

INCORE – Innovation Capacity Building for Higher Education in Europe’s Outermost Regions

Summary

INCORE aims to boost the innovation and entrepreneurial capacity of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) from Europe’s Outermost Regions (ORs) by seizing region-specific contextual and business opportunities. The ORs are classified as emerging innovative regions and present high potential for blue and green growth. The ORs share a unique natural setting for innovation and entrepreneurial activities but face common challenges such as limited training and education opportunities, as well as energy poverty and security leading to brain drain to Europe mainland and abroad. The ORs involved in INCORE are the Canary Islands (Spain), Azores (Portugal), Madeira (Portugal) and La Réunion (France). The leader of the consortium is based in the mainland European West Coast (Portugal) bridging to the heart of decision-making and the most influential pole centers of the European Union.

IST is the leading partner of the INCORE project driving forward the HEIs involved to implement an Innovation Vision Action Plan (IVAP). The IVAP is grounded on the following domains established by the HEI Initiative of the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT):

- Fostering institutional engagement and change.
- Strengthening partnerships (knowledge triangle integration).

- Contribution to developing innovation and businesses.
- Enhancing the quality of innovation and entrepreneurial education in Europe’s ORs.

Some of the results already achieved include various training and mentoring initiatives on innovation and entrepreneurship for students and academic and non-academic staff, a new research center dedicated to entrepreneurship and innovation in Madeira (OSEAN – Outermost Regions Sustainable Ecosystem for Entrepreneurship and Innovation), a new Chair on Entrepreneurship and Sustainable Development in the Canary Islands, various clustering events in the ORs with links to mainland Europe, and a harmonized “Discovery, Incubation and Acceleration” program for supporting selected SMEs/Start-Ups in the territories of the Azores, Canaries, Madeira and Réunion. This program is carefully designed to strengthen the role of the HEIs in the regional innovation ecosystem and is based on research activities by the consortium members, some of which have already been published:

Shwabe, O. Almeida, N. (in press) Healthcare innovation ecosystems as transformative enterprises improving the good health and well-being of citizens in Europe’s Outermost Regions. ONE HEALTH Transformative Enterprises, Well-being and Education in the Knowledge Economy of the Digital Age. Piero Formica (Editor).



Figure 1. First physical plenary meeting of the INCORE project (Madeira 2021).

We believe that co-creation and enhanced cooperation between the HEIs and SMEs is the key to unlock local innovation potential and meet the common challenges of the ORs.



Project Reference

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Leading Institution

IST – Instituto Superior Técnico (Portugal)

Partners

University of Reunion (France), Universidad Europea de Canarias (Spain), Universidade da Madeira (Portugal), La Palma Research Centre (Belgium), Trisolaris Advanced Technologies (Portugal)

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Project Website

incoreproject.eu