Over its three-year duration, the consortium will upscale, pilot, and demonstrate 8 distinct investment projects, each focused on developing cutting-edge biofertilizers, including biostimulants, and implementing sustainable agricultural practices. This comprehensive approach not only addresses existing market and technical barriers but also propels the sector towards greater competitiveness and environmental resilience. The Investment Cases (ICs) are:

- Organic fertilizers production from poultry manure
- Production of high-quality liquid biofertilizers
- Biofertilizers production from compost of a biogas plant
- Circular and plant-extract based production of natural biostimulants
- High-quality microbials from agricultural biomass residues
- Scale-up production of a vermicompost-based biostimulant
- Agronomic testing for market launch of PGPR-based biostimulants
- Digital decision support systems for optimal biofertilization

The D6.1 Deliverable aims at presenting the activities upon task T6.1 “market-oriented capacity building program”. This program, dedicated to SMEs (and by extension, other actors among which project partners, clusters members, FSTP candidates and laureates, regional public authorities), will not provide technical advice but market-oriented, business advice, through training sessions and didactical materials, for their R&D, scale up, demonstration and go-to-market.

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2. Objectives of the T6.1

2.1. Overall objectives

Task 6.1 aims to develop a market-oriented capacity-building programme for businesses in the biofertilizer sector. This programme will have two key objectives:

- To identify the needs of businesses, and more broadly those of key stakeholders in the biofertilizer sector (particularly regional institutions), in terms of developing their organisational structures
- To offer a comprehensive training programme for companies to provide them with more detailed information on opportunities, key issues, barriers, and drivers at various stages of their development

These actions will focus on several key areas identified in the initial project proposal (business development, internationalisation and funding), enabling to target different stages of a company's development and structuring, from R&D through to market deployment, complementing the actions to be carried out in T3.4 (see below).

This task is ongoing with the upcoming activities:

- two online mentoring sessions for SMEs in the biofertilizer sector planned in the coming months (May and June 2026); these workshops will be the occasion to introduce the different topics addressed in this program by the voice of different experts, and to receive feedback of their participant about their vision and needs during different interactive sessions organized during these workshops

- the writing of didactical materials for SMEs, which will be the synthesis of these different workshops, and the bibliographic work that will be conducted in 2026; interview with key actors and experts will also enrich these materials.

- the organization of a final event in 2027 to introduce this didactical material and make a complete online seminar, complementary to 2026 workshops, with expert speakers.

2.2. Link with T3.4

A strong communication with T3.4 (UVIC) is ongoing to avoid overlap. Indeed, T3.4 aims at producing advisory services for FSTP laureates (SME specialized in biofertilizers). The public addressed by T3.4 is therefore less large than 6.1 capacity building program, as 6.1 is opened to each European key actors, especially in the implementation regions of the I3-4-BIOFERTILIZERS consortium.

However, advisory services do not directly cover the same topics:

Topics from T6.1 2026 mentoring sessions	**Topics from T3.4 2026 advisory services**
Biofertilizers deployment	Access to market
Internationalisation	Legislation
Public fundings	Intellectual Property
Private fundings	New Technologies and Innovation Opportunities
	Certification

Table 1. Timeline of Advisory Service and Training Sessions

Additionally, T3.4 does not provide the same format for SMEs advice: the advisory service will first be personalized, with experts from the project consortium providing one-to-one tailored advice to the SMEs funded through the cascade scheme. Then, two open training activities will be delivered by external experts during T3.4, designed to complement the individual advisory phase by addressing the most common and relevant challenges identified across the participating SMEs (see D3.5 for more insights regarding this task implementation). These two sessions will be hold in Autumn 2026 and beginning of 2027 (and opened only to FSTP laureates), designing a full advisory program for them, with 6.1 workshops organized in Spring 2026.

Tasks	T3.4	T6.1
May 2026		1rst session
June 2026		2nd session
Sept/Oct 2026	1rst session	
Feb/Mar 2026	2nd session	
April-June 2027		Final event

Table 2: comparison of T3.4 and T6.1 timelines for training session

On the other hand, T6.1 will have the opportunity to valorise all the data obtained from T3.4 inside the didactical material: re-use the Q&A answers provided by experts to SMEs, anonymously, as didactical materials for SMEs. T3.4 will have two periods of collecting questions from FSTP laureates: the first one from March 2026 to May and the second one from August 2026 to December 2026.

The coordination among both tasks is facilitated by the presence of VGV and UVIC in WP3, hence keeping VGV updated of T3.4 activities. Regular one-to-one meetings between VGV and UVIC will moreover take place during the process (2026-2027).

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2.3. Main complementarities with T6.2 (BGT)

T6.1 not only has complementarities with T3.4 but also with two other tasks suggesting advisory services:

- Task 6.2. Exploitation and go-to-market roadmaps for the ICs (M20-M34), which is supposed to provide a personal advice for market access of ICs, tailored to their needs. To mitigate the risk of overlap, VGV (T6.1) and BGT (leader of T6.2) have co-constructed a survey (Annex 1) sent to ICs, to identify their needs about these connected topics (see Section 2.)

	T6.1 (VGV)	T6.2 (BGT)
Audience	All SMEs, mainly ICs	
Activity	Market oriented capacity building program	
Format	Wide/General insights	Personalized

Table 3: main complementarities between T6.1 and T6.2

3. Survey analysis

3.1. Design and objectives

To start Task 6.1, a questionnaire was designed with the Microsoft Forms tool (Annex 1). The objective of the survey was to obtain an initial understanding of the preferences and needs of ICs as consortium members. Emphasis was placed on comprehending the respondents' prior experiences with biofertilizer development and deployment and identifying the primary challenges they encountered. Upon the collection of survey responses, a report detailing the results was created, which are visually represented in Annex 2. Through the process, priority topics for the capacity building program were defined, and the needs of the end-users were explored to delineate some preferences to the didactical materials.

3.2. Qualification of respondents (ICs) and their products' typology and target

It was expected that the eight ICs from the project answer the questionnaire, in order to design the content of the webinars to assess their prior needs. As they represent different countries and process as well as products, and target different markets, it can be expected that their needs will be broad and that they will reflects the reflexion from potential other attendees to the webinar. Enough time (two months) was given for them to reply, as a consequence the total of 8 out of 8 ICs responding was reached as expected.

Organisation name	Product category	Target crops and/or systems
IC1 UNIOVO (+University of Coimbra)	Organic fertilizer (solid)	Fruits, Vegetables, Vineyards, Olive groves, Greenhouse crops, soil remediation
IC2 FERTIEBRO (fertilizantes del valle del ebro Sl)	Organic fertilizer (liquid/gel)	Fruits
IC3 AGRIENERGIA	Organic fertilizer (solid), Organic fertilizer (liquid/gel), Plant biostimulant, peatmoss replacement	Cereals (e.g. wheat, maize, barley), Fruits, Vineyards, Olive groves, Greenhouse crops, Organic farming systems
IC4 DASA (Desarrollos Agroqumicos, S.A.)	Plant biostimulant	Fruits, Vineyards, Olive groves, Greenhouse crops
IC5 ZYMOFIX	Microbial biofertilizer, Plant biostimulant, Bio-based soil amendment	Cereals (e.g. wheat, maize, barley), Industrial crops (sugar beet, rapeseed, etc.)
IC6 VERAGROW	Plant biostimulant	Cereals (e.g. wheat, maize, barley), Industrial crops (sugar beet, rapeseed, etc.), Vegetables, Vineyards, Greenhouse crops, Organic farming systems
IC7 CYBELE Agrocare	Microbial biofertilizer	Cereals (e.g. wheat, maize, barley)
IC8 AGENSO	Digital Decision Support System (DSS) / Software	Cereals (e.g. wheat, maize, barley), Olive groves, cotton

3.3. Answers of the questionnaire

General

- **Format and participation preferences?**

Most respondents indicated "speed-dating with commercial or investment partners" (4 answers each) and "presentations by external experts", followed by "networking with private investors" (3 answers).

Both mentoring sessions will include presentations from external experts, followed by an interactive discussion with the audience. This will include a question-and-answer session with the experts, and specific questions for the audience, the answers to which will be discussed collectively. While the sessions will be interactive and favour peer-to-peer exchange, networking with potential commercial or investment partners will not be a priority. However, the consortium will suggest further opportunities to ICs: a benchmark through the upcoming events of the clusters of the consortium and upcoming networking events in the biofertilizers and bioeconomy sector, such as international trade fairs will be presented. Local, external events in Europe or worldwide may be of interest to attendees, helping them to make the most of the go-to-market toolbox obtained from T6.1 and T6.2, when meeting with commercial partners or private investors.

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- **Preferred topics for T6.1 webinars?**

The most picked answers were "pricing strategy" (6), then "biofertilizer deployment best practices" (5), followed by "public funding opportunities" (4) and "market validation and customer discovery" / "business model optimisation" (3 each).

These subjects cover different stages of the product development process, from scaling up to go-to-market. Several workshops will be necessary to cover all of them.

<u>Internationalisation</u>

- **Internationalisation needs: have you already made sales abroad?**

Most respondents declared they did outside from the EU (37,5%) and within the EU (25%), therefore, almost two thirds of the participants have already made sales abroad.

One participant out of the eight ICs declared they haven't yet but plan to sell outside the EU in the next 12-24 months, hence an **importance of considering the internationalisation topic** as part of the capacity building program.

- **Which are the primary geographic markets targeted?**

I most answers go for "national" (5/8), "EU-wide" (4), "non-EU" (4) and local-regional (3), there is still a strong interest in internationalisation, specifically through two main continents: Latin America (4) and Africa (1) + 1 participant that stated some countries more specifically (KSA, Brazil and Iran in addition to Africa). It is to note that Northern American and Asian markets are not mentioned.

These answers will help to target the sessions and didactical material, with a special insight that will be provided to SME on both **Africa and Latin America**.

- **What are your main questions regarding internationalisation?**

The main answer is "to identify partners or distributors" (7 answers), but it is also question of "how to validate the relevance of new markets", "regulatory/tax requirements in target regions", participation in international trade missions (3 each).

If the question of regulation and taxes may be hard to cover in detail during a one-hour meeting due to local particularities, the panellists will consider the other subjects.

<u>Private funding</u>

- **Have you ever raised private fundings? What are your questions about this topic?**

Half of ICs stated they had already raised private investment, and one IC didn't but was planning to. Main questions that ICs are wondering about are: 1) "which investors are relevant for our sector" (4), 2) "how to approach private investors" (3), and "how to build a compelling investor pitch" and "how to demonstrate scalability" (stated twice 2 for both)

These questions will be addressed during the 1-hour session dedicated to private fundings, and they will be considered personally (e.g. pitch desk drafting…) as part of T6.2 (BGT).

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Public funding

- **For which type of project did you or wish to apply for public fundings?**

Respondents addressed very different types of calls:

- In terms of scale: regional funds, national, EU, cascade funding from EU projects,
- In terms of subjects: water, agriculture, environment
- In terms of TRL: R&D, product development, scale up, field deployment, environmental impact.

- **What questions do you have regarding public funding?**

Most respondents wonder what types of call are available (6/8).

The capacity building program will try to address this question by presenting some current or yearly occurring European calls of interest.

- **How to identify suitable call?"**

Some keys will be given e.g. advisory services of interest, newsletters, websites. (3/8) and "financial/business modelling for grant proposals" (3/8).

This question is most complicated as it depends on the call guidelines. It may be generally answered to but maybe more in detail for some specific cases in the didactical materials.

Additional questions

ICs were asked to mention if they are supported by any advisory structure including clusters relevant to biofertilizers: one fourth answered no, and the remaining entities were divided in two categories; those who participate actively in networks and the other who only take part occasionally. Among these networks can be cited innovation and competitivity clusters like Agrifood ClustER in Italy, VEGEPOLYS VALLEY in France, FEMAC in Spain, but also EU-wide and international associations like Water Europe (related to water), the International Fertilizer Association (IFA, related to fertilizers) and CBE JU (related to bioeconomy).

To gain insights on the reason why SMEs may not be members of such structures or have a limited implication, they were asked to answer, "what could prevent them from joining additional relevant networks", most respondents mentioned a lack of time (5) and unclear benefits (4). It is interesting to note that membership costs are only mentioned once as a drawback for involvement.

ICs were also asked if they would like to be speakers during the events and if so, for which topics. Several positive answers were stated, as a result this will help planning the meetings and will favour interactivity and peer to peer exchange.

Key findings from the questionnaires

The main challenges that the eight ICs face are defining an optimal pricing strategy and identifying potential partners or distributors. They are eager to benefit from expert feedback on bringing biofertilizers to market. While most of them have already sold their products outside their country of origin but they would benefit from an explanation of the Latin

American market. Their questions about funding are more general: they want to know how to identify sector-specific investors for fundraising, and which dedicated public calls for proposals they should prioritise.

Selected topics for the T6.1 Capacity building in 2026

All the above stated questions will be addressed thanks to the 4 chosen topics which are "**biofertilizer deployment**", "**internationalisation**", "**public fundings**", "**private fundings**". The two first ones will be presented during one workshop, the two others about calls for proposals and fundraising will be the subject of a second workshop.

4. Upcoming activities

As part of T6.1, planned activities for 2026 are 2 mentoring sessions. In 2027, one main event will be planned in a second time. As a deliverable to store all data from these sessions and more insights, didactical material will be written.

4.1. Mentoring sessions in 2026

The workshops will be hold in English, online (hosted by VGV). They will be open to any attendees of interest around Europe, although the prior target is SMEs in the sector of biofertilizers, among which the i3-4-BIOFERTILIZERS' IICs. FSTP laureates and any SME, company, regional authority, experts and investors will be welcomed, as well as all other project's partners.

The main risk about organizing these workshops will be the potential limited number of attendees. This risk will be mitigated by a strong communication that will start as soon as possible (March 2026) by all project partners (especially the clusters since their members can be directly interested in the topics).

The objective is to address 4 topics in two online mentoring sessions; each workshop will thus be divided into two different topics (1 hour each):

- The first one on 1. Biofertilizers deployment (actors, prices, strategies, …) and 2. Internationalization (provisional timeslot: May 28, 2026, 2 to 4 PM)
- The second one on 1. Private and 2. Public fundings (provisional timeslot: June 3rd, 2026, 10 to 12 AM).

Each topic will be introduced in 20 to 30 minutes (top-down presentation by one or 2 speakers, including as much as possible an experience sharing from a SME), followed by a session of 30 minutes of quiz with questions asked to the audience to feed the future didactical materials and peer to peer exchanges and experience sharing (see Annex 3 for examples of questions). The questions could be asked to participants thanks to the Mentimeter application, and answers could be shown to the audience, anonymously thanks to the use of a nickname for all participants. Several general questions about these different topics will also be asked in the registration form, to complete the data obtained by the interactive sessions.

To describe the agendas and insights for participants more precisely, the "business **deployment of biofertilizers"** topic will give keys to attendees regarding market validation, customer discovery, but also pricing and marketing strategies. SMEs will better know how to justify the price of their products and technologies, depending on the customer typology for instance, whereas the "internationalisation" subject will explain why **internationalisation** doesn't mean exportation, it is mainly about collaboration with partners that not only are clients. It will explore market opportunities especially about South America and Africa: participants will be presented how should they check the relevance of their product for a new market and how they should make their product/logistic chain/marketing specific for the regions targeted and their customers' habits among other local specificities. Specific upcoming trade missions and international fairs will be presented. The **"private fundings" webinar will include the presentation of the investment types existing (e. g. own funds, love money, venture capital, crowdfunding, prizes and competitions (including the presentation** of some competitions in the partners' regions), public funding, Business angels, seed funds, banks…, remember some vocabulary and present some advises for fundraising SME at each fundraising step (e.g., SME should not that if there are other sources of financing available, it is best to avoid fundraising if possible, they should think about second rounds of financing: the initial valuation should be as low as possible.), they will also be given keys on how to build a compelling investor pitch including how to demonstrate scalability. The "**Public funding**" topic will serve to introduce types of European calls available dedicated to SMEs (e.g. EIT food, EIC accelerator, eurocluster, eurostar, Horizon Europe, LIFE) but also to give generic insights on building the business modelling for grants. More details regarding the sessions are presented in Annex 3 (provisional programme).

4.2. Didactical material

This part of T6.1 is a written resource for SMEs, covering the same four subtopics as the mentoring sessions: 1) Business deployment, 2) Internationalisation, 3) Private funding, 4) Public funding. but in greater detail. The didactical material is not exhaustive — it provides tailored information responding to ICs expressed needs: the two online 2026 sessions will indicate which subtopics to explore further. It will be fed and written all along the project implementation and will be submitted as part of D6.2 in Month 34.

4.3. 2027 Event

This event, which will be during the first semester of 2027, still must be discussed and organised. It will be an EU-wide event in English language, but the content and format are not yet decided.

4.4. Expected outcomes and impact

From T6.1 will be produced the following material:

- Didactic material for SMEs (D6.2)

- Two webinar recordings and PDF presentations

SMEs will gain practical insights on how to:
- Finance their R&D, scaleup and product go-to-market thanks to fundraising and public fundings.
- Structure themselves and be ready for pre-launch, launch and post-launch of their products and services locally, in the European Union and worldwide.

The impact of the task will be assessed using different indicators, including the following for each online session:

- Attendee typology:
  - SMEs/startups in biofertilizer, biostimulants or related tools
  - clusters and networks
  - consulting/advisory services
  - other types (laboratories, testing supplies, distributors, bigger companies, etc)
- Number of attendees by stakeholder type
- Regions/countries in general and in Europe, and in the project regions
- Number of attendees by regions/countries

It is expected that each of the online sessions in spring 2026 will have between 50 and 100 participants, the majority of whom will come from the clusters' regions (France, Italy and Spain). This is because the three clusters in the consortium have the opportunity to share the event with their members. Based on the results of the FSTP campaign (125 applications received, see D3.3), there is also a strong probability that entities from Belgium, Greece, Hungary and Portugal will attend the webinars.

5. Conclusion and next steps

The upcoming training sessions in 2026 will help to design the content of the didactical material and the 2027 event to come after. They will also provide an opportunity to gain initial insights into the needs of businesses, which will be presented to regional public authorities to inform future public decisions.

The next step for T6.1 is to find speakers for all four topics and finalise the agendas for the sessions. In the meantime, communication for both events can begin with a 'save the date' message sent to the ICs and all partners' networks across Europe. Once the agenda has been finalised, invitations to participate will be sent out around one month before the events.
By 2027, the didactic materials will be created based on feedback from these sessions.

These next steps will be further developed, along with conclusions from the 2 sessions, upon the next T6.1 public deliverable: D6.2 "Capacity building programme on internationalization, investment readiness, financial advisory-Update" (VGV) that is due in Month 34. The final

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workshop will be the occasion to make a synthesis of this whole work and to introduce complementary topics or to go beyond for some topics already showcased.

6. Annexes

6.1. ANNEX 1: Questionnaire for ICs

SECTION 1 — Identification & Context

Organisation name*

Investment Case number (IC1–IC8) *
- IC1 – Poultry manure compost (Uniovo)
- IC2 – Liquid Ca biofertilizers from vineyard/olive by-products (Fertiebro)
- IC3 – Compost-based fertilizers & biostimulants (Agrienergia)
- IC4 – Plant-extract-based biostimulants (DASA)
- IC5 – Microbial biofertilizers on hydrochar (N-Fix)
- IC6 – Vermicompost-based biostimulants (Veragrow)
- IC7 – PGPR biostimulants (Cybele)
- IC8 – DSS for optimal biofertilisation (AGENSO)

Main contact person(s) for "Go-to-Market, Commercialization and Internationalization"*

Email address(es)*

Country and region*

Short description of the product/technology your team is developing in the framework of I3-4-Biofertilizers (3-4 sentences)

SECTION 2 — Product & Technology Overview

Product category (select all that apply)*
- Organic fertilizer (solid)
- Organic fertilizer (liquid/gel)
- Microbial biofertilizer
- Plant biostimulant
- Bio-based soil amendment
- Digital Decision Support System (DSS) / Software
- Other:

Commercial or working name(s) of the product(s)*

Main functions of your product (select up to 5)*
- Nutrient supply (N)
- Nutrient supply (P)
- Nutrient supply (K)
- Soil organic matter / carbon increase
- Soil structure / water retention

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- Nitrogen fixation
- Abiotic stress tolerance (drought, salinity, temperature)
- Root development / rhizosphere health
- Disease suppression / biocontrol
- Decision support / optimal application (for DSS)
- Other:

Current TRL of the product/solution*
- TRL 6 – Technology demonstrated in relevant environment
- TRL 7 – System prototype demonstration in operational environment
- TRL 8 – System complete and qualified
- TRL 9 – Actual system proven in operational environment

Target TRL by end of project*
- TRL 7
- TRL 8
- TRL 9

Current status of agronomic validation*
- Laboratory tests only
- Greenhouse/pot trials
- Small plot field trials (single region)
- Multi-location field trials (several regions/countries)
- No agronomic validation yet
- Not applicable (e.g. pure software/DSS)

Please indicate the main technical KPIs you are targeting (quantify where possible)
Examples: *N-P-K content, microbial CFU/g or CFU/mL, germination index %, moisture %, shelf life, stability, error margin for DSS, etc.**

Target crops and/or systems (select all that apply)*
- Cereals (e.g. wheat, maize, barley)
- Industrial crops (sugar beet, rapeseed, etc.)
- Fruits
- Vegetables
- Vineyards
- Olive groves
- Greenhouse crops
- Organic farming systems
- Other:

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SECTION 3 – Market Landscape & Customers

Primary geographic target markets (within 3 years after project end) — if you are targeting any particular country, please answer "Other" and specify.*

- Local / regional
- National
- EU-wide
- Outside EU – Europe (non-EU)
- Outside EU – North America
- Outside EU – Latin America
- Other:

How would you rate current market awareness of your solution type in your main market?*

- 1 Very low demand
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 Very high demand

Which customer segments are you targeting as **priority**? (select up to 3)*

- Smallholder farmers
- Medium-scale commercial farms
- Large agribusinesses
- Cooperatives / producer organisations
- Fertilizer distributors / retailers
- Ag-input companies / formulators
- Agronomists / advisory services
- Public authorities / municipalities
- Other:

Which adoption profile best describes your initial target customers?*

- Traditional Farmer (cost- and risk-averse, prefers conventional inputs)
- Pragmatic Adopter (tests new products on limited area before scaling)
- Sustainability-Oriented Farmer (prioritises soil health and environmental impact)
- Tech-Savy Agribusiness (uses precision farming, data-driven decisions)

Main **purchase decision factors** for your target customers (select up to 3)*

- Price per unit
- Cost-effectiveness per hectare
- Proven yield impact
- Proven soil health impact
- Compatibility with existing machinery / practices
- Regulatory / organic certification

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- Environmental impact / ESG
- Brand / supplier reputation
- Technical support and advice

SECTION 4 – Value Proposition & Competitive Positioning

Expected **average yield impact** for typical users (under realistic conditions)*

- No measurable yield change expected
- 0–5% increase
- 5–10% increase
- 10–15% increase
- 15% increase or more
- Not applicable / too early to estimate

Potential **reduction in mineral fertilizer use** for typical users*

- No reduction expected
- Up to 10% reduction
- 10–20% reduction
- 20–30% reduction
- 30% reduction or more
- Not applicable / too early to estimate

Key **economic benefits** you intend to emphasise (select up to 3)*

- Reduced input costs
- Increased yield stability (lower risk)
- Premium / higher value market access (organic, low-residue, etc.)
- Lower logistics/storage costs
- Longer shelf life
- Other:

Key **environmental benefits** you intend to emphasise (select up to 3)*

- Reduced nutrient losses (leaching, runoff)
- Reduced GHG emissions / carbon footprint
- Increased soil organic matter / carbon
- Reduced reliance on imported nutrients
- Circular use of waste and by-products
- Biodiversity / soil microbiome improvement
- Promoting soil health
- Other:

Who do you see as your main competitors or reference products?*

SECTION 5 – Business Model & Go-to-Market Strategy

- Intended business model (select all that apply)*
- Direct sales to farmers
- Sales via distributors/retailers
- Sales via cooperatives / producer organisations
- Licensing of technology / formulation to third parties
- White-label / co-branding agreements
- SaaS / subscription (for DSS)
- Other:

Expected average selling price at commercial scale — in €/ton (solid) or €/liter (liquid)*

Expected production cost at commercial scale (approximate)*

- < 50% of selling price
- 50–70% of selling price
- 70% of selling price
- Not yet known

Share of your company's total turnover that this product could represent 3 years after project end *

- < 5%
- 5–15%
- 15–30%
- 30–50%
- 50% or more

Main go-to-market tools you consider essential (select up to 5) *

- Standard pitch deck (investor/partner oriented)
- Commercial pitch deck (distributors/farmers)
- One-page product sheet / technical datasheet
- Product brochure / leaflet
- Short promotional video / explainer
- Website landing page
- Participation in demo days / trade fairs
- On-farm field demonstrations

- Webinars / training material for advisors
- Policy / regulatory brief for authorities

Which of the above tools are you most lacking today and would like Task 6.2 to prioritise? (select up to 2)*

- Standard pitch deck (investor/partner oriented)
- Commercial pitch deck (distributors/farmers)
- One-page product sheet / technical datasheet
- Product brochure / leaflet
- Short promotional explainer (video or podcast)
- Website landing page
- Participation in demo days / trade fairs
- On-farm field demonstrations
- Webinars / training material for advisors
- Policy / regulatory brief for authorities

SECTION 6 – Regulatory, Compliance & Risk

Regulatory status of your product in the EU*

- In preparation for national authorisation
- In preparation for mutual recognition
- In preparation for CE marking

Do you expect major regulatory bottlenecks (EU or national) for your product? *

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

If Yes or Unsure, please briefly describe the main regulatory risks or uncertainties.

Please indicate any mandatory certifications or standards you are targeting. *

SECTION 7 – Interregional Value Chain & Partnerships

Main feedstocks/raw materials used for your product (select all that apply) *

- Livestock manure
- Agro-industrial by-products (e.g. olive, wine, fruit, vegetables)
- Urban organic waste / OFMSW
- Biochar / hydrochar
- Microbial strains
- Plant extracts

- Other:

Are these feedstocks primarily:*

- Sourced locally/regionally
- Sourced nationally
- Sourced from multiple EU regions
- Imported from outside the EU

Which types of **partners** are most critical for your value chain in the next 3–5 years? (select up to 4)*

- Feedstock providers (waste/by-products)
- Industrial processing partners
- Technology / equipment suppliers
- Distributors / commercial partners
- Cooperatives / farmers groups
- R&D / testbed partners
- Digital / DSS partners
- Public authorities / regulators
- Investors / financial partners

Are there clear **synergies with other I3-4-Biofertilizers Investment Cases** (technical, commercial or regional)? If yes, please specify.*

SECTION 8 – Commercialisation Objectives, Funding Needs & Time-to-Market

What are your **main business development / commercialisation objectives** for this product within the project? (select up to 4)*

- Refine our business model and pricing strategy
- Identify national distributors
- Identify EU-level distributors / partners
- Prepare to raise private investment (VC, equity, debt)
- Prepare applications for EU/national funding (e.g. Horizon, EIC, national schemes)
- Improve communication with regional/national authorities
- Improve communication with EU-level authorities and initiatives
- Strengthen relationships with cooperatives, clusters, and farmer organisations
- Improve our visibility with farmers and advisors
- Other :

For this product, what is your **expected time-to-market** after project end (for regular commercial sales)?*

- Already on the market
- 0–12 months after project end
- 12–24 months after project end
- 24–36 months after project end

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- 36 months after project end

Estimated **CAPEX still needed** (beyond the project) to reach full commercial scale*

- < 150 k€
- 150-250 k€
- 250–500 k€
- 500 – 1 M€
- 1M€–1.5 M€
- 1.5 M€ or more
- Not yet estimated

Estimated **annual production capacity** targeted 3 years after project end — in €/ton (solid) or €/liter (liquid)*

In your view, what is the **main constraint** to achieving your time-to-market and scale-up objectives? *

- Technical / process optimisation
- Regulatory approval / certification
- Access to investment / finance
- Market acceptance / customer awareness
- Access to feedstock / logistics
- Internal capacity (HR/management)

SECTION 9 – Needs for Promotional Kit & Communication

Please rank your **priority target audiences** for the promotional kit (1 = highest priority, 4 = lowest).*

	1 - Highest Priority	2	3	4 - Lowest Priority
Farmers / cooperatives				
Distributors / commercial partners				
Investors / funding agencies				
Public authorities / policy stakeholders				

For each audience, indicate which **materials** would be most useful.*

	Pitch deck	Technical datasheet	Short brochure / leaflet	2–3 min promotional	Policy / regulatory brief	Other

		/ product sheet		video or podcast		
Farmers / cooperatives						
Distributors / commercial partners						
Investors / funding agencies						
Public authorities / policy stakeholders						

If you already have **existing materials** (datasheets, brochures, videos, etc.), please briefly describe them and indicate if you are willing to share them as a starting point. *

SECTION 10 — Capacity-Building, Internationalisation & Investment Readiness (Task 6.1)

The following questions aim to gather input needed to shape the Task 6.1 capacity-building programme, including three online workshops and support materials, in which you will have the opportunity to participate.

A. Format & Participation Preferences

What topics would you like the Task 6.1 workshops to address? *Tick all that apply.* *

- Networking among SMEs/startups
- Networking with private investors
- Networking with clusters/innovation agencies
- Speed-dating with commercial or investment partners
- Peer-to-peer exchange of experiences among ICs
- Presentations by external experts
- Panel discussions
- Case-studies from large companies
- Case-studies from startups
- Other:

Would you like to share your experience with the consortium in one of the workshops? *Mark only one.* *

- Yes
- No

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If you answer yes to the previous question, please **indicate which topic(s)** you would like to address (e.g., internationalization challenges, investment readiness activities, interregional cooperation with other stakeholders, etc.).

B. Internationalisation Needs

Have you already made sales abroad?*

- Yes, within the EU
- Yes, outside the EU
- No, but planning to sell within the EU in the next 12–24 months
- No, but planning to sell outside the EU in the next 12–24 months
- No, not at this stage

What are your main questions regarding internationalisation? *Tick up to 3.**

- How to validate the relevance of new markets
- How to set up a site/branch abroad
- Regulatory/tax requirements in target regions
- Identifying partners or distributors
- Logistics and supply chain for foreign markets
- Participation in international trade missions
- Other:

C. Networks, Clusters & Interregional Collaboration

Do you take part in any regional/national/EU network or cluster relevant to biofertilizers or the circular bioeconomy? Are you currently supported by an advisory structure? *

- Yes, actively.
- Yes, occasionally.
- No

Can you please name and briefly describe the entity(s) you take part in; if you answered no: can you name regional networks you are however aware of? (e.g. scientific partnership, sourcing, triels in different regions, commercial partnerships)

What could prevent you from joining additional relevant networks? *Tick all that apply. **

- Lack of time
- Participation/ membership cost
- Unclear benefits
- Not relevant to our product(s)
- Lack of contacts or entry points
- Other:

D. Investment Readiness & Private Financing

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Have you ever raised private investment (equity, VC, business angels, loans)?*

- Yes
- No
- No, but planning to

Would you like to communicate about your current or future fundraising during the workshops? *

- Yes
- Maybe
- No

What questions would you like us to address regarding private financing? *Tick up to 3.**

- How to approach private investors
- Which investors are relevant for our sector
- How to build a compelling investor pitch
- Risks for autonomy and governance
- How to demonstrate scalability
- Understanding dilution/equity terms
- Certification schemes that support investment-readiness (HiFrance, Agrio, EIT Food, ENISA, EIC Accelerator, etc.)
- Specific questions regarding bank loans
- Other:

Public Funding & Advisory

Have you ever applied for public subsidies outside the I3 programme (e.g., Horizon Europe, LIFE Programme, national or regional schemes)? *

- Yes
- No
- No, but planning to apply in the next 12–24 months

For which type of project did you (or do you wish to) apply for fundings (e.g. R&D, product development, investment, sourcing, field deployment, environmental impact, industrialization, scale up)

What questions do you have regarding public funding? *Tick up to 3.* *

- Types of calls available (EU / national / regional)
- How to identify suitable calls

- How to prepare competitive proposals
- Consortium building for calls
- Financial/business modelling for grant proposals
- Eligibility rules
- Other:

Preferred Topics for T6.1 Webinars

Please select the topics you consider most useful for the Task 6.1 capacity-building programme. *Tick up to 4.**

- Internationalisation strategies
- Market validation and customer discovery
- Regulatory landscape for biofertilizers
- CAP / Green Deal / Soil Mission incentives
- Pitching to investors
- Venture capital & equity financing
- Public funding opportunities (Horizon, EIC, LIFE, national funds)
- Business model optimisation
- Pricing strategy
- Biofertilizer deployment best practices
- Networking & partnership building
- Other:

SECTION 11 – Final Remarks & Confidentiality

Is there **any sensitive or confidential information** we should be aware of when using your answers across WP6 activities (e.g. *pricing, IP details, pending patents, supplier or investor negotiations)? **

Are there **any specific conditions** for how your responses may be used in WP6 outputs (e.g. anonymisation, restricted internal use, prior approval before publication)? *

Do you have **any additional comments, or suggestions** regarding WP6 (capacity-building, go-to-market, commercialisation, value-chain positioning, or any other aspect)? What is your main interest/goal under this WP? *

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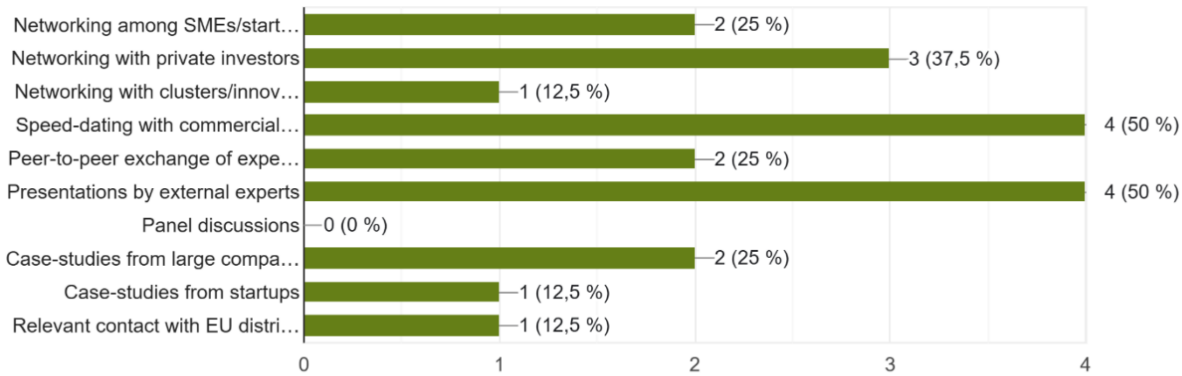
6.2. ANNEX 2: Graphics from results of the questionnaire

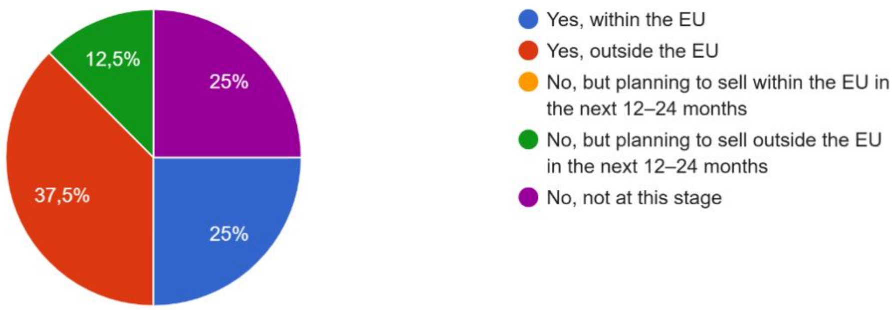
A. Format & Participation Preferences What topics would you like the Task 6.1 workshops to address? Tick all that apply.

8 réponses



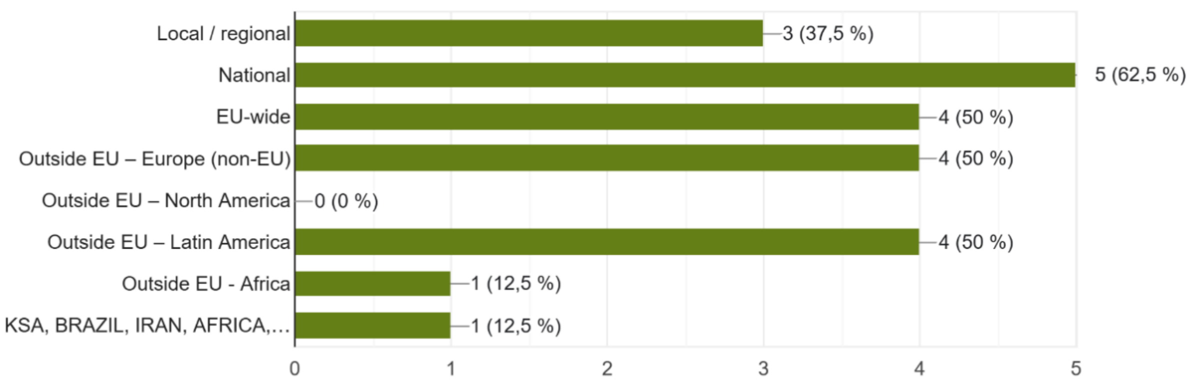
B. Internationalisation Needs Have you already made sales abroad?

8 réponses



Primary geographic target markets (within 3 years after project end) — if you are targeting any particular country, please answer "Other" and specify.

8 réponses



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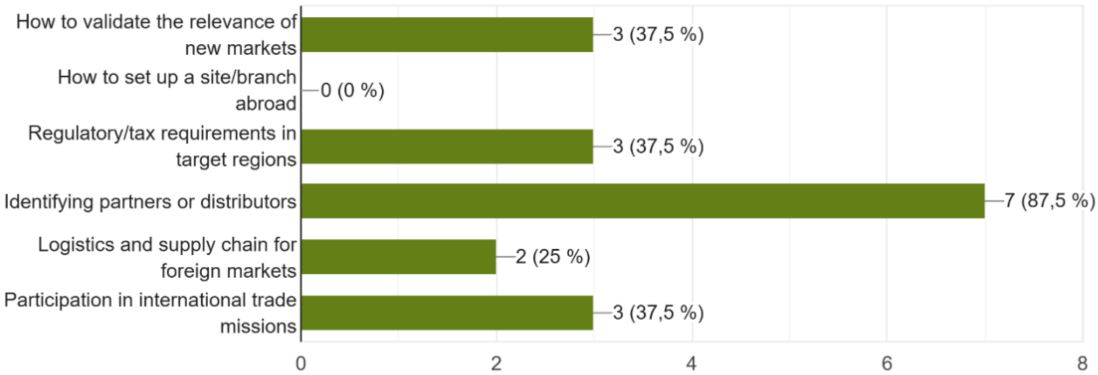
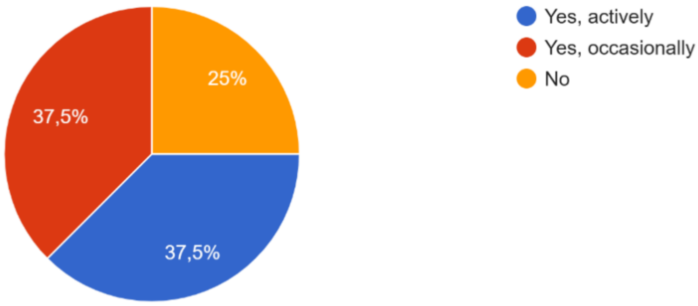
What are your main questions regarding internationalisation? Tick up to 3.

8 réponses



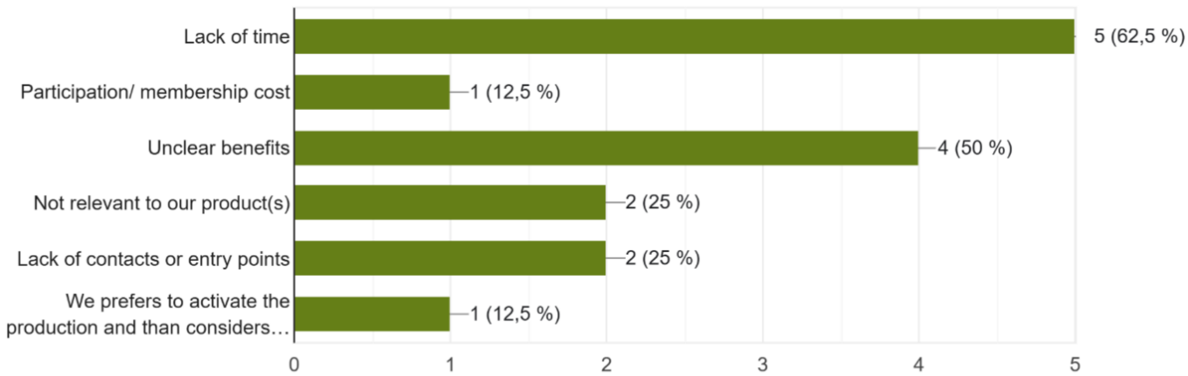
C. Networks, Clusters & Interregional Collaboration Do you take part in any regional/national/EU network or cluster relevant to biofertilizers or the ...re you currently supported by an advisory structure?

8 réponses



What could prevent you from joining additional relevant networks? Tick all that apply.

8 réponses



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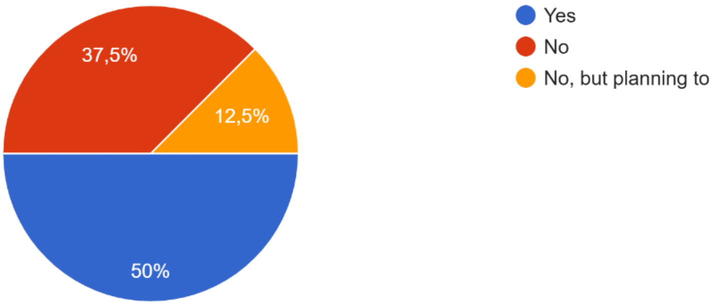
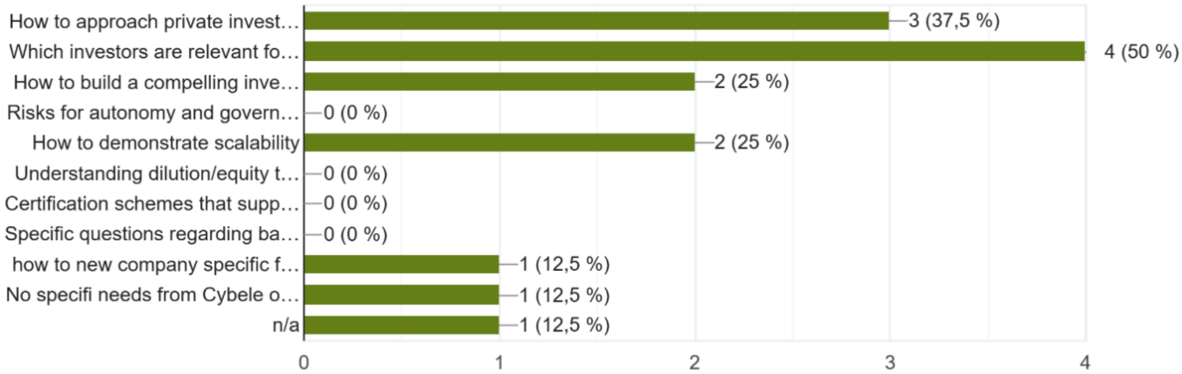
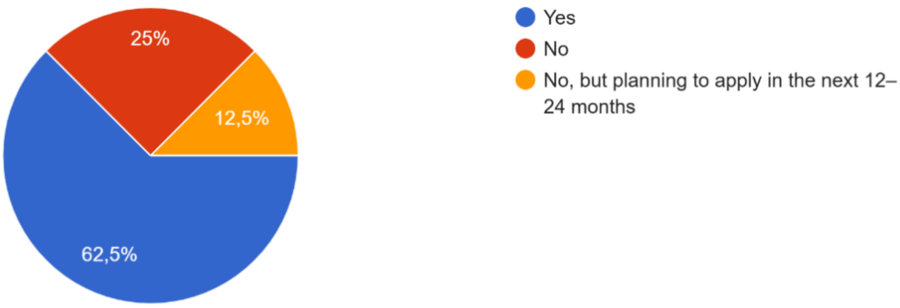
D. Investment Readiness & Private Financing Have you ever raised private investment (equity, VC, business angels, loans)?
8 réponses



What questions would you like us to address regarding private financing? Tick up to 3.
8 réponses



Public Funding & Advisory Have you ever applied for public subsidies outside the I3 programme (e.g., Horizon Europe, LIFE Programme, national or regional schemes)?
8 réponses



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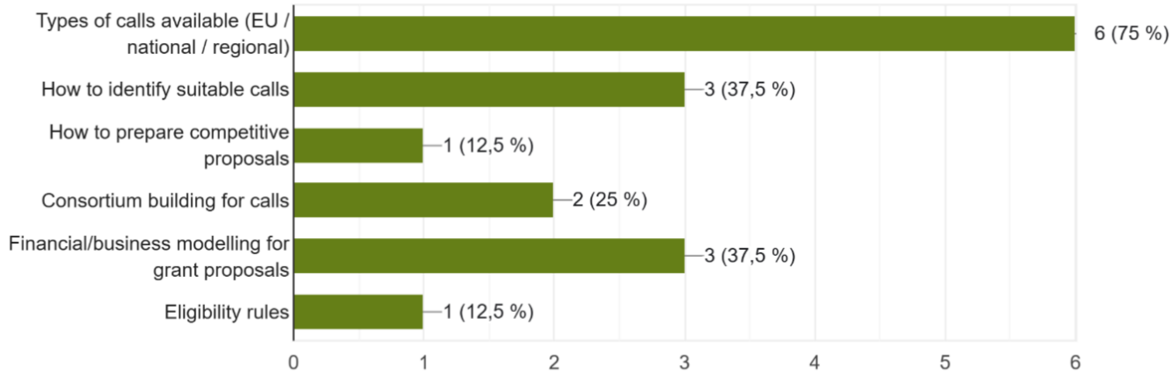
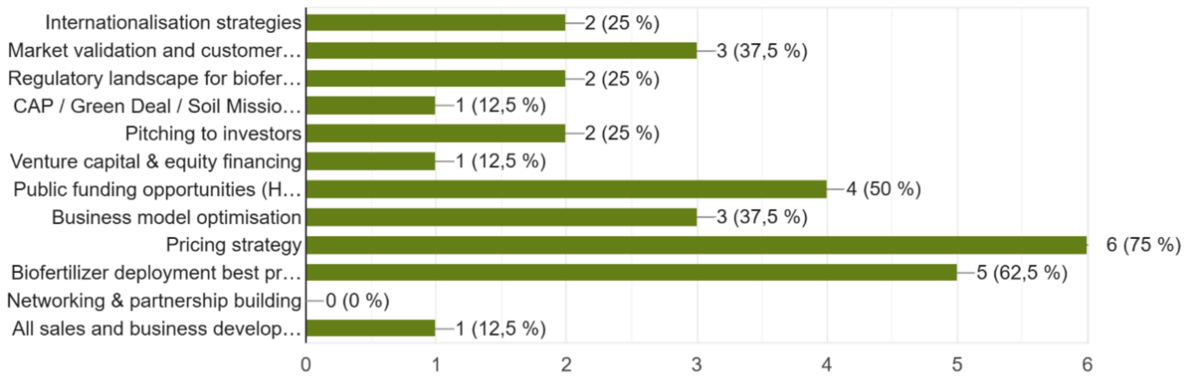
What questions do you have regarding public funding? Tick up to 3.

8 réponses



Preferred Topics for T6.1 Webinars Please select the topics you consider most useful for the Task 6.1 capacity-building programme. Tick up to 4.

8 réponses



6.3. ANNEX 3: Webinars pre-identified agendas and contents

Webinar 28th May 2-4 pm

Business deployment of biofertilizers	Main topics for top-down presentation	- **Business deployment:** key actors, best practices (field trials, membership of clusters, business strategy, …) for market validation and customer discovery - **Business model optimization:** pricing strategy & product value, marketing and image
	Questions to attendees (suggestions, not the final list)	- What is the main challenge you face when experimenting your new biofertilizers? Is it finding experimental plots to contract with? Funding? - In your opinion, what **price argument** is most relevant when dealing with a sceptical farmer? - In your opinion, what price argument is most relevant when dealing with a cooperative? - In your opinion, what price argument is most relevant when dealing with a distributor? - Is it more difficult for you to justify an answer to question 1) too expensive 2) unproven 3) risky? - In your opinion, what is the most relevant **marketing method** for a biofertilizer for an SME: 1) product alone 2) bundle (fertiliser + advice) 3) multi-year contract - In your opinion, which **price unit** is the easiest to justify: 1) €/ha; 2) €/kg 3) €/treatment?

Presentation n°1: Business Development

<table>
<tr><td rowspan="2">Internationalisation for SME in the biofertilizer sector</td><td>Main topics for top-down presentation</td><td>
- (expert) Precise how to validate the relevance of new markets: e.g. 1) the needs and expectations of local consumers: what issues are they seeking to resolve? What solutions are they already using? 2) Consumption habits: what are their preferred purchasing channels, seasonality, sensitivity to price, quality or innovation? 3) Purchasing power and decision-making criteria: what are the priorities of potential customers? What are the barriers to purchase? 4) Sector trends and market developments: growth, maturity, innovations, ongoing disruptions.
- (expert) Mention how to identify partners and distributors in targeted regions.
- (expert) Give keys on which are the regulations and taxes in targeted regions (not a priority since it depends a lot on regions, stay “wide scale/general” during the meeting)
- (clusters) Clusters from the project can 1) introduce themselves in 3 minutes, 2) introduce upcoming international trade missions or upcoming international fairs, events worldwide on the topic and 3) present potential partners in the project regions, and indicate how to stay informed of current competitors through specialized newsletters, professional fairs, trade networks…
- (startup) A startup could present their success story regarding settling international collaborations.
</td></tr>
<tr><td>Questions to attendees (suggestions, not the final list)</td><td>
- What skills are you looking for with your international partners?
- What expertise can you propose for your international partners?
- What type of international collaboration are you looking for?
- What are your primary target markets outside EU?
- Can you specify countries:
- What topic would you like to know more about (your answers will be considered for the upcoming project’s deliverable regarding “didactical materials to support SME internationalisation”?
- What would make you want to develop your entity internationally?
- For those who are concerned, how many years after the creation of your society did you start collaboration worldwide?
- What topic would potentially prevent you from starting international collaborations or what question should you first work on, to verify your internationalisation readiness?
</td></tr>
</table>

Presentation n°2: Internationalisation

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Webinar 3rd June 10-12 am

Private fundings	Pre-identified topics for top-down presentation	- Present the **lifetime of a startup and financing opportunities** along the way - Introduce the **different private investment types** existing: equity, VC, business angels, loans (European Investment Bank, EIC) ... - **Remind of some vocabulary & give keys for fundraising (e.g.** Dilution Rate and Dilution Risk) - Present **fundraising steps** (i.e. questioning phase, preparation phase, meeting phase) - give keys on **how to identify investors** that are relevant for the biofertilizer sector, on how to approach them. Maybe present some Europe-wide VC. - give keys on how to **build a compelling investor pitch** (present your roadmap clearly, realistically and convincingly, what do investors want to hear? what gets attention? dos and don'ts during your investor presentation), on how to demonstrate scalability to potential private investors, be able to explain why they should invest. - Present **some warnings for the first fundraising** - **Introduce the benefits of start-up competitions (clusters)** with identification of competitions for startups of interest in the regions of main attendees - optional **experience sharing** from a startup that already raised funds: what convinced investors, key takeaways that other SMEs can apply

	Questions to attendees (suggestions, not the final list)	- Have you ever raised funds? Yes/no
		- For those who have already raised funds:
		  o Which step seemed the most challenging to you:
		    ▪ Approaching the relevant investors
		    ▪ Writing the pitch deck and business plan
		    ▪ Training to pitch
		    ▪ Pitching
		    ▪ Contracting
		  o what would you have liked to know beforehand to optimize the process?
		- Which elements presented in this webinar seem most unclear to you?
		- Which stage of fundraising would you like to know more about?

Presentation n°3: Private fundings

Public fundings	Pre-identified topics for top-down presentation	- Introduce Eu fundings dedicated to SMEs, types of calls available: **Eurostar**, **Cascade fundings**, EIT food, **EIC** accelerator, **Horizon Europe**, LIFE… - Give keys on how to identify suitable calls (role of clusters) - Give generic keys on how to build the financial/business modelling for grant proposals - Optional experience sharing from a former EIC accelerator laureate
	Questions to attendees (suggestions, not the final list)	- What gaps do you identify among current and past calls for projects? (e.g. In terms of topics and guidelines)? - For what TRL level of R&D are you looking for public fundings? - What is the minimum of funding rate for you to apply for a funding? - What prevents you the most from applying for fundings 1) making collaborative research 2) applying itself 3) the self-financing amount 4) other, specify - If you were ever not selected for funding, what main drawback did you application have: insufficient: 1) business model 2) financial capacity 3) R&D description 4) alignment to the call guidelines?

Presentation n°4: Public fundings