



Past - Present - Future



# CREATIVES MEET INDUSTRY

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Concept Paper ‘Living Lab’

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T4.3.1



Reporting Period 2



PP 10, Stebo



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# 1. Introduction

The InduCult2.0 partnership aims at reviving the cultural spirit of long-standing industrial regions in Central Europe. While capitalizing on the tangible and intangible cultural assets of the industrial past, present and future, regions mono-focused on industrial production are supported to position themselves as attractive places for a.o. working and living. The project set-up comprises regional partners from 8 Central European nations and two academic partners. For more information see also [www.inducult.eu](http://www.inducult.eu) or [www.facebook.com/Inducult2.0/](https://www.facebook.com/Inducult2.0/).

The creative community is a specific target of the InduCult2.0 project. Indeed, the transition towards Industry 4.0 has or is starting to emerge in the producing industry regions as well. In order to adapt to these developments, creative potentials based on the rich historic pioneering culture of peripheral industrial areas need to be stimulated. The partners engaging in thematic work package 4 will locate that potential in their region, and build up a creative community around it.

Within WP4 Stebo centralizes the goal of fostering creative entrepreneurship. In DT4.3.1 a Living Lab will be set up for this purpose. It is based on the given that creative entrepreneurship is relatively unknown or considered too risky by the local population which was and often still is brought up with a typical blue-collar worker mind-set. As a result non-metropolitan regions have difficulties in competing with their metropolitan counterparts, yet are forced anyway to make the transit to an Industry 4.0 environment. Producing companies, for example, have difficulties in finding and attracting creative minds guiding them through this transition. Main objective of the 'Living Lab' therefore is to boost entrepreneurial initiatives which are rooted in the region's industrial culture but yet respond to current economic trends. As such it will set up a cultural interplay between the creative and industrial sectors.

## 2. Context

### 2.1 The European Industry 4.0 environment

An analysis of the European Industry 4.0 landscape shows that during the past decades two different 'industrial habitats' have emerged (during several transformation periods):

#### 1) Metropolitan areas:

In big Belgium cities (such as Antwerp, Brussels, Gent) we have seen typical manufacturing industries being replaced by creative and innovative industries, fed by young and hip urban youngsters and potentials. In these areas exists a high demand for fast and high risk projects (large ad hoc capital investment). New and innovative ideas are produced and financed there every day by an extensive force of skilled self-employed 'wizzkids' who are willing to take these risks and to actively engage in this competitive environment. In other words: there is a good match between the demand and offer side, reached by specific approaches: pitching, seed capital, meet and greet, investors and start-ups. It creates a business atmosphere for BtoC activities.

The sociological image of the metropolitan areas is very hip and trendy and therefore attracts many youngsters, also from the peripheral areas. Entrepreneurship and self-employment are all build in its DNA.

#### 2) Peripheral non-metropolitan areas:

Peripheral areas are equally typified by a long industrial past. They are also in transition towards Industry 4.0 today:

- The producing industries are still strongly present but have suffered from factory closures. While competing with other industrial regions they are in a way forced to turn into smart factories where digitalization and new technologies are being introduced in the production process.

- As for the metropolitan areas the 'traditional' manufacturing environment gets more and more crowded with new types of industries, with a strong link to the creative economy sector. The Industry 4.0 landscape in non-metropolitan areas however is still in its experimental phase when creative industries are concerned. New and innovative ideas and creative entrepreneurship - sourcing the Industry 4.0 potential which is undoubtedly present - are not being developed at the same pace as in the metropolitan areas. This is caused by the fact that innovation and entrepreneurship are not characteristic for peripheral environments.

### c) The province of Limburg

The province of Limburg - Stebo's working area - is an example of such a non-metropolitan industrial environment. On the one side there is strong link with the traditional producing industries (especially visible in a blue-collar attitude and mentality). On the other there are a number of innovative and creative trends coming up, which are connected to the industry 4.0 environment as well. Service related industries as well as circular and sharing economy initiatives are starting to set foot in the industrial landscape.

But although there is a rich industrial culture which is rooted deeply in the region's past and has the potential to act as a basis for future innovative and creative developments, it is not yet identified as such, nor promoted or maximized in that respect.

The population has not yet developed the reflex to cash these opportunities, e.g. by starting up a business around one of the trends. The hiatus of entrepreneurial ambitions is remarkable but has a logic explanation which is again connected to cultural aspects. Indeed, the province of Limburg is populated largely by (descendants) of blue-collar workers. The group is typified by a specific mentality - known as loyal, obedient and reliable. This way of thinking was developed and sustained by the manufacturing industries for generations and has become part of the regions' cultural DNA. Hierarchy and following orders were general aspects in this type of work environment, contrasting strongly with the ideas of self-employment, spotting opportunities and setting up business plans. The statement that finding a job in industry ensures a well-paid and secured future is still very much alive. Since this message has been passed on through generations and generations, young and/or unemployed people are not inclined to start up their own business "with all the risks involved (high investment, standing on your own,...)".

As a result creative communities are not easily set up. And the match between such communities and the Industry 4.0 trends and demands cannot easily be made. Also, producing companies have difficulties in finding creative minds to guide them in the transition towards Industry 4.0 (via marketing, communication, product design and technologies,...).

All these elements lead to reducing competitiveness of the province of Limburg with other (metropolitan, creative) industrial regions.

## 3. Objective

Stebo's main goal is to answer to the latest Industry 4.0 trends, demanding the availability of enhanced creative and innovative potentials. An approach will be developed for boosting creative business start-ups which are rooted in the industrial past, yet respond to present and future trends.

The idea of intra- and entrepreneurship is however not yet part of the region's general mind-set. The relatively few people that recognize entrepreneurial opportunities brought up by the 'Fourth Industrial Revolution', often do not know how to make them work, or how to cash them in.

A living lab will therefore be organized in order to induce a mentality switch and to foster creative economies and innovative spirit in the province of Limburg. It will reconnect the current Industry 4.0 needs with the historic pioneering culture for which the region is known. As such initiatives are set up which are maximally connected to the region. Because of this close connection with cultural regional identity, the produced products and/or services are unique and authentic. As such the region can be 'branded' - in turn leading to a higher economic and regional competitiveness.

## 4. Concept

### 4.1 Living Lab: the basics

A 'living lab' is both a trajectory and a meeting place. It inspires and motivates local people to make the shift towards innovative intra- and entrepreneurship, building on the region's industrial DNA. The industrial culture - as it is today and/or as it will be tomorrow - is the underlying theme of the labs.

How can people make a living out of it? Can they set up a business around it?

We investigate the possibilities of industrial culture as investment opportunities in a broad range of sectors, e.g.:

- creative economy
- circular economy
- sharing economy
- service economy
- digitalization
- tourism

Participants are offered the ability to take part in several orientation and guidance projects - tools that will help them define, set up and evaluate their businesses. Focus is both on horizontal (peer to peer) and vertical (professionals) knowledge exchange.

Organizing a living lab means creating a win-win for all participants, and this at many levels. While entrepreneurial skills (e.g. spotting/cashing of business opportunities) can be taught to a group of starters, experienced entrepreneurs might be inspired by the hands-on mentality that is typical for the blue-collar mentality. In the same way bringing together 'traditional' producers and modern services can lead to the creation of new items (products and/or services). These items are rooted in the past (based on blue-collar mentality and attitude; industrial production techniques; themes) yet responding to current industrial trends (design, 3D-printing, upcycling, sharing, digital processes) and therefore contributing to the region's future (identity).

Living labs in other words foster pioneer spirit, creativity and innovation in a peripheral region, and revive its Industrial Culture.

### 4.2 Industrial Culture as a catalyst for creative economies

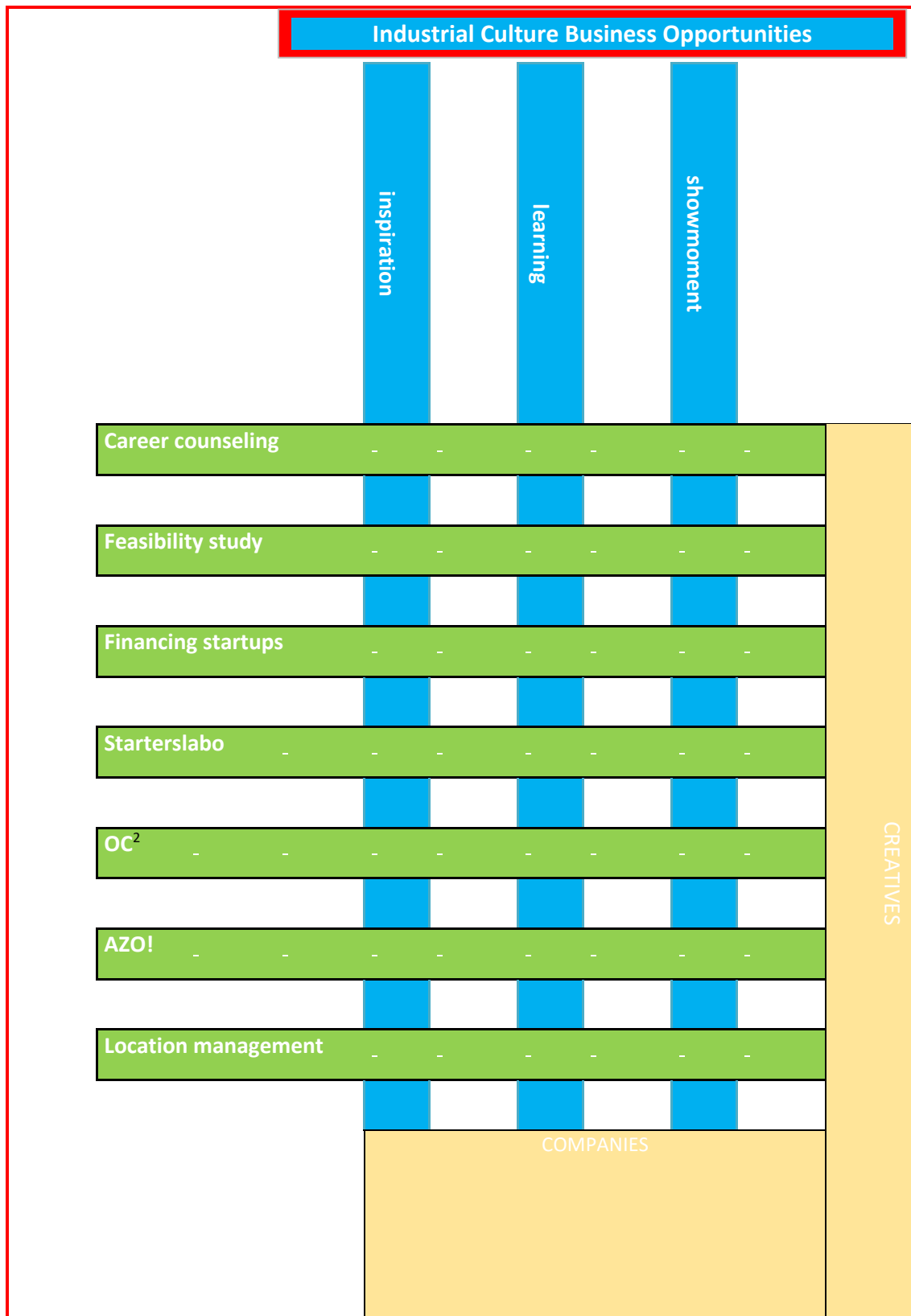
Stebo will introduce Industrial Culture in the approaches it has developed, while particularly focusing on the possibilities it has to offer within Industry 4.0.

This means:

- Introducing a number of themes/techniques referring to the past (e.g. products), present (products and services based on circular economy, sharing economy,...) and future (design, 3D-printing, upcycling, applications,...).
- But also building on cross-pollination between different attitudes and mentality (past hands-on blue-collar mentality combined with entrepreneurial attitude).

## 4.3 Trajectory

People will be trained to make the shift towards creative intra- and entrepreneurship in 3 phases: 1) Inspiration, 2) Learning, 3) Show moment.



### 4.3.1 Inspiration

People who have an idea but do not know how to make it work need inspiration. But also, entrepreneurs might need inspiration to develop new products or services. There are several options to provide in this:

- Linking ambitious ideas with entrepreneurs (the latter give advice on how to set up a business while at the same time might be inspired to develop new items based on Industrial Culture)
- Linking 'old' and 'new' (e.g. producing traditional designs with a 3D-printer, linking craftsmen with modern techniques,...)
- Linking companies with entrepreneurs/creatives (e.g. during an inspirational workshop)
- Inviting a speaker
- ...

### 4.3.2 Learning

In the past years Stebo has invested in finding approaches to strengthen entrepreneurial activities, reaching out to people just ambitioning a business setup, as well as to starters and already advanced actors. Appropriate methods for fostering and stimulating these target groups have been developed, and are united into a powerful package. Indeed, Stebo strongly believes that intra- and entrepreneurial skills and competences can be taught.

#### *Career Counseling/guidance*

...offers the opportunity to plan a career in Industry 2.0 as employee, intrapreneur or entrepreneur. This tool helps anyone who is interested in making the shift from the manufacturing industry to new types of industrial economy.

#### *Feasibility studies trajectory (Start!)*

...offers the opportunity to create and to evaluate your business plan. During a series of workshops participants are taught how to make up their business plan so they are able to evaluate whether or not their businesses are ready for a start-up.

#### *Financing start-ups*

....guides entrepreneurs to microcredits for setting up a business. Our counselors have set up a list of organizations providing a loan for starters.

#### *Starterslabo*

...supports unemployed people with a valuable business idea. They are coached in order to prepare them to undertake entrepreneurial activities and to increase the survival chances of their business. This programme also offers financial security so the risk factors of becoming self-employed are eliminated.

#### *OC<sup>2</sup>*

...organizes workshops on how to develop intra- or entrepreneurial competences.

#### *AZO!*

...offers guidance on how to start up a business, especially targeting immigrants. Reaching them in a language that they can understand and introducing them to the Belgian context on how to do business, is prioritized.





## Location Management

....focuses on projects which maximize cooperation, identity creation and image-upgrading of commercial streets (e.g. Vennestraat, Stalenstraat in Genk and Koolmijnlaan in Heusden-Zolder, which already fulfilled this role when the mines were active).

### 4.3.3 Showcase

The Box acts as a try out place and platform for (starting) entrepreneurs.

For the Living Lab it will act as a location where actual products and services are brought to the attention of potential buyers.

The Box will also act as a platform: entrepreneurs working on similar themes are brought here during a collective selling moment. As such they can exchange experiences, talk about strengths and weaknesses,...

At the same time the showcase moment invites companies transforming into Industry 4.0 environments. As such creative minds are connected to the producing industries which are constantly looking for more dynamic ideas and people for marketing, communication, design,... and often in a free-lance statute. Current industries need that kind of profiles to be profitable and to grow, or in short: to make transition to Industry 4.0.

## 5. Implementation

Within InduCult2.0 one Living Lab trajectory will be implemented. Preparations will start in October 2017, leading to a showcase moment in the summer of 2018.

### 5.1 Participants

Living Labs gather both ‘to be’ entrepreneurs (people with an ‘idea’), starters and experienced skilled actors. The aim is to reach 12 participants. Participants live in the province of Limburg, and preferably in municipalities build up around the producing industry (e.g. Maasmechelen, Genk, Houthalen-Helchteren, Heusden-Zolder, Beringen). The trajectory will for the largest part take place in Genk where the Stebo Homebase as well as The Box are located.

Stebo has in the past years already strongly invested in training programmes focusing on entrepreneurial skills. The organization can therefore rely on an extensive network which will deliver a number of participants for the trajectory. Apart from that participants can also be found in the numerous voluntary organizations that are present in the former mining cities. These are crowded with creative initiatives, linked to the industrial past. In many cases they have not yet been stimulated to take these ideas a step forward and/or to develop business models on them. Additionally a number of colleague organizations equally focus on developing and stimulating entrepreneurship, and its connection with the transition towards Industry4.0 which is manifesting itself in the province of Limburg. For example, as a spin-off of their project ‘Branded by Bokrijk’ - where products/souvenirs for the museum were created by craftsmen using traditional- and designers using modern techniques (pottery wheel/3D printer) - they will now set up a training programme to stimulate authentic yet creative craftsmanship. Stebo will closely cooperate in the programme. It is highly probable that participants for the Living Lab will also be found there.

### 5.2 Timing

- **October - December 2017:** content development and campaigning to gather (to be) entrepreneurs, inspirational offers,...
- **January - June 2018:** one group of participants will follow the trajectory (inspiration and learning)

- **July 2018:** Showcase
- **August-September 2018:** capturing lessons learned in a blueprint paper for setting up a Living Lab and a Train-the-Trainer programme (TTT) (cfr. 6)

## 5.2 Outputs

A creative community of at least 12 creative entrepreneurs: the implementation of the Living Lab will result in the creation of a creative community that is directly connected to the Industry 4.0 environment and its demands.

A blueprint in which the structure and methodology of the Living lab will be described as well as the principles of the TTT programme.

## 6. Transnational added value

In many Central European regions, including several of the partner regions, there are only few creative entrepreneurs cashing on the opportunities that came along with the Industry4.0 transition. As a matter of fact the creative community that is present in the peripheral regional is moving to the urban areas which are conceived as more attractive for setting up a business.

Within InduCult2.0's thematic WP 4 the InduCult2.0 partnership goes into these questions and develops pilot actions to improve the interaction between creative communities and the producing industry. Stebo actively engages in this work group. While peering and sharing experiences with the colleague partners, Stebo will gain the necessary inspiration and knowledge to turn the described concept into practice.

*e.g.: the concept of the Maker Faire for example (as described in the T4 Research Input Paper, and applied in Chemnitz - [www.maker-faire-sachsen.de](http://www.maker-faire-sachsen.de)) has offered inspiration on how to foster innovation spirit in small- and medium-sized towns typified by a blue-collar mindset.*

## 7. Outlook and sustainability

The idea of intra- and entrepreneurship will take up its place in the region's general mindset and current opportunities (such as new technologies) will be cashed in. Valorizing the region's industrial culture in this way creates a lucrative industrial landscape as well. New entrepreneurs and investors will be attracted. At the same time producing industries will be motivated to invest in the transition towards Industry 4.0, since creative minds and ideas will become increasingly available to them.

It is therefore clear that the results of this pilot action will continue to have an impact on the region beyond the InduCult2.0 project's runtime. If introducing the theme of Industrial Culture in the creative entrepreneurial community induces a growing number of interested people Stebo will repeat the trajectory. It will invest in introducing these new business models to the inhabitants of the region and setting up training programmes on how to implement these models.

## Abstract

Within the Industry 4.0 environment there is strong contrast between metropolitan and peripheral areas. Although both connected to industrial activities, the shift towards Industry 4.0 is more rapidly and easily made in the former. The reason for this contrast is that metropolitan areas are crowded with new technologies, innovative ideas and creativity. As such opportunities presenting themselves in current industrial trends are quickly cashed.

A similar mindset is not yet present in peripheral areas. Creative entrepreneurship is relatively unknown or considered too risky by the local population which was and often still is brought up with a typical blue-collar worker mindset.

As a result non-metropolitan regions have difficulties in competing with their metropolitan counterparts, yet are forced anyway to make the transit to an Industry 4.0 environment. Producing companies, for example, have difficulties in finding and attracting creative minds guiding them through this transition.

Main objective of the 'Living Lab' therefore is to boost entrepreneurial initiatives which are rooted in the region's industrial culture but yet respond to current economic trends. People will go through a three phase project. After offering inspiration, proper guidance will be organized. This ranges from career counseling, defining and teaching entrepreneurial skills, and feasibility studies. The trajectory is closed by a 'show' moment which is actually a platform where future entrepreneurs meet each other but also get into contact with actual buyers and producing companies.

The 'Living Lab' will set up a cultural interplay between the creative and industrial sectors.