

## Back to the start! The DIFASS approach to early stage financing

After fruitful sessions on topics as internationalisation and micro loans the DIFASS partners went back to the start and discussed the best ways to provide access to finance to start-ups, spin-offs and early stage enterprises.

The DIFASS project facilitates access to finance for enterprises by exchanging innovative business support measures across Europe. The focus will be on the development and implementation of non-grant based financial support instruments, such as revolving funds, transregional funds and venture capital funds.

Hosted by IDEPA and CEEI Asturias in Gijón and Llanera (Spain) on 28-29 November, five new successful regional initiatives were shared by project partners. These five so-called Good Practices originate from several European partner regions. They are innovative business support measures implemented or funded by (semi-) public bodies.

The first day in Gijón offered a fine selection of good practises: the 'Access to Early Stage Finance' presented by local Cristina Fanjul Alonso of CEEI Asturias, followed by Accelerace.com presented by Külle Tärnov of Tallinn Science Park Tehnopol. Third in line was a video presentation about the Academic Incubator in Rzeszow, Poland by Joanna Wdowik and the program was concluded in the afternoon by Alenka Mubi Zalaznik of Spirit Slovenia on their Support Programme of Mentorship and by Alan Scrase of the Business Incubation Centre of the University of Southampton on their SETsquared Partnership.

The audience voted the Nordic-Baltic cooperation Acceleracelife.com as the best initiative. Their approach to offer workshops, labs, internationalisation and investment strongly reduces risk and increases start-up survival rate.

On the second day the group visited the IDEPA premises in Llanera and paid a study visit to the CEEI Asturias facilities and attended the CEEI Entrepreneurs Awards.

DIFASS has an interactive [www.difass.eu](http://www.difass.eu) website with YouTube videos of all Good Practice presentations from all workshops and Twitter news feeds @DIFASS.

The project is supported by the INTERREG IVC Programme. The overall objective of the programme is to improve the effectiveness of regional policies and instruments. INTERREG IVC provides funding for interregional cooperation across Europe. It is implemented under the European Community's territorial co-operation objective and financed through the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF).

---

Not for publication:

For more information on the DIFASS project you may contact:

- the DIFASS project communication component leader Mr. Frank Hiddink of Business Development Friesland (NL) through tel. 0031 58 845 8045 or by e-mail [f.hiddink@bdfriesland.nl](mailto:f.hiddink@bdfriesland.nl)
- the DIFASS project manager Mr. Robert Nemeth of the Pannon Business Network (HU) through tel. 0036 94 505 003 or by e-mail [nemeth@pbn.hu](mailto:nemeth@pbn.hu)

or visit our website [www.difass.eu](http://www.difass.eu) .