Project Description

SMART WORK

Building a EU Network of Creative Hubs and Coworking Spaces

2016 - 2018

SMart

I ENVIRONMENT

1. Our mission and values

Today, the **social and cultural value** of coworking spaces and creative hubs has been largely acknowledged. Coworking spaces and creative hubs act as conveners for networking, business collaborations, economic development and community engagement. This comes along with a strong potential for entrepreneurship, social inclusion and cultural diversity.

Furthermore, the **economic value** of coworking spaces and creative hubs has reached the attention of leading companies and investors. To give one example from the Belgian context, one could think of the installment of Google's second Data Center in one of Creative Wallonia's creative hotspots, thereby generating jobs, economic development, innovation as well as communities.

The EU economy needs creative hubs and coworking spaces and should support and favor the efforts of the entrepreneurs that are building these businesses. If there's a place where people can launch their startup, their creative project or freelancing career, it is in a creative hub or coworking space. If established professionals want to have a peer support network that outside the context larger companies, they will find it in creative hubs and coworking spaces.

The overall potential of creative hubs and coworking spaces coincides with a large variety in their:

- **Shape and size**: e.g. studio's, centers, clusters, networks, ...

- **Economic model**: e.g. privately financed hubs, publicly financed hubs, ...

- **Field**: e.g. cultural and creative sector, social sector, technology, ...

- **Services offered**: e.g. training, community building, networking, digital domains, ...

- **Purpose**: e.g. networking organisations that operate remotely, hubs with a physical space, …

This means that the concept of coworking and creative hubs finds itself within a large variety of social, cultural and economic realities. Such diverse structures seem to be challenged by **similar problems and issues** when it comes to their economic and financial models, the services provided, the building of a community, their internal and external communication, and so on. As strong leadership amidst a volatile socio-economic context is vital to run sustainable coworking spaces and creative hubs, the goal of our mission is *to focus on the development of communities that help each other out, to enhance and mutualize the exchange of knowledge and know-how on the social, cultural and economic aspects of creative hub building, on a European level, both digital as well as non-digital.*
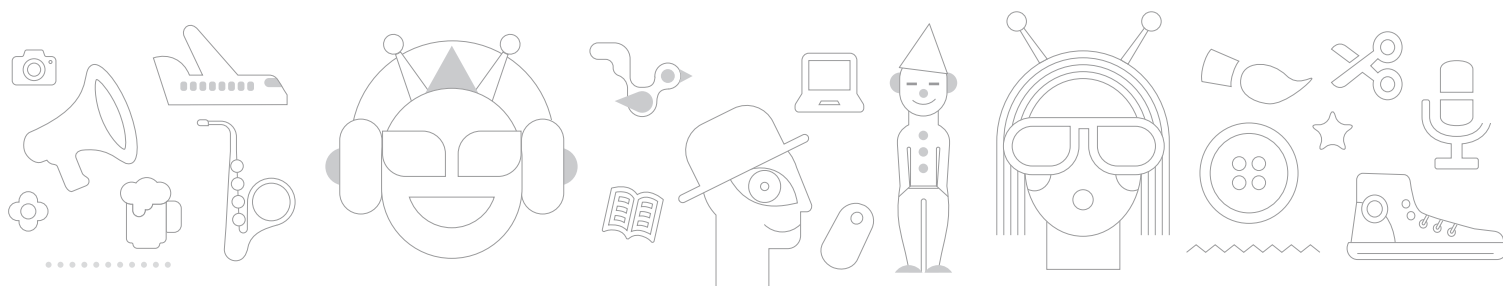
2. Our approach

Over the years, the project partners, SMart and The European Coworking Assembly, have gained experience in establishing networks of coworking spaces and creative hubs, focusing on developing adapted spaces for creatives and entrepreneurs, by boosting the community and offering needs-based services and spaces.

The strength of this partnership lays in the complementarity of the two networks. The European Coworking Assembly's experience in facilitating coworking spaces on the European level, combined with SMart's experience in supporting cultural and creative professionals via a broad range of services, leads us to a set of common goals, that will be reached throughout the building of the network by focusing on the following points:

- **Firstly**, the partners will establish a community of hub managers and users of European coworking spaces and creative hubs. They will gather regularly to reflect on gaining efficiency in managing their hubs, easing mobility for their communities and how to help their users in the development of their businesses.

- **Secondly, an academic team** from within SMart's and the European Network Assembly networks will be supporting the managers' thought process. This team will be composed of key actors in the field. The partners are well aware that the rapidly evolving sector of coworking and creative hubs is part of a global context in which numerous sectors and fields are connected with one another: urban planning, gentrification, economic development, and so on. Therefore we aim to engage and to connect thinkers (researchers, speakers, teachers, ...) and professionals (entrepreneurs, investors, creative professionals, …) from this very **diverse range of domains.**

- **Thirdly,** the project partners acknowledge the existence of already established and/or emerging networks of coworking spaces and creative hubs on the European level. Our vision is that **collaboration** and partnership with other networks and initiatives can only **generate a higher leverage for the project**. As such, openness will be favored and **collaboration with other networks and initiatives will be seeked as much as possible.**

3. Objectives

The project partners set course to contribute to the professionalisation and development of European coworking spaces and creative hubs. **The general objective** of the project is to create a European network **where both hub managers and hub users can find suited and practical solutions to improve their work experience.**

The network aims to reach the following specific objectives:

- **Mutualize knowledge**, know-how, competences and experiences, as to heighten efficiency in the daily management of coworking spaces and creative hubs;

- To **provide capacity-building** to creative hub managers and cultural and creative professionals and entrepreneurs;

- To **facilitate mobility** and strengthen transnational and trans sectoral cooperation;

- To **contribute to the acknowledgement** of the innovative sector of coworking spaces and creative hubs and **raise awareness** on the institutional level through the provision of policy recommendations.

SMart's managing director at the foundation's general assembly - 2015
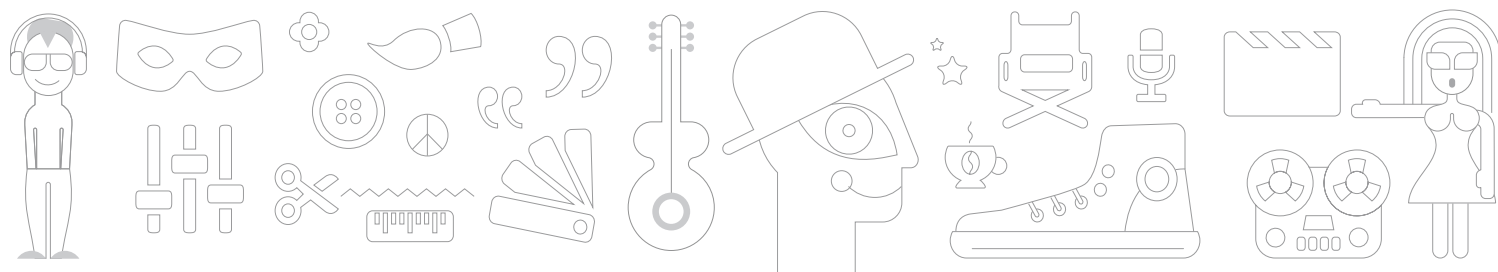
II Methodology

The first step of building a European community of coworking spaces and creative hubs is to find and select hubs *that are willing to participate in the network*. Coworking spaces and creative hubs exist in a large variety of socioeconomic characteristics. Existing initiatives often regroup similar workspaces. However, our aim is to create a network reassembling as many diverse workspaces as possible. We are convinced that exchanging on different approaches and management of those spaces will trigger innovation and will result in practical solutions.

It is very important to find a clear way to communicate those different aspects to the workspaces that we are willing to mobilise. It is also essential to remember the intercultural aspect of the network: the partners are fully aware that different cultures, languages and mindsets will be approached. Therefore our communication should be as clear as possible, but we should also reflect on the best way of reaching the different hubs (phone, mail, visits,...).. In the following section we will point out which work packages and deliverables will be developed in the course of the project and how these will be realised.

1. **Work package 1**: Identification and selection of eligible creative hubs and coworking spaces in the European Union

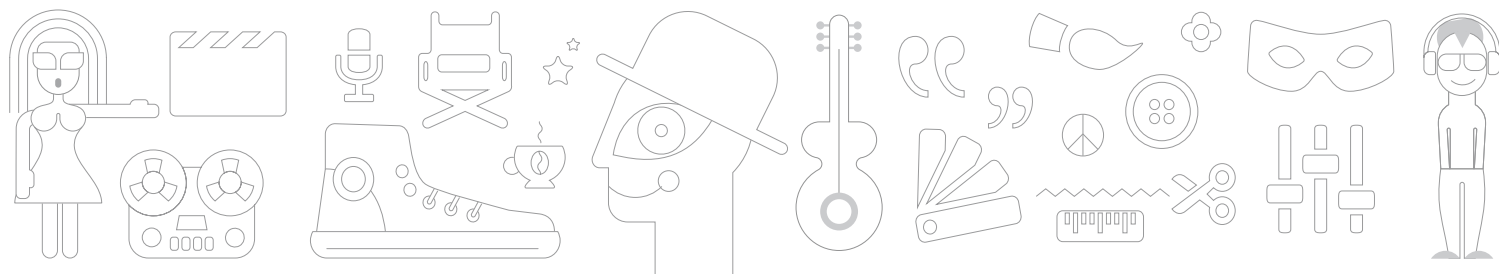### 1.1 IDENTIFYING COWORKING SPACES AND CREATIVE HUBS

The project partners have set up an **inventory of European coworking spaces and creative hubs**, gained via their broad European network. It will serve as the main tool in the selection process.

1.2 SELECTING COWORKING SPACES AND CREATIVE HUBS

After having defined the final list of *potential* participating coworking spaces and creative hubs, we will initiate the process of selecting the spaces and hubs to engage in the network. In a first phase the hub managers of the selected workspaces will be contacted by phone, Skype or by any means necessary. The goal is to understand *in detail* their working structure, their short and long term goals, and their potential interest in and contribution to the network. **The selection criteria** are the following:

- hubs must be **actively involved in the cultural and creative sectors**;

- hubs must be active in the **development of (or planning to develop) training services/** training sessions, support the professionalisation of their users, and **focus on developing a community** of professionals;

- hubs **must share our approach, vision and values**, which are: openness, community, accessibility and sustainability.

- hubs must be willing to **share information and participate at the network's activities**.

1.3 ACHIEVING AN OPTIMAL GEOGRAPHICAL BALANCE

Today, SMart is present in 9 European countries (France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Germany, Spain, Italy, Hungary, Sweden and Austria). The European Assembly and its dynamic community of professionals' networks stretches throughout the European Union and beyond. This will allow the partners to achieve an adequate geographical balance within the overall network. The broad SMart network as well as the network of the European Coworking Assembly will be deployed to contacts hubs throughout the EU. Specific partners within our networks have already indicated their readiness to provide support and to activate their own networks, in search of interested coworking spaces and creative hubs (e.g. Copass and Scintillo).

## 1.4 MANAGING THE RISK OF LACK OF INTEREST

The project partners are well aware that it will be challenging to convince some coworking spaces and creative hubs to join this new EU network. This could be the case for a variety of reasons, such as the lack of time to partake in the network's activities, being part of other networks and the restraint to share information. To mitigate this risk, we foresee two distinct courses of action.

Firstly, hub managers will be offered *variable levels of implication/participation* in the network, according to their level of development, focus and specific interests.

The number of events per year, or the rate at which hubs participate in the activities and events of other hubs, are indicators that will be used in order to define the notion of 'development'.

Secondly, the partners will highlight that participation comes with the **following added value** for their coworking space/creative hub:

- Being part of a community of hub managers and taking part in the creation of a European network for their hub users.

- **Members** of the network will be able **to transcend the individual functioning of their hub and will gain access to information on the management, financing, business models and community building activities** of all participating hubs. Hub users will benefit from increased mobility opportunities and will have the feeling of belonging to a European community.

- Facilitate the **connection with a large variety of workspaces**. This variety aims to ease collaborations and generate a spillover effect, from the cultural and creative sectors towards the social, service or tech sectors and vice versa.

- Trigger the **exchange of best practices and capacity building for the managers and the users.** We will reflect on the most efficient way of building a community in a workspace. How to finance an upcoming workspace and sustain an existing one? **How can we mutualize our knowledge as well as our tools, services and facilities?** How can a hub attract new users? Joining the network will open up gateways to a decent **internationally coordinated reflexion on how to facilitate international mobility**, both for hub managers and hub users.
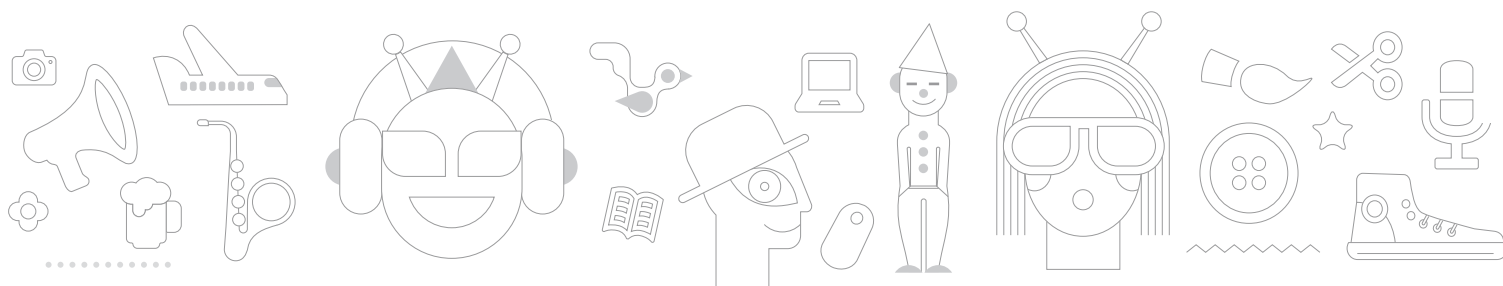
2. **Work package 2**: Development of virtual networks

Once the participating coworking spaces and creative hubs have been identified and selected, they will be able to interact with each other on **1. the public Network portal** and on **2. the Network's forum**. Both digital devices will be the central place where one can exchange and mutualize specific information on workspaces that are geographically, economically and culturally disconnected from each other.

2.1/ THE NETWORK PORTAL

⊙ **Technical development**: The existing website creativespot.be will be enhanced and functionalities will be added to make it the social network for the community of hub managers and users as well as potential clients. The development will be subcontracted and SMart's IT-department will be in charge of the permanent maintenance of the portal.

⊙ **Content development**:

› The portal will contain a detailed presentation of the overall EU network and its members, as well as an overview of all hub users with a job description, including their contact data and information;

› Potential clients will be able to perform a filtered search on the website, according to a series of geographic and sectoral criteria.

2.2/ THE NETWORK'S FORUM

⊙ **Technical development**: an online forum for hub managers and users will be developed. On the forum, both target groups will be able to share and find information, to ask questions and browse through answers and to post relevant news and opportunities. The development of the forum will be subcontracted and the maintenance will be done by SMart's IT-department.

⊙ **Content development**: the forum will contain specific content for the hub managers and the hub users:

› hub managers will have access to a specific Q&A section, where they can mutualize information, questions and answers. Furthermore, we aim to expand the network with experts, active in diverse scientific research areas. This academic team' will provide the forum with targeted fact sheets, articles and bibliographical references on coworking and creative hub management. Next to that, informal discussions will be able to take place on this forum.

› hub users will find a place to connect with other professionals and potential employers, where they can offer services and exhibit their work, while potential employers can post their requests and look for potential candidates. The project partners will be able to build upon the experience gathered with "SMartAgora", a community tool offered to SMart's Belgian members and their potential employers. It will be made available EU-wide for the network members.

› a third section on the forum will contain *'useful links to EU funding for cultural and creative sectors and its relevant national/local contact points as well as national and other funding opportunities and contacts for the cultural and creative sectors'*:
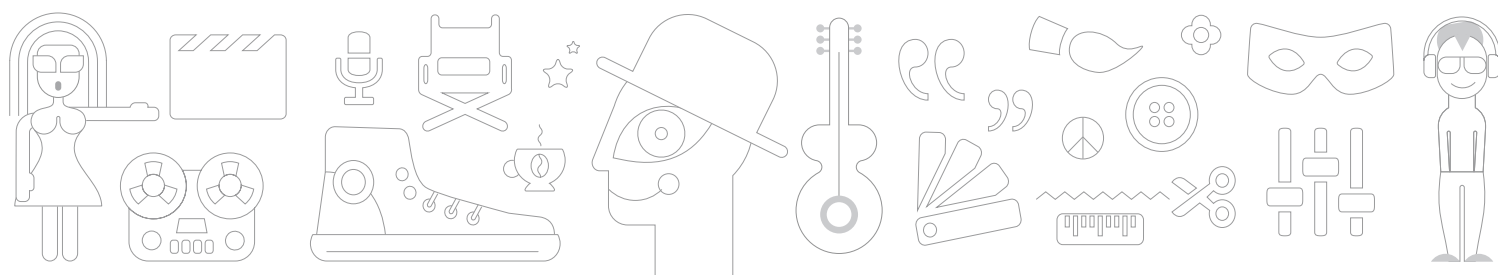
- Hub managers should be aware of the different associations and institutions able to provide up to date information regarding funding on the national and European level. Therefore, the project partners will refer hub managers and users in search for specific funding to the exact, sought-for sources. Hub managers will inventory the associations and institutions (e.g. Kunstenloket, COSME, Creative Europe, Eramsus+, etc.). This guarantees up to date information by qualified persons.

- In addition, methodic fact sheets will be provided, concerning questions such as : *How to make up a budget ? How to present a crowdfunding project ? How to write an application for funding and subsidies ?* Such methodic fact sheets already exist within the SMart repertoire at the moment (cf. technical list.)

2.3 SOCIAL MEDIA PRESENCE

Technical development : SMart's communication department will be responsible for the development and maintenance of the network's social media pages. Planned activities, workshops and regular info on the specific development of the project will be shared with the broader public. Also all relevant information on topics related to coworking and creative labor will be shared, with links to online articles, events, and relevant information. The network will be present on Facebook, where it will share events, news and relevant information through a dedicated page ; a common Twitter account and the use of hashtags will enhance the dissemination of project results and news regarding events and workshops. Video material produced during workshops and events will be shared through the network's YouTube channel. The network's LinkedIn group will be used to share professional contributions. We will work together with graphic designers, as to maximize the aesthetics of the digital platforms.

2.4 RISK MANAGEMENT

Hubs will have to provide information on their economic and organisational models and participate to the network's activities. It must be taken into account that some hubs won't be interested in doing so. As such, risk must be managed on two levels :

- **Digitally** : hub ID's must be provided via the digital platform. To ensure that it's done, network members will receive notifications when the information to be provided is not yet complete and when their online presence seems to decrease over time.

- **On the field** : It is essential to develop a feeling of 'belongingness' among the members of the network. Thematic workshops are well-suited dispositives in order to reach a well-knit network. To transcend the local community and create a feeling of belonging it is important to create as much encounters as possible (Skype, meetings, conferences). Organising similar, small events on same dates amongst the different hubs will also increase the feeling of belonging to the network.

3. **Work package 3** : People to people network

3.1 DEVELOPING THE PEOPLE TO PEOPLE NETWORK

Step 1 : Building a network and community is a *long term action that requires regular meetings and interaction*. We aim to use a '*bottom-up*' methodology, in order to establish the people to people network. Specifically, we will develop regional pools of neighbouring countries. Every geographical region will have its own network manager who will be responsible for animating and mobilising this part of the global network.

SMart has, at this moment, offices in 9 European countries ; The European Network Assembly englobes coworking spaces throughout the whole EU. This local and regional presence, as well as the local contacts of the project partners, will enable the consortium to identify one *key hub* and its hub manager as the responsible for a specific regional pool. The project partners will collaborate closely with the regional reference persons/hub managers (via Skype, mail or phone), in addition to planned physical meetings.

It is planned to develop six regional pools. However, the final *regionalization* of the network will depend on the reality of the terrain.

Step 2 : A 2 day intermediate meeting will be held where all regional reference persons are brought together. The following subjects will be discussed :

 Final determination of the plan of action

 Budgetisation : every reference person will be allocated a budget to be invested in the realization of (physical) encounters and the animation of the network.

Concretely, it will imply :

 The organisation of 4 encounters per year, with all regional coordinators. These meetings are designed to connect the regional reference persons, and to discuss the actions to be taken for the next 3 months.

 The organisation of workshops designed as thematic reflexion groups. The results of the workshops will be transcribed in thematic fact sheets, and shared online. The project partners will engage hub managers and users as well as academic experts studying the impact of those workspaces on economic development, urbanism and gentrification.

 The organisation of similar events on same dates in different hubs.

 The organisation of an annual conference in Brussels, bringing together the participating hub managers, hub users and academic experts.

The general goal of this action is to *build bridges*, i.e. cross-sectoral exchanges among creative and more classical sectors. The project partners are well aware that the financial approach of a coworking space manager is different as the one of a creative hub manager. By comparing these different approaches, we aim to realise a new perspective on the economic and financial aspects of those workspaces.
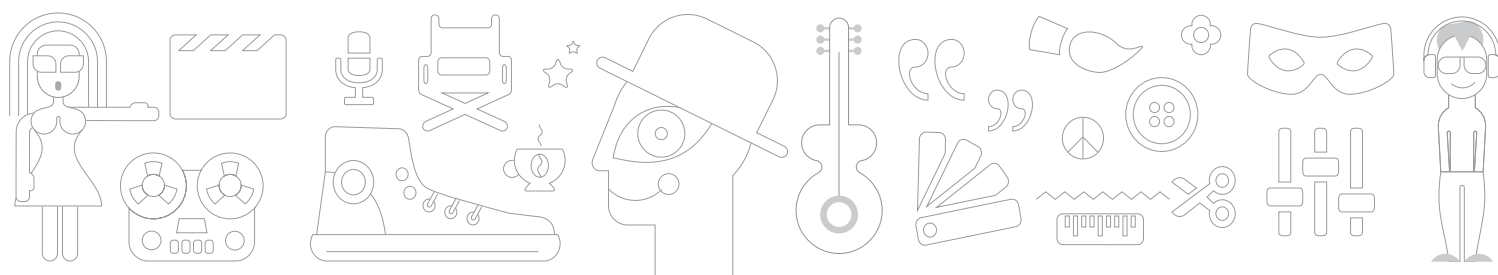
The consortium consists of one partner from the cultural and creative sectors (SMart) and one partner active in the sector of classical coworking (European Coworking Assembly). In order to open up towards a broad range of other sectors we aim to establish the regional networks as explained above, by connecting people and ideas, mutualizing knowledge and know-how in a broad economic context.

3.2 TOWARDS AN INCUBATOR FOR INNOVATIVE IDEAS

In order to render the project specifically to an innovative network, we plan the following :

- Peer to peer exchanges : Meet & Connect - These are networking sessions during which a confirmed creative entrepreneur shares his experiences and best practices with other entrepreneurs on a specific topic. It ends with a festive networking evening. Meet & Connect sessions can contribute to dialogue, networking and know-how exchange. It also brings together different cross-disciplinary and cross-sectoral target groups that share problematics and interests. Fuckup Nights - SMart is hosting this original way of peer to peer learning. Fuckup Nights is a global movement born in Mexico in 2012 to share publicly business failure stories. Hundreds of people attend each event to hear three to four entrepreneurs share their failures. Each speaker is given 7 minutes and is able to use 10 images. After each speaker, there's a question/answer session, as well as time for networking. The Fuckup Nights hold full potential for cross-sectoral exchanges of best practices, bringing together hub managers, cultural and creative professionals and entrepreneurs from a broad range of fields.

- The Creative Hubs Visa - The Creative Hubs Visa will be based on the Coworking Visa, a voluntary program that has been developed by the European Coworking Assembly, where active members of the participating hubs can use other coworking spaces that participate in the program for free. This easy to implement visa enhances international mobility for the hub users. In the frame of this network, the concept will be adapted and tested to the reality of creative hubs and their users.

Meet&Connect présentation
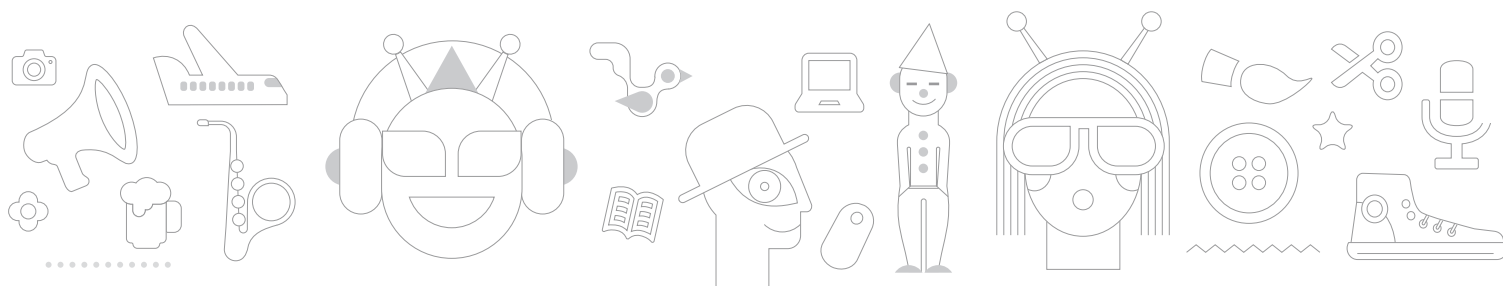
4. **Work package 4** : Coaching support and tailored professional development and capacity building

4.1 COACHING AND TRAINING SUPPORT TO CREATIVE HUB MANAGERS

Needs - The project partners' experience in managing coworking spaces and creative hubs, as well as their day-to-day contact with creative entrepreneurs and hub managers, has allowed them to identify a series of needs and difficulties that they encounter.

As such, hub managers are often isolated. They are focused on the daily tasks of their hub and struggle to step back and transcend their local positions. Information on best-practices and on other hub's economical functioning is difficult to find, which makes it hard to develop common solutions to issues related to the management of hubs, such as :

- the lack of financial support and human resources ;

- the scarcity of financial and administrative support ;

- difficulties to build a well-knit community of hub users.

In order to go beyond their local whereabouts, the international mutualization of knowledge and know-how via coaching support and tailored professional development is essential.

Content - Hub managers will be assessed about their needs, problems and difficulties as well as their strengths and skills. While one manager can have skills in the organisation of events and lack economic skills, another manager can be skilled economically, while not being able to organize successful events. Therefore, implementing a self organised exchange system of best-practices among different hub managers is essential. In short, by continuously identifying needs and skills, we aim to enhance better economical and management practices for hub managers through peer to **peer data gathering and sharing** on the common forum.

Realisation - Therefore, the hub manager's needs will be assessed and surveyed. This will be done as follows :

- Quantitatively - During work package 1, a **survey** will be provided and filled in by all contacted managers. The results of this survey, and thus the needs and skills of hub managers, will be discussed during roundtable discussions at the Launching Conference in Brussels in 2016.

- Qualitatively - During the launching event, there will be roundtable discussions on revealing problems for hub managers as well as presentations of "success stories" tackling those specific problems. We want to make sure that the encounters are positive and constructive and are revealing new perspectives to the participants. .

- Comparable with the hub ID's that will be provided on the digital forum, we'll also provide '**manager ID's**'. These are practical sheets containing the manager's information, a profile picture, their parcours, and their specific skills. As such, we aim to create an internal version of LinkedIn, where managers easily can find each other based on the skills they need, lack or want to enforce.

- Finally, in the context of the digital and the people to people network, there will be face-to-face encounters (thematic workshops within regional pools) and the online forum.
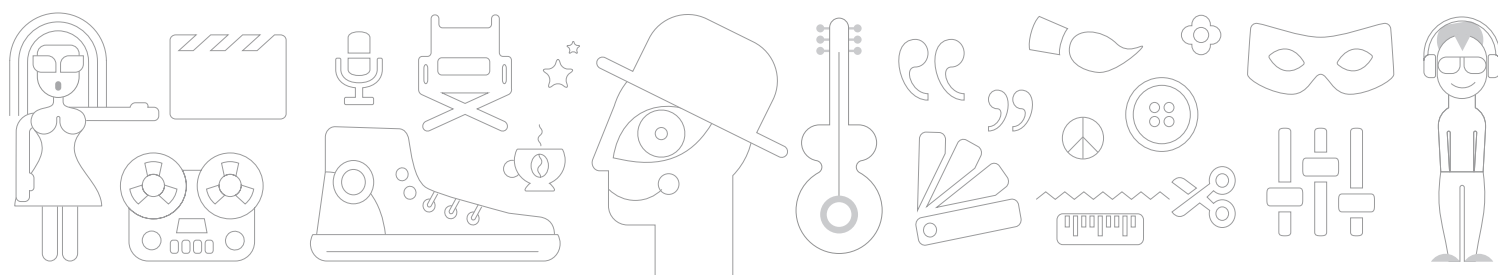
4.2 COACHING AND BUSINESS SUPPORT TRAINING TO CREATIVE PROFESSIONALS AND ENTREPRENEURS

Needs - The project partners' experience in working with creative entrepreneurs, coworkers, artists, and with cultural and creative professionals in general, shows that the following questions are recurring :

- How to develop and professionalise cultural and creative activities ?

- How to build competences regarding creative labor ?

- How to efficiently find contracts ?

- Where and how to find effective fiscal, administrative and financial advice ?

- How to develop decent communicative skills, online as well as offline ?

Content - The fact sheets provided online, and the thematic encounters organised within the people to people network, will address the above listed needs and themes. Here again, the goal is to connect the right people with the right skills. For example, a creative professional developing his activity (e.g. a food truck) in a classical coworking space might need a specific visual plan and communicative style. While he might not find the right solution for this need in his local hub, the hub manager should be able to provide the right hub and/or coworking space where these specific skills and services can be found and provided.

Implementation - We aim to connect cultural and creative entrepreneurs/coworkers with classical entrepreneurs/coworkers. The other way around, we strive to bring the classical (co) workers closer to cultural and creative workers such as graphic designers, photographers, etc. This will be realised via the online platform, where 'hub ID's', 'manager ID's' and information on the participating hubs and their residents, all over Europe, will be available.

4.3 PROVIDING TOOLS FOR PEER LEARNING AND CROSS-OVER STIMULATION

In order to provide peer learning and cross-over stimulation, a minimal of 3 peer to peer events per year will be organised. These events will be organised in and by each participating hub, on the same day, and will happen on 3 to be confirmed dates.

The concept of **Meet & Connect** is a perfect catalyst for peer-learning and cross-over stimulation. The organization costs are low and the concept is perfectly modulatable and adaptable according to the means and resources available, as well as to the thematic focuses. Hubs will be offered to implement one such activity at least 3 times a year (all hubs on the same day), but hubs with a large capacity may, of course, organize these events at a higher pace.

5. **Work package 5** : Organization of EU Network of Creative hubs Conferences in Brussels

Both partners of the consortium are actively involved in Brussels and have firm connections and partnerships with press agencies, local institutions and cultural organisations. They are accustomed to organizing relevant and diverse events involving a large variety of participants. SMart manages the 5000 m² creative hub "LaVallée", located in the heart of Brussels. It is the perfect location to organize the launching and final conference.

5.1 CONFERENCE FOR THE LAUNCHING OF THE EU NETWORK OF CREATIVE HUBS

General - The launching conference will be a 3 day event, organized in June 2016. The first two days of the event will be restricted to the members of the network, while the last day will be open for the general public.

The content - The first two days of the launching event are meant to bring together network members. During these two days, the needs of creative hubs and coworking spaces will be discussed (as these have been surveyed during *work package 1*), not only in panels and roundtable discussions, but also during presentations and interventions of related partners such as Ouishare, Scintillo and Copass. In addition, we'll provide a guided visit throughout the building of LaVallée, including its artists' ateliers. The main objectives of the launching event are :

- To create a community of hub managers ;
- To present the objectives and the main tools of the network ;
- To define and specify the activities and encounters that will be held during the course of the project ;
- To survey and discuss the needs of creative hubs and coworking spaces ;
- To carry out specific workshops (organised by Ouishare or Scintillo);
- To present the academic team, in the form of lectures.

The third day of the conference will be open for the public. A press conference will be organised, in order to present the project. Key persons from the specialized cultural press and from the project partners' broad network will be invited as well as key actors from cultural and creative institutions and organizations. The day will end with a festive networking event.

The target group - Creative hubs' and coworking spaces' management, stakeholders from the creative and cultural sectors, academics, press and larger interested public.

The location - LaVallée is situated in the heart of Brussels, and encompasses 5000m² of space for a very broad diversity of cultural events and activities. Furthemore, LaVallée also has a 1000m² exposition area and hosts daily more than 70 creative entrepreneurs
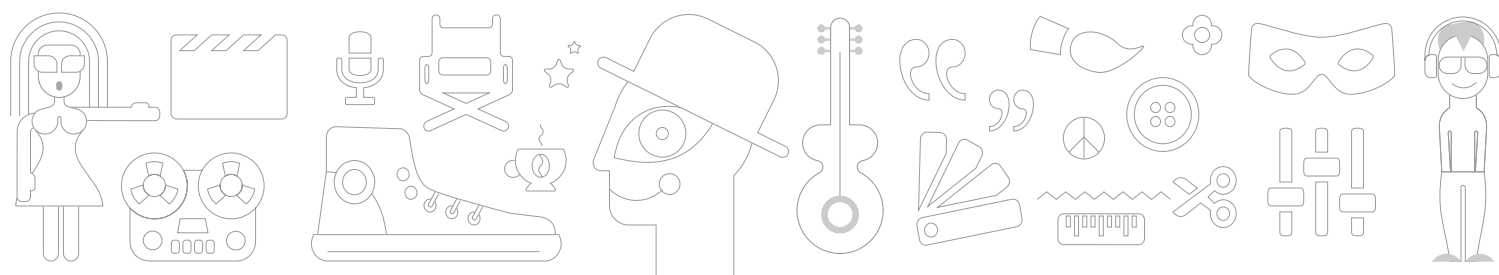
Communication - The conference will be filmed and registered visually by a Brussels based film company, if possible users of LaVallée. The film will be disseminated through the network's social media pages and website. Furthermore, press coverage of the event as well as appropriate innovative communication channels will be provided, such as radio interviews streamed live from the event, interviews published in the specialised, cultural press and an interactive Twitter-wall.

Logistic and organizational details - In order to realize a smooth and well organized 3-day event, we will provide the following details:

- Every speaker and hub manager will be assigned to a reference person (who is part of the coordinating team) to facilitate his/her contact and whereabouts at the event.

- If necessary, the coordinating team will be able to provide translators for the presentations and roundtable discussions. The specific needs concerning translations will be assessed when the team has a clearer vision on the final composition of speakers and visitors.

- LaVallée has 140 parking spots at its disposition. Using nearby public transportation will be promoted.

- A call for proposals for organising an exhibition/performance/animation during or after the conference will be launched amongst LaVallée's residents.

5.2 THE FINAL CONFERENCE

General - The final conference will be organised in September 2017.

The content - Whereas the launching conference will be a momentum of exchange, discussion and internal connection, the final conference will be the moment when the effective results of the EU network will be presented, and where the prospects towards the 5 following years will be analysed. The main objectives of the launching event are:

- To present the obtained results throughout the past 2 years of EU-level collaboration of coworking spaces and creative hubs;

- To present the final research report on the network, as well as the network's policy recommendations;

- To organise roundtable discussions hosted by experienced hub managers, aiming at interaction with hub users and cultural and creative professionals;

- To organise 'a fair', in parallel with the roundtable discussions, where every participating coworking space and creative hub has its own stand. We'll have a total of about 50 stands. Also non-participating (in relation to the network) Belgian/Brussels hubs will be invited to host a spot in the fair;

- To end the event with artistic performances and festivities, open for the public.

The target group - The main target group of this event are the creative hubs and coworking spaces users and residents, managers, as well as other stakeholders from the creative and cultural industries.

The location - LaVallée (Brussels, Belgium)

6. Work package 6 : Report on EU creative hubs and coworking spaces

The report on EU creative hubs and coworking spaces will be carried out by SMart's research and development cell. Since 2007, SMart develops sectoral and thematic studies, both quantitatively and qualitatively, on a broad range of subjects that are always of interest for the cultural and creative sectors. Full-time researchers work together on a day-to-day basis, in an ever dynamic and critical way.

SMart's international development department has built experience in international cultural research, in lobbying and in providing policy recommendations, specifically on subjects relating to the international mobility of cultural and creative professionals.

Smart's researchers will thus be mobilized to realize the final report on EU creative hubs and coworking spaces.

Content - In addition to the specific content of the report that is described in the official call for proposals (i.e. a general presentation of the network / lessons learnt concerning creative hubs and their needs, concerning different innovative schemes, concerning innovative business models / conclusions, executive summary and recommendations to the European Commission), we will also provide :

- **Conclusions from internal researches**. The project partners' internal research could benefit from the data provided by the network. The other way round, the network can also benefit from the consortium's internal research, such as SMart's studies on post-fordist labor and the manual *The Coworking Handbook* (by Ramon Suarez). Data from these works will also be integrated in the final report.

- **Specific passages, written by the academic team**. To give just a few examples of relevant subjects : an analysis of the economical, social and cultural context of the network, an impact analysis of coworking spaces and creative hubs on their urban surroundings, expert interviews, etc.

Dissemination - The research results and the final report will be disseminated via the following channels :

- **On the project partners' websites.**

- Via **news articles** that will be disseminated in the specialised press.

- Research results and policy recommendations will also be synthesized in folders, that will be disseminated during coworking events on the national and European level, such as the Coworking Week belgium.
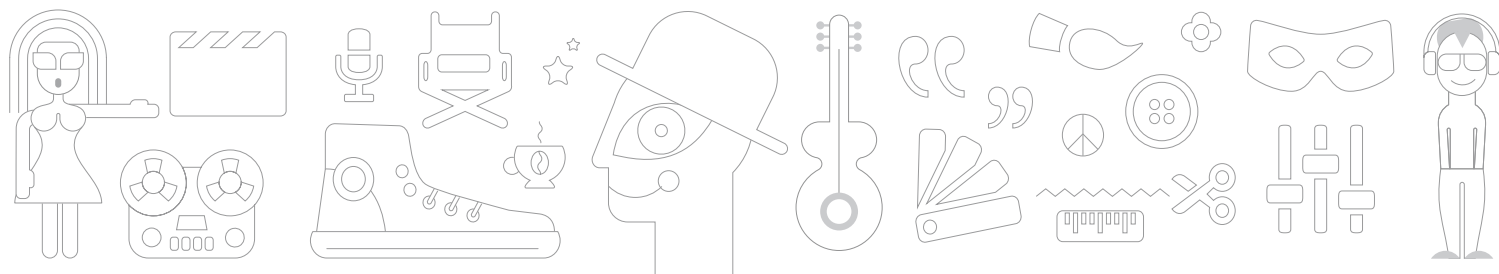
7. Work package 7 : Management and Coordination

SMart will ensure the overall coordination of the proposed project and management of financial resources allocated to it. This includes the monitoring and supervision of the implementation of the project's action plan, and making sure that the defined outputs and targets are met on time. Furthermore, SMart will be in charge of producing the Interim Operational Report as well as the Final Implementation Report.

Betacowork Coworking will be in charge of coordinating, monitoring and supervision the work of the regional coordinators, that will lead to the development of the regional coordination and contact points, the organisational core of the network. It will support the coordination of the intermediary regional coordination meeting as well as of the regional coordinators meetings and ensure the production of reports on these.

III EXPECTED RESULTS

The expected results of the development of the work packages during the project and after its completion are :

- ❯ A strong EU-wide creative hubs' and coworking spaces' community allowing for a cross-fertilization across sectors and borders as well as the creation of new contacts, networking and cooperation opportunities for hub managers, users and the creative sector in general ;

- ❯ The development and acquisition of knowledge and capacity building tools that enhance the management of creative hubs and coworking spaces available through the network's online platforms ;

- ❯ A network based on transnational and trans sectoral cooperation, innovation and sustainability ;

- ❯ The of new international markets and international employment and collaboration opportunities for artists, cultural and creative professionals.

LaVallée
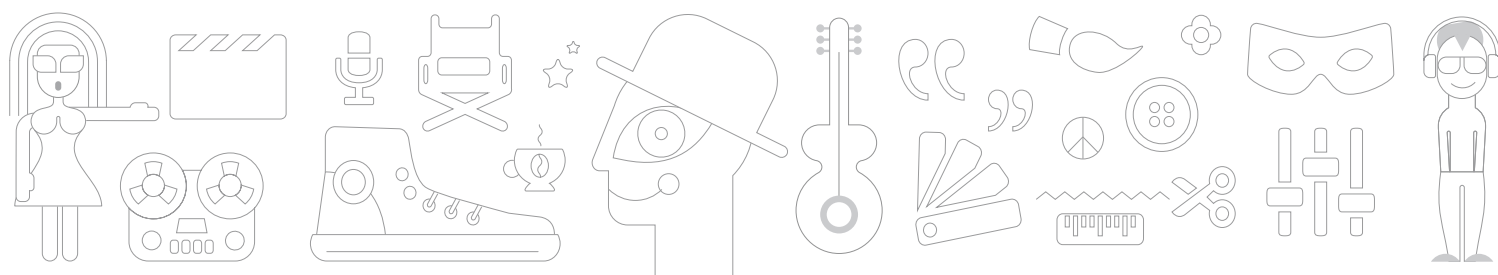
IV COMMUNICATION AND SUSTAINABILITY OF THE NETWORK

1. Contact with other networks

Aware of the already large variety of existing networks we will contact and mobilise them to get involved in our network. Several of the existing networks are already partners with whom we exchange knowledge, services and logistics on a regular basis and some of them have already committed themselves to participate to the network (e.g.: Copass, Scintillo, Ouishare).

2. The network's communication tool

The EU network of coworking spaces and creative hubs will be supported by the following communication tools:

- **Mailings**: invitations, information and updates concerning the regional pools and the thematic workshops will be send within a regular thematic newsletter to all the participants of the project, .. Participants will have the opportunity to enroll for activities, encounters and workshops via an Eventbrite application.

- Presentation of the project on the **network's portal**, its **social networks, on the partners' websites and through their networks**. Every event, workshop and thematic encounter in the course of the project will be closely monitored on the social media channels, but also on the social media channels of the network itself. A specific hashtag on twitter is a useful tool to increase the online visibility of the project. Also during the launching event and the final conference, a Twitter wall (in combination with a specific hashtag) will be put in place.

3. Sustainability of the network

In order to sustain and keep the project up to date for a subsequent period of at least 5 years, we will involve the regional reference persons in an active reflexion on the business model of the network. Furthermore, we plan to implement the following on- and offline actions, as to sustain the network for a period of 5 years:

- **Online**

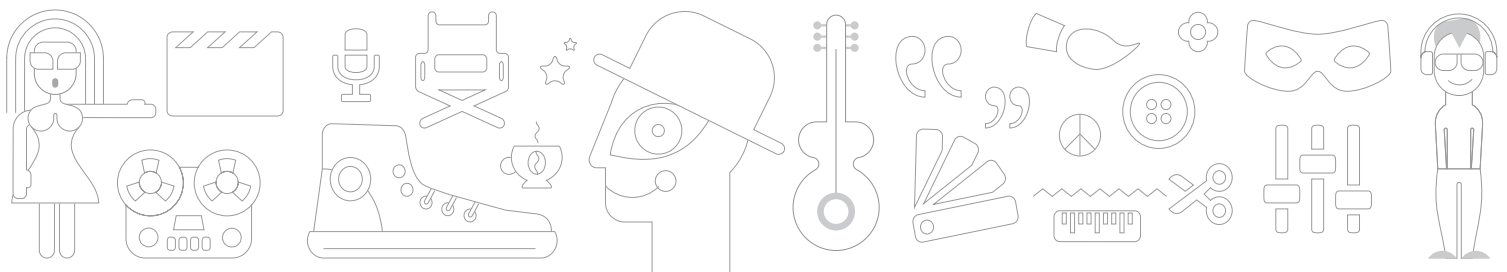 - The information resulting from the regional and thematic encounters throughout the project will be transcribed in practical **fact sheets** and will be available on the network's portal, In the final stage of the project, the portal will thus contain information on 1. the hubs themselves 2. their social media pages and 3. practical information for those active in coworking and the cultural and creative industries. Both partners of the consortium will further adapt their own websites and social media pages, adding links to the (public) website to gain maximal online attention for the EU network.
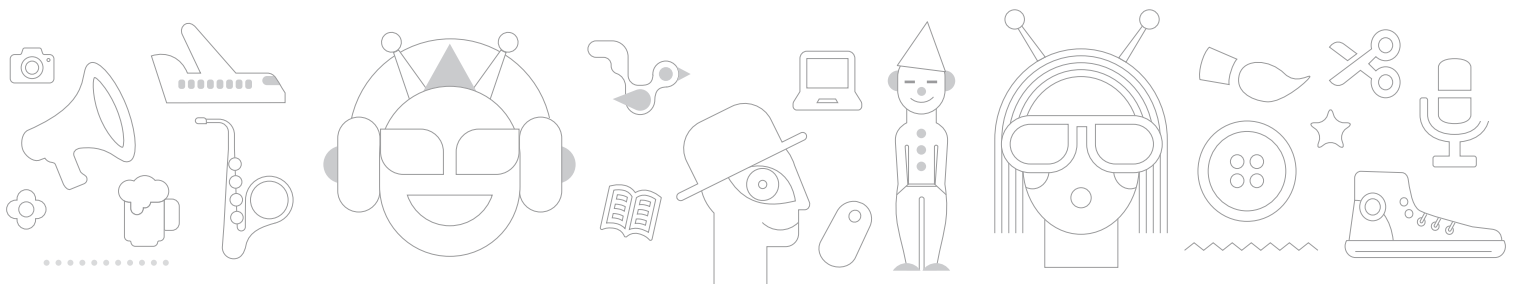
> Furthermore, as has been shown above, participating hub managers will provide specific hub ID's, concerning the financial characteristics of their hubs, as a source of useful information on the digital domain. As the mutualization of knowledge and know-how is central in the envisaged EU network, hub managers will be asked to **update this information regularly**.

> During the 2 year project partners will have to create the habit of connecting with one another on a regular basis. Regular meetings will be organised.

◉ Offline

> The people to people network will, in a first phase, be *regionally designed*. **Regional reference persons** will initially be appointed, not only to plan and coordinate the regional and thematic encounters during the project (Cf. supra), but also to facilitate an enduring contact among hub users and managers after the official 2-year period of the network.

> On the long run, we aim to establish an **enduring international mobility**, within an affordable perimeter, once the program has been finished. Not only do we set the goal of regular encounters among the regional reference persons, but we will also *mobilize* the users of the participating hubs. Of course, also hub managers will be mobilized after the 2-year project, in order to sustain the already ongoing process of exchanging management and business models, best practices and peer-learning. An innovative scheme such as the coworking visa is an example in this context.

> The sustainability of this network will be a central topic of the worksessions with the regional referents. Both SMart and the European Coworking Assembly have networks generating incomes in different ways. Members of the European Coworking Assembly are paying a yearly membership fee. Smart on the other hand invoices a variety of tools and services to their members. The earnings generated are mutualized to develop a whole range of services that wouldn't be, on themselves, sustainable. Their expertise will be completed by the experience of other networks (such as Copass and Scintillo) to result in an adequate sustainable business plan for the network.

V THE CONSORTIUM

1. European Coworking Assembly

The planned EU network of coworking spaces and creative hubs is a joint project of the **European Coworking Assembly** and **SMart**. In this section we will provide a presentation of both partners of the consortium. (Cf. Annex *Sociogram* for a detailed overview of all project partners).

The European Coworking Assembly is an association of coworking entrepreneurs and professionals who want to improve Europe's economy and society via coworking, and help and promote coworking to reach its full potential. The European Coworking Assembly works with coworking spaces and policy makers to promote coworking businesses, activities and interests in the European Union. Its goals are to:

- Promote coworking spaces via demand, not offer

- Facilitate access to finance and guarantees

- Open up unused spaces to be used by local coworking businesses

- Update laws and regulations to include coworking as a recognized business

- Simplify VAT taxation for intra-Community transactions

- Limit taxation on early stage spaces so that they can focus on growth and long term sustainability

- Promote coworking spaces as a necessary lever for innovation

- Encourage the support of coworkers, increase their numbers and promote their lifestyle

2. Betacowork

Betacowork is the oldest coworking space in Brussels and the largest in Belgium with over 200 coworking members and almost 2400 professionals in our extended community. It has a dynamic community of professionals that work, collaborate, pay it forward and participate in its events. The key to Betacowork's success is its community of members and the facilitation of contacts and opportunities by the team that host them.
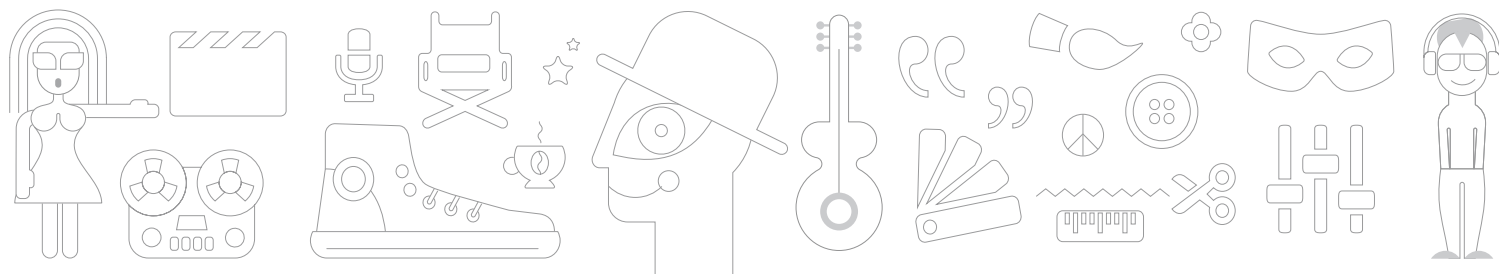
Some of the companies and people that have benefited of Betacowork and power it are:

- Davy Kestens and his company Sparkcentral, who we helped raise US$1.2 million through one of our members in the USA: Sebastien de Halleux. Davy is one of the entrepreneurs that offers free office hours to help other entrepreneurs at Betacowork.

- Edebex was created at Betacowork and Xavier Corman raised its first million while at our coworking space.

- Data.be has been created and developed at Betacowork by Toon Vanagt and Eric Rodriguez.

- The Frontback App development team and cofounder were at Betacowork before moving to the USA. Frederic della Faille has also met entrepreneurs at Betacowork.

- Xavier Damman, founder of Storify, regularly hosts office hours for entrepreneurs at Betacowork.

- Jean Derely grew Woorank at Betacowork before moving to an office in the same building.

- The ride sharing app Djump was also launched at our premises.

- Some of the key organizers of startup and tech events in Belgium are part of Betacowork, like Karen Boers and the startups.be team, Robin Wauters (tech.eu) Leo Exter (westartup.eu), Michel Duchateau (Brussels Startup Digest & Weekend), Marie Laenen (Startup Weekend Brussels), Julie Foulon (Betagroup), etc.

- Mozilla, WikiMedia, LibreOffice and GNOME

- And also Facebook, Ikea, World Bank, and a long and interesting etc. of people and companies have been or are working at Betacowork (public list of members here).

We organize and host many events and courses to help and support freelancers, entrepreneurs and startups.

Betacowork is the creator of Coworking Belgium, a network of coworking spaces in Belgium, and with it has organized the first Coworking Unconference in the country.

Betacowork is part of the Coworking Visa network, that offers coworking exchange opportunities with more than 400 spaces around the world.

3. SMart

Since 1999 SMart's main mission is to improve the working conditions of artists and cultural and creative professionals. By actively interpreting the real needs of cultural and creative professionals, SMart engages in generating solidarity and collaboration among the cultural and creative sectors. SMart provides the following services (specific information on these services is provided in the annex 'Detailed technical equipment'):

- Administrative services

- Financial services

- Legal services

- Information and advice

- Research

- Events

- Workspaces

Today, the SMart network stretches throughout 9 European countries, being: Belgium, the Netherlands, France, Spain, Italy, Sweden, Hungary, Germany and Austria.

We end this presentation with the **common values** of both the European Coworking Assembly and SMart. The consortium thus strives for:

- Greater visibility, knowledge and utilization

- A greater collaboration for transnational activities

- An increased interaction among owners and operators

- The sharing of know-how and experience
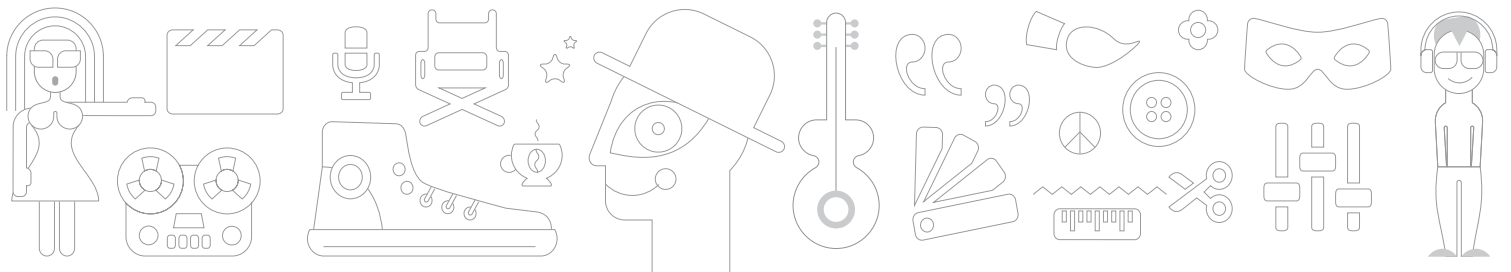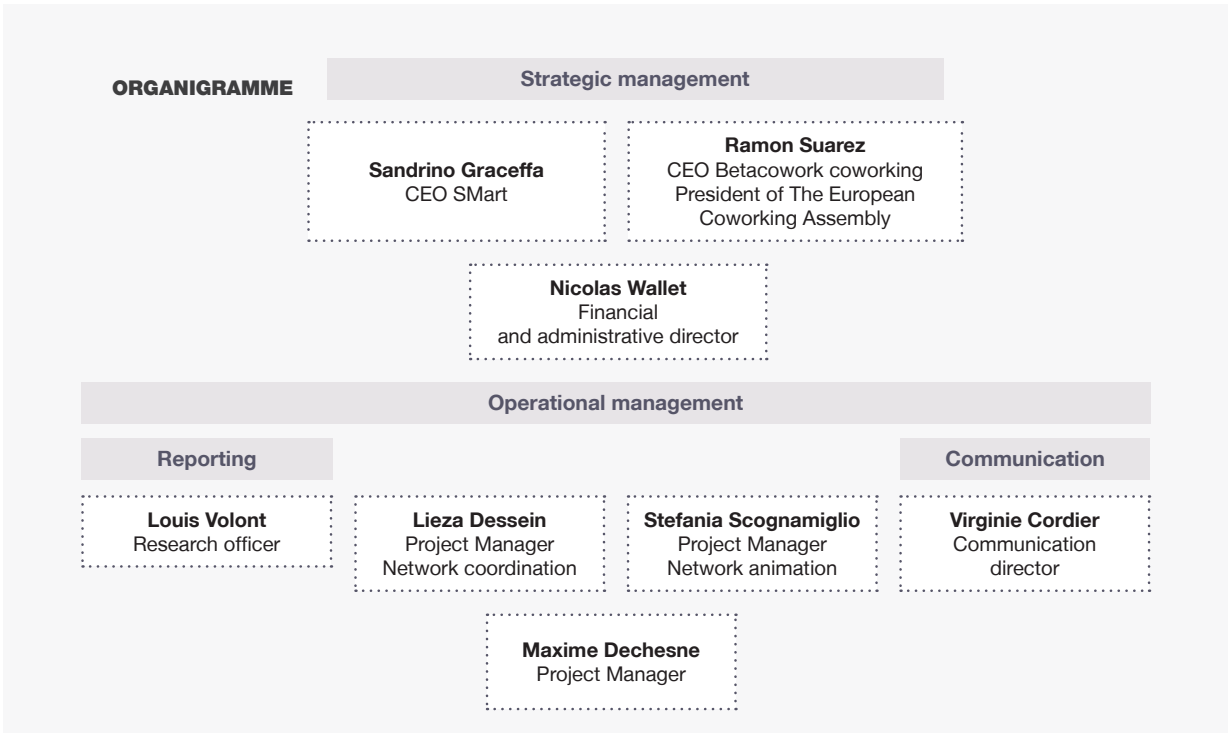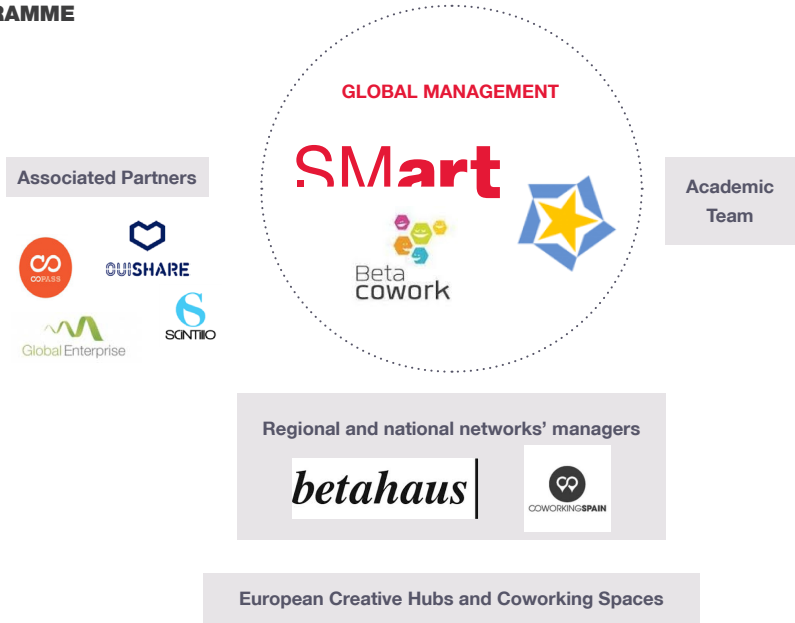
- The mutualisation of services and logistics

SMART WORK 2016 - 2018

23

Project Description

4. Common values

OPENNESS

COMMUNITY

ACCESSIBILITY

SUSTAINABILITY

5. Sociogramme and organigramme

SOCIOGRAMME

GLOBAL MANAGEMENT

SMart

Beta cowork

Associated Partners

COPASS

OUISHARE

Global Enterprise

SCINTIIO

Academic Team

Regional and national networks' managers

betahaus

COWORKINGSPAIN

European Creative Hubs and Coworking Spaces

ORGANIGRAMME

Strategic management

Sandrino Graceffa
CEO SMart

Ramon Suarez
CEO Betacowork coworking
President of The European
Coworking Assembly

Nicolas Wallet
Financial
and administrative director

Operational management

Reporting

Communication

Louis Volont
Research officer

Lieza Dessein
Project Manager
Network coordination

Stefania Scognamiglio
Project Manager
Network animation

Virginie Cordier
Communication
director

Maxime Dechesne
Project Manager

VI ANNEXES

letter of intent 1

OUISHARE

Objet : Soutien à la constitution d'un réseau de hubs créatifs en Europe

Monsieur Graceffa,

Vous avez sollicité une manifestation de soutien à votre projet de constitution d'un réseau de hubs créatifs européen que vous souhaitez développer en consortium avec The European Co-Working Assembly dans le cadre d'un appel à projets européen.

Depuis 16 ans SMart accompagne les entrepreneurs créatifs dans leur parcours professionnel. La présence de SMart dans 9 pays européens lui permet de couvrir un large réseau de personnes et logistique.

En tant que président co fondateur de OuiShare, communauté qui vise à construire une société basée sur le partage, la collaboration et la contribution, je tiens à vous signifier mon vif intérêt pour ce projet. Nous pourrons mettre à profit notre expertise en terme d'animation de groupes de réflexion et effectuer la mise en relation avec des chercheurs, entreprises et citoyens compétents dans la réalisation du réseau.

Je vous prie de bien vouloir accepter mes sincères salutations.

Edwin Mootoosamy
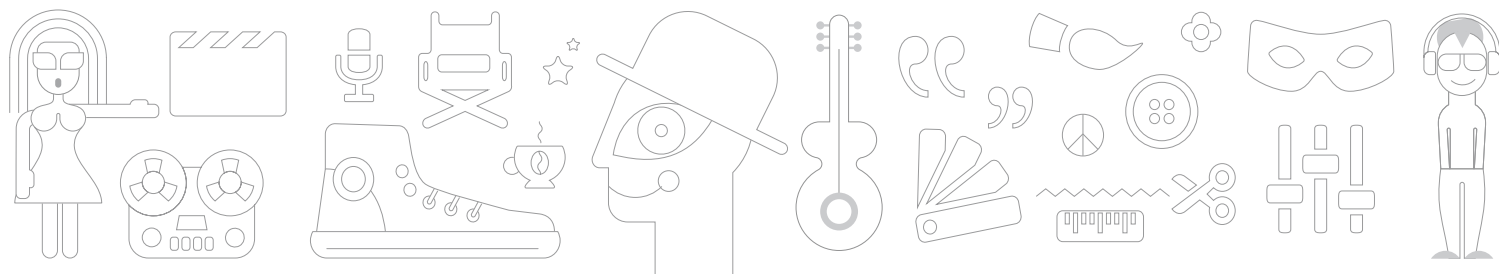
letter of intent 2

To
Smartbe
Consortium Coordinator
Call for proposal **EAC/S08/2015 - EU Network of Creative Hubs and Coworking Spaces Consortium**

Letter of intent from Coworking Spain to the Consortium coordinated by Smartbe

This letter is to confirm the support of Coworking Spain to the proposal submitted by Smartbe in the framework of the call for proposal EAC/S08/2015 - EU Network of Creative Hubs and Coworking Spaces.

We, the undersigned, hereby accept that the consortium will consider Coworking Spain as a privileged supporting organisation.
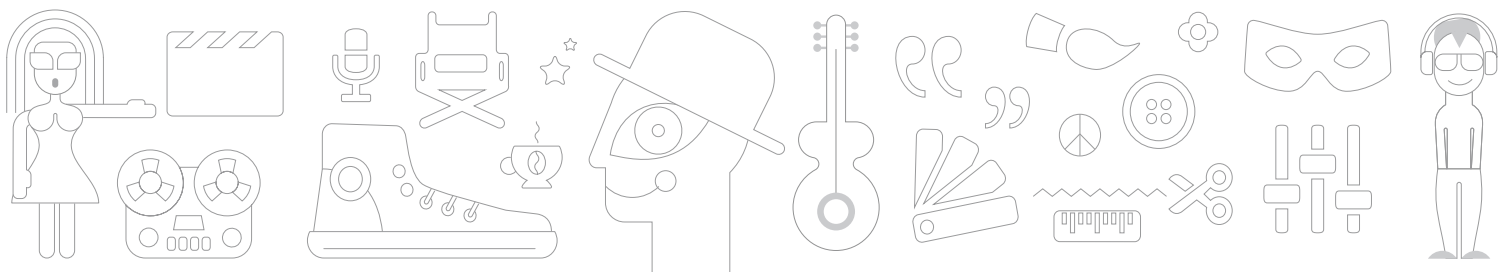
The proposal aims to set up and support an EU Network of Creative Hubs and co-working spaces for cultural and creative professionals and entrepreneurs.

Yours sincerely,

Manuel Zea Barral
Founder-CoworkingSpain.es

Madrid 7, September 2015

letter of intent 3

Global Enterprise

From
COWORKING EUROPE (produced by Global Enterprise)
rue chant d'oiseaux 4/3bc
B 5300 Landen — Belgium

To:

Smartbe
Consortium Coordinator
Call for proposal: **EAC/S08/2015 - EU Network of Creative Hubs and Coworking Spaces Consortium**

Letter of intent from Coworking Europe **to the Consortium coordinated by Smartbe**
(produced by Global Enterprise)

This letter is to confirm the support of Coworking Europe to the proposal submitted by Smartbe in the framework of the call for proposal EAC/S08/2015 - EU Network of Creative Hubs and Coworking Spaces.

The proposal aims to set up and support an EU Network of Creative Hubs and co-working spaces for cultural and creative professionals and entrepreneurs.

We, the undersigned, hereby accept that the consortium will consider Coworking Europe as a privileged supporting organization.

Yours sincerely,

Date and signature of the representative

5/5/2015   Jean-Yves HUWART
                COWORKING EUROPE

letter of intent 4

SCiNTiIIO
67, rue de la Roquette – 75011 Paris
SAS au capital de 100 000 euros
RCS 522 661 289 Paris

Paris, le 4 septembre 2015

A l'attention de M. Sandrino Graceffa / SMart

Objet : **Soutien à la constitution d'un réseau de hubs créatifs en Europe**

Monsieur Graceffa, cher Sandrino,

Par la présente, le groupe Scintillo confirme son soutien au projet de constitution d'un réseau de hubs créatifs européen que souhaite développer SMart en consortium avec The European Co-Working Assembly dans le cadre d'un appel à projets européen.

Scintillo mutualise moyens, talents et réflexion autour de la création culturelle par la prise de participation dans des entreprises et des équipements.

Les valeurs communes que nous partageons avec SMart et notre engagement commun dans les secteurs culturels et créatifs renforcent notre intérêt à s'investir auprès de SMart dans ce projet.

Nous pourrons mettre à disposition notre savoir-faire spécifique pour les projets culturels à caractère innovant tant dans le domaine économique que dans celui des usages et de la gestion.

Je vous prie d'agréer, Monsieur, l'expression de mes salutations distinguées.

Steven Hearn, président
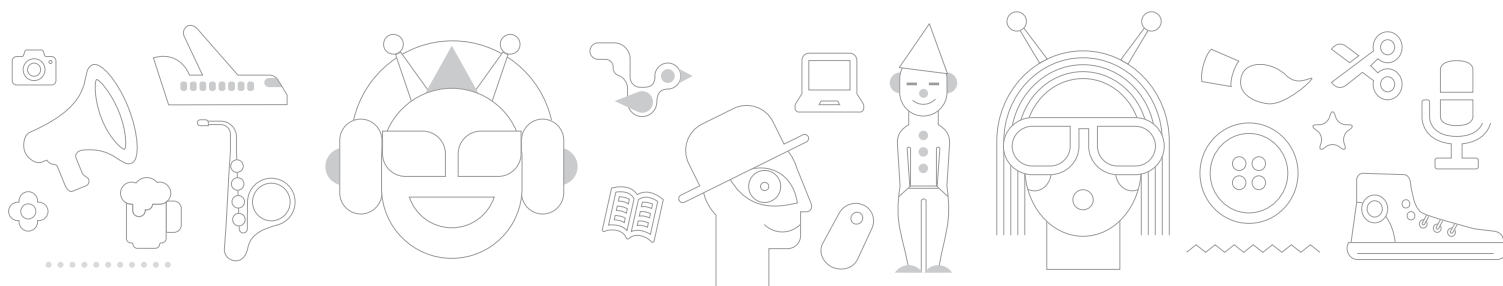
letter of intent 5

Stéphanie TOUSSAINT
PhD Candidate
Louvain School of Management & Lille 2
Chaussée de Binche 151 (UCL)
7000 Mons
stephanie.toussaint@uclouvain.be

September 9, 2015

CALL FOR PROPOSALS EAC/S08/2015

Candidate : European Coworking Assembly / SMart / Betacowork (the three of them being named *Consortium* hereafter)

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing this letter in support of the *Consortium*, who is applying for the 'EAC/S08/2015 proposal - EU Network of Creative Hubs and co-working spaces'.

In my capacity as a scientific researcher, I have known and worked with the Betacowork for the past 3 years. At the time of my data collection (2012-2013), the Betacowork was chosen for its academic relevance: pioneer in its domain, internationally driven, as well as very proactive and recognized beyond Belgian borders. During my experiences with Ramon Suarez (European Coworking Assembly, Betacowork) and Stefania Scognamiglio (Betacowork, European Coworking Assembly), I have found them to be dynamic and motivated to export coworking at the European level, with concrete results.

In the time since I started to collaborate with the Betacowork, I took part to conferences as well as to various activities they were organizing regularly. According to me, they have shown a real ability to develop an original business model and to spread its innovative aspects among their followers. My experience at the Betacowork with creative professionals and entrepreneurs has been very productive: I have benefited from their support in my research as well as from a rich professional network.

In particular, the Betacowork has the ability to drive and share projects on various domains and scales. Publications such as the Coworking Handbook (by Ramon Suarez) is a good example of a critical review about setting up a coworking space and managing its community, whereas on a daily basis, weekly routines at the Betacowork really encourage serendipity and peer-exchanges.

I have no doubt that the input of the *Consortium* in this project would be both rich and productive and I encourage them towards the ultimate dissemination and publication of their work. If you require any additional information, please contact me at: stephanie.toussaint@uclouvain.be.

Yours faithfully,
Stéphanie TOUSSAINT
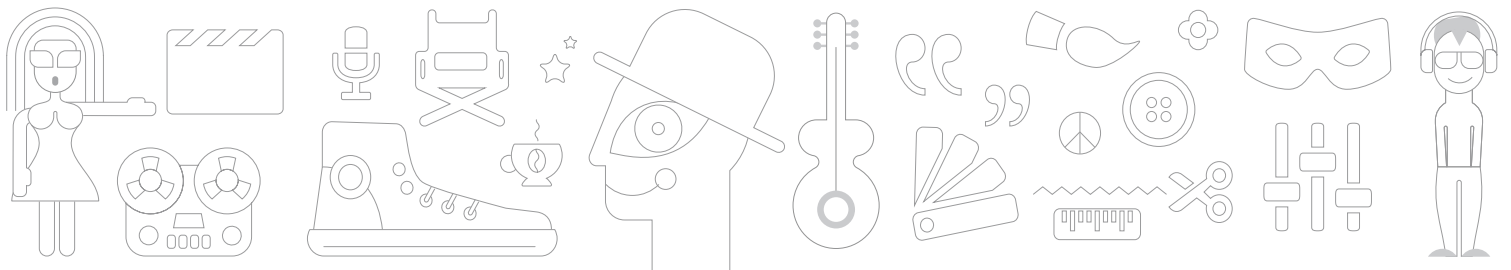
letter of intent 6

To:

Smartbe
Consortium Coordinator
Call for proposal: **EAC/S08/2015 - EU Network of Creative Hubs and Coworking Spaces Consortium**

Letter of intent from _copass_ **to the Consortium coordinated by Smartbe**

This letter is to confirm the support of Copass to the proposal submitted by Smartbe in the framework of the call for proposal EAC/S08/2015 - EU Network of Creative Hubs and Coworking Spaces.

The proposal aims to set up and support an EU Network of Creative Hubs and co-working spaces for cultural and creative professionals and entrepreneurs.

We, the undersigned, hereby accept that the consortium will consider **Copass as a** privileged supporting organisation.

Yours sincerely,

Date and signature of the representative

the 09/09/2015

Èric van dem Broch
CEO of copass
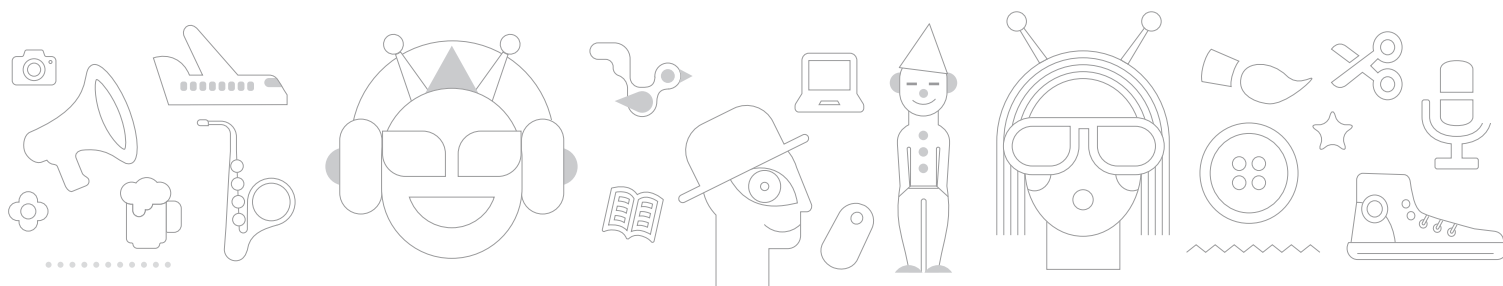
letter of intent 7

To:

Smartbe
Consortium Coordinator
Call for proposal: **EAC/S08/2015 - EU Network of Creative Hubs and Coworking Spaces Consortium**

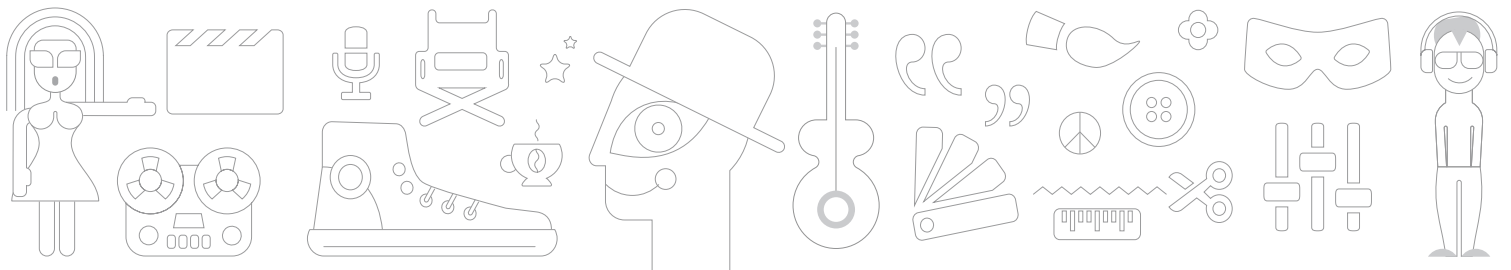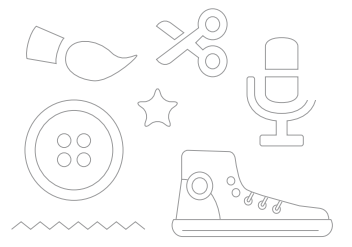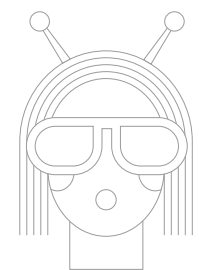**Letter of intent from Mattia Sullini to the Consortium coordinated by Smartbe**

This letter is to confirm the support of Comboproject to the proposal submitted by Smartbe in the framework of the call for proposal EAC/S08/2015 - EU Network of Creative Hubs and Coworking Spaces.
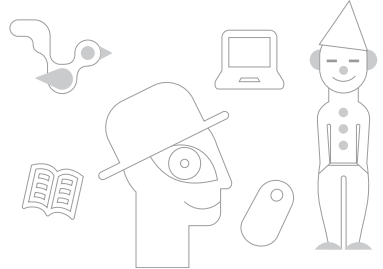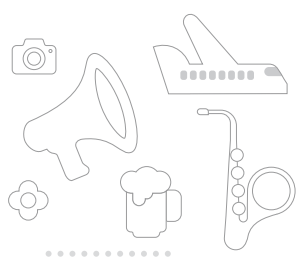
The proposal aims to set up and support an EU Network of Creative Hubs and co-working spaces for cultural and creative professionals and entrepreneurs.

We, the undersigned, hereby accept that the consortium will consider Combproject as a privileged supporting organization.

Yours sincerely, Mattia Sullini

09/09/2015

Project Description
SMART WORK
Building a EU Network of Creative Hubs and Coworking Spaces
2016 - 2018

SMart