

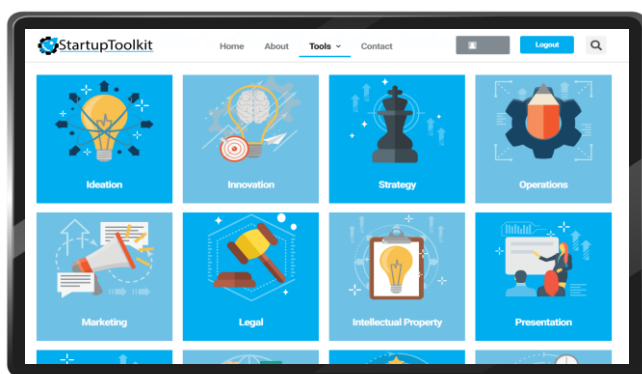
### Training seminar for the Support Centers staff

September 23, 2021 Heraclitus Research Centre of the Cyprus University of Technology hosted the training seminar for the support centers staff of the BalkanMed Gazelle project. The event took place at the conference room of the Continental building of CUT. Partners from National and Kapodistrian University of Athens (UOA), Enterprise Greece and Athens Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ACCI) visited Cyprus for the seminar. Because of pandemic measures,



partners from the Ruse Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI) and Economic Chamber of North Macedonia (ECCM) were unable to visit Cyprus and to participate fiscally at the event. However, they joined through a Zoom video platform and the seminar took place in a hybrid manner. During the seminar was presented the Toolkit platform developed by CUT for the purposes of hosting the tools of the project.

The presenter addressed issues regarding the infrastructure, architecture and functionality of the platform, such as technologies used and cross-platform compatibility. A live demonstration of the Startup Toolkit platform followed and all participants took the chance to see and to test it.



After the presentation of the platform, the experts went in depth into presenting the tools

developed by each partner. The topics of the tools presented were: Selection of business angels for BANs; design thinking; Pitch deck; Technology transfer; Business modelling, etc. The seminar ended with a visit to ARIS (A Really Inspiring Space) accelerator, which resulted in networking and great discussion regarding acceleration in Greece and Cyprus and the startup ecosystem.



### Partners Meeting & Steering Committee



Friday, September 24th, Limassol Cyprus. The partners meeting and steering committee were conducted with participants from all partners of the consortium in a hybrid manner because of the pandemic situation. The discussion topics around work packages included all finished and forthcoming activities as: Operational plan for the support centres and their future activities; Toolkit for the Support Centers; Study visits; Selection of Gazelles; Acceleration programs; Website Development and Social Media; Website Development and Social Media. The partners concluded the meetings with the hope to see each other again soon, but this time live.

### The study visits in South France

The study visits gave the opportunity to partners to get a first hand experience that was used for the design, development and operation of the Support Centers.

#### ***Study Visit to CISAM, Marseille: Innovation - Incubation - Acceleration. Wednesday, October 27<sup>th</sup>, 2021***

The Cite de l' innovation et Des Savoirs Aix-Marseille (CISAM) is an essential space for innovators in the Aix-Marseille area. The organization is born out of the skills and ambitions of the largest French-speaking university, the largest metropolis in France and two multinationals: CMA CGM Group and L'OCCITANE Group. They ambitions are: promote scientific, technical et industrial cultures; encourage expression and citizen initiatives, in terms of wealth creation and innovation; accelerate exchanges between industrial actors and research laboratories. The Gazelle Partners during their visit were informed how the skills and ambitions of the largest French-speaking university, Aux Marseille University, the largest metropolis in France and two multinationals, CMA CGM Group and L OCCITANE Group, develop scientific culture and innovation in order to benefit



economic growth. CISAM is a place for meetings, creation, project incubation and acceleration.

**Study Visit to SATT South-East, Marseille: Technology Transfer - Investment Network, Wednesday, October 28th, 2021:**



GAZELLE partners found out how SATT Sud-Est (Societe d' Acceleration du Transfer de Technologie) -"The technology transfer accelerator" accelerates technology transfer by bringing together research and business players. Its core business is the maturation of inventions from regional research laboratories on the legal (intellectual property), economic (market) and technological (technological maturation) levels. Its objective is to transfer innovative

technologies from its shareholders to the industrial world by granting operating licenses to companies. Together with their patents SATT Sud-Est focuses its investment strategy on innovative projects in line with the scientific skills of its shareholders around 5 priority areas of interest: Connected information society; Environment, energies & territories; Health & life technologies; Industrial processes and Digital Culture, Heritage & Humanities.

**Study Visit to ANIMA Investment Network, Marseille, October 28th, 2021:**

ANIMA Investment Network is a platform for economic cooperation between Europe, the Middle East and Africa. It deploys its engineering to create and implement initiatives to develop investment and business ecosystems favoring an attractive, sustainable and inclusive economy.



Organized as a network, ANIMA offers expertise in economic development and cooperation, investment promotion and impact management, territorial marketing, development of innovation and mobilization of expatriate talent resources. The purpose of the Association is to promote the economy of the countries of the Euro-Mediterranean area and to improve their economic and industrial image, to



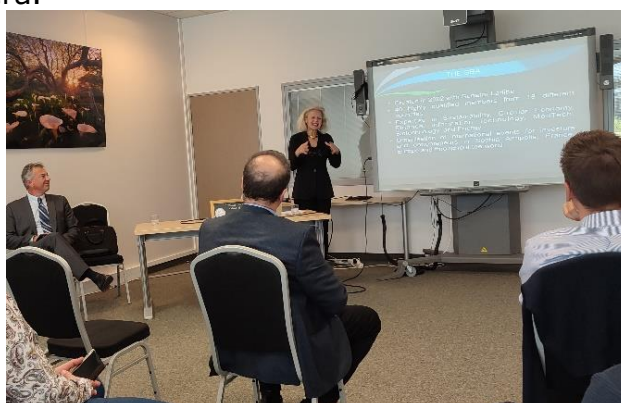
contribute to making the Euro-Mediterranean area as a whole an attractive and secure destination for investors and entrepreneurs, and an area of shared prosperity. During the visit the Gazelle’s partners discussed with the hosts about their experience with start-ups, financing instruments, technology transfer, mentoring and how they know-how could be applied by organizing the project events.

**Study Visit to Sophia Business Angels, Sophia Antipolis: Business Angels and Ecosystem, Friday, October 29th**

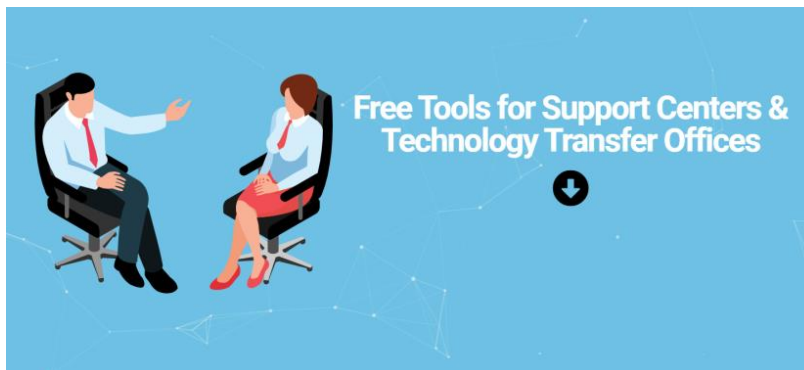


The visit held in Sophia Business Angels (SBA) venture and the atmosphere was extraordinary and friendly. The project partners exchanged precious experience with the SBA hosts. It was the closing study visit and the consortium had the opportunity to discover new horizons in business matching events. The partners discovered new horizons, drawing on the experience of their hosts for their future plans in organizing the upcoming investment forums. The SBA readily and happily offered its supportive participation in the 2022 Investment Forum in Greece. The partners learned how inspiring the process can be when communicating between business idea holders and business angels. How the former learn to grab the interest of the latter. Founded in 2002, SBA is an international group of members, based in Sophia Antipolis - one of the leading technology parks in France and Europe. SBA is dedicated to fostering and investing in innovative startups on the French Riviera.

Sophia Business Angels (SBA) are helping startups thrive in building their business plans, pitches and fund-raising through coaching and mentorship. Start Up Factory and the Venture Academy are some of the SBA's regular events, helping startups to improve their project, their approach to investors and to make the “investment ready”. SBA, in close collaboration with EBAN, Europe’s largest and multivariant BA network, has been assisting the development of startups for two decades up to date, along with providing consultancy for other BA networks Europe-wide.



## Building 4 Support Centers



In the project frame were created 4 fully operational Support Centers in Bulgaria, Greece, Cyprus and North Macedonia. The Operation Manual for the Support Centers was the first fundamental document which gave the main basic engagements

of the centers and later, upon the principles, they will build an international **hub of the Support Centers**. Centers will focus on the acceleration of BalkanMed "Gazelles" and the creation of an ecosystem where "Gazelles can run faster and further".

They will operate in each of the four countries and will apply the same operation model, as well as build and maintain an information network for the hosted Gazelle companies. In order to achieve these objectives, selected innovative SMEs will go through an intensive business acceleration program that is supported by two important (however neglected in the BalkanMed) institutions: the angel market and the technology transfer. Combining an acceleration program with angel investment and technology transfer at a transnational level is an innovative approach that will give Gazelles the chance to innovate their business model and strengthen their international collaboration.

To this end, innovative SMEs have the chance to seek 'smart money', to cooperate with universities and to seek cooperation with other "Gazelles" participating in the project. This will be achieved through the Acceleration Program, the operation of the project's local Support Centers and their participation in the investment forums. The development of this transnational integrated approach is fully in line with the program's priority specific objective as innovative SMEs have the chance:

- to advance their existing knowledge about business model innovation with a focus on internationalization,
- to re-orient their business policies at all levels through their intensive interaction with investors, consultants and universities.

The Support Center's mission is to "operate as a catalyst in connecting research facilities/Universities/laboratories, investment funds and market needs, aiding to



create new, sustainable and rapidly growing companies that offer high quality and utility products and services". Support Center's strategy is focused on developing partnerships with the main sectors of the three aforementioned pillars (knowledge production, investment funds and new innovative business schemes) on every field of its operation.

Specifically, Support Center will cooperate closely with Business Angels Networks (BANs) and Technology Transfer Offices (TTOs), while simultaneously combining features of business support programs to the Gazelles, similar to those implemented by Accelerators. Support Center will cooperate with BANs, while developing partnerships of many levels, essentially participating in various of Support Center's stages of operation.



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