



International Development  
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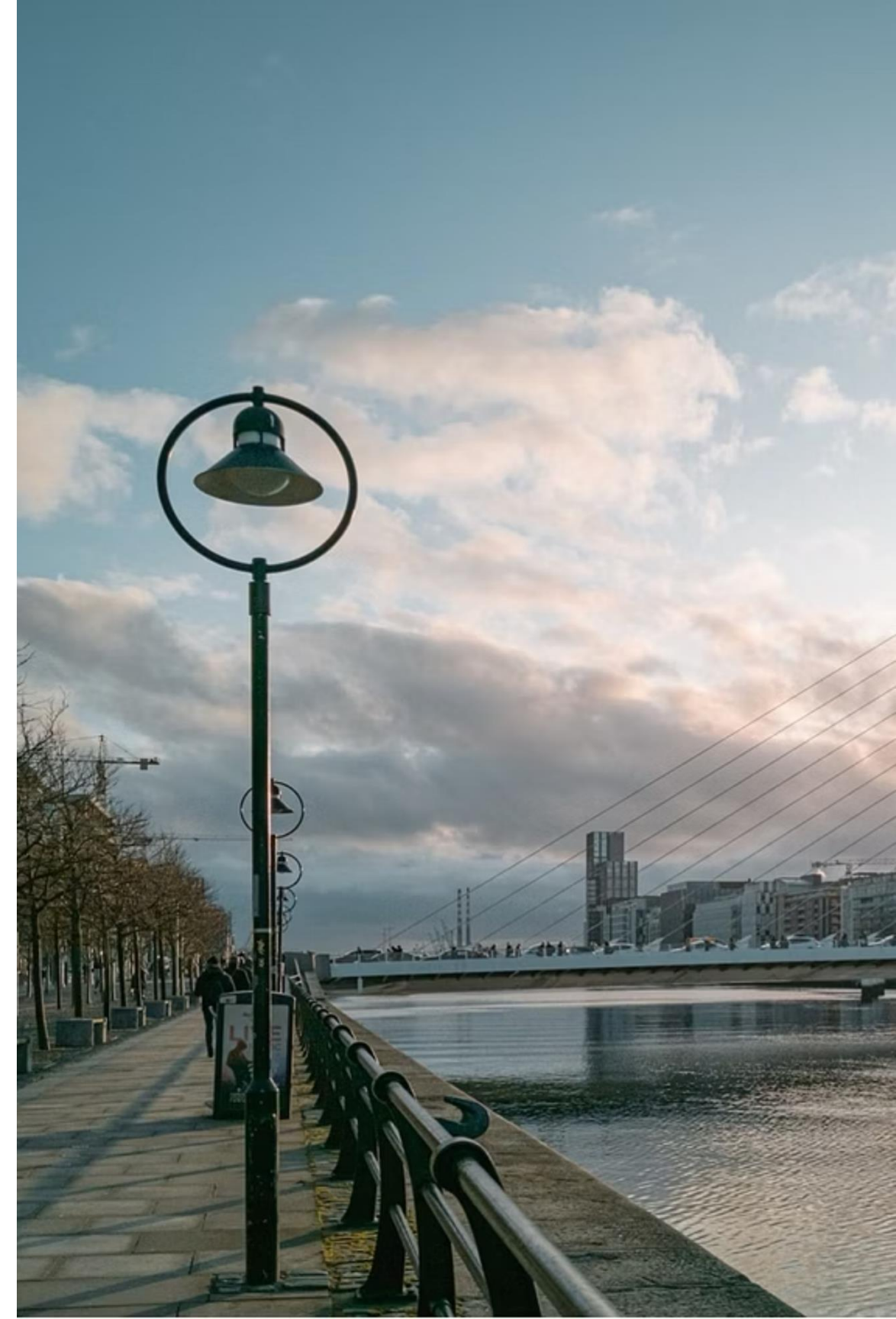
# Building Innovation Ecosystems

IDI in R&I Support and Capacity Building

Supporting Public Sector Innovation Through European R&I Projects

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## Governments Need Proven Partners to Build Thriving Innovation Ecosystems

The gap between research outputs and market-ready solutions remains wide, particularly in emerging innovation regions. IDI works in:

- **building policies & support mechanisms** that connect all necessary actors, researchers, entrepreneurs, investors, and policymakers, into functioning ecosystems.
- **transforming scientific excellence into economic growth**, jobs creation, and addressing societal challenges through innovation.



### Research to Market Gap

Bridging the distance between academic research and commercial application through design and implementation of incubation, acceleration & technology brokerage programs.



### Capacity Building

Supporting Technology transfer offices and innovation intermediaries with proven frameworks to effectively support entrepreneurs.



### Sustainable Funding

Creating financial mechanisms for early-stage innovation that balance public investment with private sector participation.



### Ecosystem Connections

Connecting startups and SMEs with investors, markets, and strategic partners across borders and sectors.

📄 In five major European projects, IDI has developed and tested replicable methodologies, toolkits, and frameworks that governments can adopt to strengthen their national innovation ecosystems with confidence and measurable results.



# Block.IS: Creating Europe's Blockchain Innovation Blueprint

Block.IS created Europe's first large-scale blockchain acceleration ecosystem, investing €2.8 million across 78 innovators and SMEs in three strategic sectors: ICT, agri-food, and fintech. The project proved that structured acceleration combined with cascade funding can drive technology adoption at scale, providing governments with a validated model for supporting emerging technology innovation. [2019 - 2022 / GA: 824509]

78

Innovators Supported

SMEs and startups accelerated through comprehensive three-stage framework

40+

Solutions Piloted

Blockchain applications tested with multiple reaching commercial deployment

€2.8M

Investment Deployed

Cascade funding distributed through proven digital innovation model

1

Acceleration Playbook

Comprehensive guide providing step-by-step implementation guidance

## Replicability for Governments

Countries seeking to stimulate emerging technology adoption can use Block.IS methodologies to create national innovation sandboxes. The project provides a blueprint for combining public funding with private sector mentorship, enabling SMEs to experiment with transformative technologies while managing risk. The cascade funding model demonstrates how governments can maximise impact per euro invested while building sustainable market capacity.

IDI: As Impact and Exploitation Leader, IDI designed the business model innovation framework, created go-to-market strategies for participants, and quantified the business, societal, and policy effects of blockchain adoption—expertise essential for governments measuring return on innovation investment.



# S3E: Accelerating Deep Tech Commercialisation Across Southern Europe

The Southern European Entrepreneurship Engine (S3E) addressed a critical gap: despite world-class scientific research in institutions across Greece, Italy, Spain, Portugal, and Cyprus, Southern European countries ranked as moderate or emerging innovators in the European Innovation Scoreboard. S3E built a cross-border acceleration engine connecting 131 participants from research teams in university labs to scaling technology companies. [2022 - 2024 / GA: 101072135]

01

## Research Teams (34 teams)

University researchers received entrepreneurship training and business model development support to transform discoveries into viable ventures

03

## Startups (50 companies)

Early-stage deep tech companies received investor readiness training, pitch coaching, and access to capital networks

02

## Technology Transfer Offices (23 TTOs)

Institutional intermediaries gained frameworks and tools to better support academic entrepreneurship and manage intellectual property

04

## Scale-ups (24 SMEs)

Growth-stage technology companies received internationalization support and connections to strategic partners and markets

## Replicability for Governments

S3E demonstrates how governments can strengthen the connection between university research and business growth. The project's framework helps countries improve technology transfer capabilities, enhance investor readiness among research-based startups, and create cross-border collaboration mechanisms that amplify national innovation efforts without duplicating infrastructure.

IDI: Co-Designed the Integrated Acceleration program and implemented the Technology Brokerage component focusing on Scale-ups. Created and validated methodology combining business model innovation with investor readiness and the Deep Tech Entrepreneurship Toolkit for innovation agencies.



## ExcellEnt: Delivering Ready-to-Use Resources for Government Implementation

ExcellEnt delivers ready-to-use resources that governments can immediately integrate into national entrepreneurship strategies and innovation support programs. The toolkit helps policymakers assess ecosystem maturity using validated diagnostic frameworks, identify gaps in support infrastructure and funding mechanisms, and implement targeted interventions based on evidence from multiple country contexts. [2023 - 2025 / GA: 101100515]



### Replicability for Governments

Countries can integrate ExcellEnt's ecosystem blueprint into their national strategies to promote entrepreneurship, strengthen innovation intermediaries, and align educational systems with future skills needs. This enables governments to design coordinated innovation support systems that build on existing strengths rather than importing incompatible foreign models.

IDI: Authored Europe's first comprehensive ecosystem builder's handbook, co-designed the Entrepreneurship Academy and created policy guidance based on multi-country participatory workshops. Created the Policy Makers' Manual with international best practices and actionable recommendations aligning with EU competence frameworks (EntreComp).

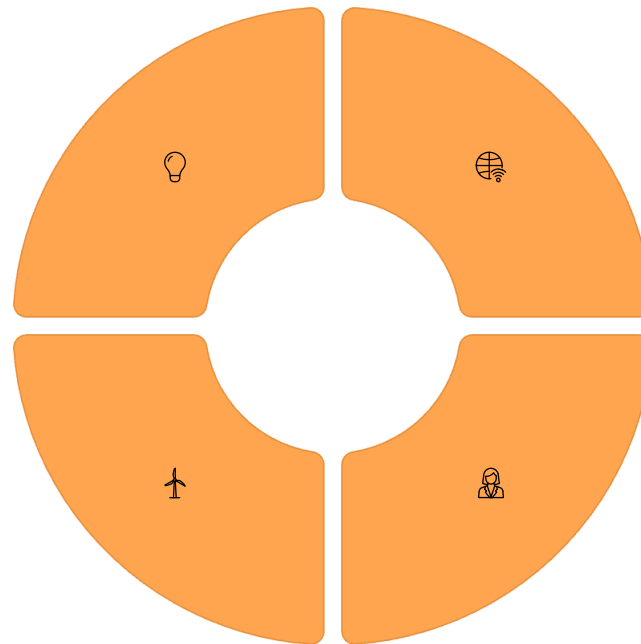


## SolarHub: Building Cross-Border Excellence Hubs for Green Innovation

SolarHub created a Greek-Turkish Excellence Hub connecting five regional solar energy ecosystems to accelerate green innovation and technology transfer. The project demonstrates how cross-border collaboration can strengthen national capacity for sustainable industrial transformation and deliver on European Green Deal objectives while building local entrepreneurial capability in strategic clean technology sectors. [2023 - 2026 / GA: 101086110]

**Acceleration Program**  
A full scale 3 year acceleration program supporting R&I teams, startups and SMEs and linking them with Research Institutions.

**Commercialisation & Intellectual Property Strategy**  
Support R&I ecosystems in commercialising 4 distinct pre-designs, each focusing on innovative solar energy solutions.



**Regional Ecosystems**  
Five distinct ecosystems connected across Greece and Turkey, sharing knowledge and resources.

**Capacity Building & Foresight**  
Hackathons & Foresight workshops to facilitate future exploration, produced Foresight Report on "The Future of Energy - Water - Food Systems in 2050."

### Replicability for Governments

Countries pursuing European Green Deal objectives can adopt SolarHub's excellence hub model to create regional centers of innovation in strategic clean technology sectors. The framework shows how governments can link academia, industry, and local authorities to accelerate clean technology adoption while building local entrepreneurial capacity. The cross-border dimension demonstrates how countries can leverage regional collaboration to achieve national sustainability goals more effectively.

□ **IDI:** Leading the Acceleration Program, commercialisation, capacity building and impact assessment, IDI created frameworks for building and implementing full scale innovation support programs in demanding sectors like clean energy and designed replicable models for capacity building of Green Skills.



## ECHO: Energy Communities excellence Hubs: catalyzing energy innOvation ecosystems

ECHO establishes Excellence Hubs in Turkey, Greece, and Portugal, demonstrating how governments can empower citizens and local organisations to co-own and manage renewable energy assets. With €5 million in EU Horizon Europe funding over four years, ECHO creates replicable models for community-driven energy transition that address both climate goals and social equity objectives. [2025-2028 / GA: 101185725]

### Why Energy Communities Matter

Energy communities represent a paradigm shift from centralized energy systems to distributed, citizen-led models. They increase social acceptance of renewable energy infrastructure, keep economic benefits local, address energy poverty, and build community resilience. Governments need proven frameworks to enable this transition while managing regulatory complexity.

#### Excellence Hubs

Three multi-actor innovation spaces connecting local authorities, energy cooperatives, citizens, researchers, and private sector partners in participatory design processes

#### Capacity Building

Comprehensive training programs for local government officials, cooperative managers, and community leaders on legal frameworks, financing models, and governance structures

#### Real-Life Pilots

Demonstration projects addressing energy poverty, citizen participation, and community ownership models that governments can study and replicate nationally

#### Policy Guidance

Strategic recommendations and policy briefs aligned with EU climate priorities while respecting national regulatory contexts and cultural differences

### Replicability for Governments

ECHO provides governments with transferable models for enabling local energy communities—a key mechanism for increasing social acceptance of renewable energy while delivering local economic benefits and addressing energy poverty. The project's policy briefs and strategic recommendations help national governments create enabling regulatory frameworks, design appropriate support mechanisms, and coordinate cross-ministerial implementation.

❑ IDI: Leading Innovation, Impact & Exploitation, IDI designs the stakeholder engagement framework, business support mechanisms, and financial sustainability strategies. This expertise helps governments translate energy policy into community-level action with lasting impact beyond project funding.



# Measurable Results Across Innovation Ecosystems

## €7.8M+

### Investment Leveraged

€2.8 million in cascade funding (Block.IS), €5 million for energy communities (ECHO), plus significant follow-on investment attracted by supported companies. Demonstrates ability to design funding mechanisms that maximise public investment leverage.

## 400+

### Organisations Supported

Organisations directly accelerated across all projects: 78 blockchain innovators (Block.IS), 131 deep tech actors (S3E), 75+ solar energy SMEs (SolarHub), 140+ ecosystem stakeholders (ExcellEnt), plus multiple energy communities (ECHO).

## 15+

### Countries outReach

Cross-border collaboration models proven across Southern Europe, the Balkans, and Eastern Mediterranean, demonstrating replicability in diverse national contexts with varying innovation maturity levels.

### Economic Impact

- €7.8M+ in direct public investment deployed efficiently through cascade funding and program operations.
- 500+ jobs created or supported through accelerated ventures and ecosystem development.
- Multiple commercial solutions deployed addressing real market needs in strategic sectors.

### Capacity Impact

- 200+ innovation professionals trained in acceleration methodologies and ecosystem building.
- 25+ technology transfer offices strengthened through frameworks and peer learning.
- Excellence hubs established and operating sustainably in multiple countries.

### Policy Impact

- Regulatory sandboxes and innovation-friendly frameworks tested through project learnings.
- Multi-country collaboration models strengthening bilateral innovation relationships.
- Contribution to EU competence frameworks (EntreComp) and innovation best practices.

# IDI as a key Innovation Ecosystem Partner

Designing and implementing innovation-driven policies, strategies, and national capacity-building programmes. IDI can provide comprehensive expertise in:



## Innovation Policy & Frameworks

Design and implement national innovation frameworks, acceleration systems, and metrics to measure impact and readiness.



## Deep Tech Commercialisation

Translate cutting-edge research into market-ready solutions, supporting universities and linking them with the industry.



## Innovation Ecosystem Building

Build interconnected innovation ecosystems linking academia, industry, government, and citizens, fostering collaboration and entrepreneurship.



## AI Governance & Digital Policy

Develop responsible AI governance frameworks, supporting digital transformation strategies, ethics, and trustworthy AI implementation.

- Experience from leading Horizon Europe projects with tested methodologies in policy, foresight, and innovation management.
- Multidisciplinary co-design approach ensuring applicable, efficient and measurable results.



# Thank you.

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