

Building the pathways for green clusters – sustainable business models

Webinar recap

Towards Green Transition Facility (TGTF), an initiative of the European Cluster Collaboration Platform (ECCP) has been supporting 25 selected clusters with targeted business advice through a team of hand-picked world-class advisors from around the world.

This September, the facility launched its first cross-cutting support webinars- the idea is to share best practices, exchange knowledge on green transition themes and create a community of practitioners

Bianca Dragomir, CEO of AVAENSEN CleanTech Cluster and founder of Clusters for Change, shared best practices around innovative and proven methods to design and implement sustainable business plan models.

The challenge is to reimagine business models that are both **financially and environmentally sustainable**. A strategy of testing, validating, repeating and scaling was proposed as a roadmap for clusters to arrive to innovative business models. As an example of this innovative way of acting, Bianca Dragomir presented her experience when taking over the management of the CleanTech cluster. This cluster was almost bankrupt at the time, but by transforming its business model into a “no cure no pay” one, it managed to find a **stable and sustainable revenue stream**.

This was complemented by an interactive session moderated by Pouyan Maleki, TGTF Expert & Ecorys Sustainability Consultant. Here, the clusters were showcased a number of **successful outputs and activities already developed** under the TGTF with the objective of **promoting synergies and guiding clusters** and respective experts in the next steps of the TGTF. Several types of positive outputs were presented, among them, those of the Sofia Knowledge City cluster and of IDiA. The Sofia Knowledge City cluster developed a **model of the ideal green urban economy**, with several lines for action such as the minimisation of energy demand for transport or the establishment of refurbishment centres. In the case of IDiA, the cluster developed an **open and interactive repository** of information with the aim of collecting and compiling “building blocks” for companies to help them design new green projects, adjust business models, find funding opportunities, etc.

The final part of the webinar showcased **roadmaps for green transformational impact**. Recognising the need to ensure continuity of sustainability efforts beyond TGTF, the clusters were assigned to draft a roadmap of their own to be presented and discussed in the final TGTF cross-cutting webinar. A need to **empower SMEs** in order for them to maximise the

usage of the TGTF was identified. The need to **utilise EREK** (European Resource Efficiency Knowledge Base) was raised, as this is a reference point on business competitiveness that **provides SMEs with a resource efficiency self-assessment tool** and complements mentor's advice. It was agreed that TGTF activities should be disseminated with local and regional authorities to explore future opportunities for greening.