

Best Practice

27ème région

Contact: Stéphane Vincent, co-founder and director general of the « 27e Région » think-and-do-tank

A summary of your support

We see social innovation as part of the new culture that needs to grow within public authorities and local governments. All our innovation programmes are designed to develop this vision – from webinars or collaborative surveys (Sonar, Enacting the commons, etc.) to multiannual research-action programmes (« Territoires en Résidences », « La Transfo », « Lieux Communs », etc.).

Need for support

Recent years have shown that the role of robust public services is central in our current and future ecological and social contract -but their culture historically based on “new public management” is no more adapted to tackle systemic challenges such as climate change or social justice. That’s why there is a need for a new way to design and build public policies and public institutions, much more open and cooperative, more connected to citizen’s reality, and more experimental.

Who receives your support?

Our activities are non-commercial and primarily dedicated to our 100 members. Half of them are local authorities (cities, metropolitan area, counties, regional government), public institutions (ministries, public bodies), including civil servants, elected officials. Our other members are individuals, individual practitioners, and citizens.

Describe a concrete example of the support you provide

LA TRANSFO is an action research-program developed from 2011 to 2020, with the goal of exploring how to create social innovation capacities and social innovation laboratories within 14 local governments (including Paris, Strasbourg, Dunkerque, Occitanie region, etc).

The support provided

- Knowledge and development of skills in social innovation
- Methods and tools for promoting social innovation
- Linking up social innovators, public authorities and “traditional” private enterprises
- Advisory services for social innovators
- Methods and support for upscaling social innovations
- Methods and support for assessing social impact
- Assistance with or information on financing

What do you see as the most innovative aspects of your support initiatives?

Our main singularities: developing social innovation culture *within* public institutions (instead of *beside*), creating new capacities both *with* civil servants and citizens (instead of *for*), developing activities based on grounded experimentations.

Are your initiatives supported by local/ regional/national policies?

Originally, in 2008 la 27e Région has been created partly by a group of local authorities -mainly regional governments-, and a pluridisciplinary group of researchers, practitioners and professionals including politists, sociologists, urbanists and designers. Our current members include 9 regional councils, 13 county councils, 15 cities / metropolitan / urban communities, and some State services dedicated to the State’s modernization.

Are they supported by financing, research or other forms of support?

Our activities are supported by public funding and private partnerships such as with Bloomberg Philanthropy (US). Our annual budget is 1M€.

Outcomes of your actions

One of the most significant outcome is the creation of social innovation labs within 14 local authorities in the frame of the « La Transfo » program (cf. see best practices and main results here in English: [La Transfo • Source Code \(la27eregion.fr\)](#)).

Here are the main figures over 4 years of « La Transfo »:

- 1791 public servants mobilized in the program
- 32 new jobs created
- 8,5 M € of public and private investments
- Replication of the method in 40 projects
- 100% of the created labs have been sustained
- 35 social innovation projects have been developed by the labs (eg. how to prevent the tossing of cigarette butts on the pavement)
- 132 workshops
- 45 departements in local authorities have used the transferred methods
- 5 creations of labs inspired from the « La Transfo » programme at the international level (Chile, Serbia, Albania, Sweden, etc.)

Upscaling of your actions

Our actions are replicable in other countries and appear amongst the 10 most inspiring initiatives of public innovation in the world, according to Nesta (UK) and Bloomberg Philanthropies (US) report published in 2014 (<https://www.nesta.org.uk/report/i-teams-the-teams-and-funds-making-innovation-happen-in-governments-around-the-world/>)

What are the main success factors for your work?

- The level of engagement of public servants at early stage of the process
- The level of agency (capacity to invest in new solutions, to provide new resources)

- The authorization to work directly with citizens.
- The strong support of mayors and elected officials

What are the barriers? How could you provide better support for social innovation?

- Difficulty to build open governance in public authorities
- A need for more rigorous and explicit theory of transformation, risk of “innovation-washing”
- A need for more diversified funding and to build larger innovation ecosystems

Best Practice

Banque des Territoires

A summary of your support

The Banque des Territoires is a public investor that intervenes to finance projects led by the territories. Within its actions, the Banque des Territoires, with increasing intensity over the past two years, has been building support and investment solutions to support SSE companies at all stages of development from ideation to scale up.

It invests directly in structuring projects, which have a real and measured social, territorial and/or environmental impact in the territories. The extra-financial impact is an essential criterion, essential to the Banque des Territoires' intervention; it is as important as the financial profitability of the project.

For its direct investments, the Banque des Territoires has selected 5 priority sectors on which it focuses its intervention: local economic development, health and medico-social, education and training, digital inclusion and food transition.

Banque des Territoires also invests in national financial tools and impact funds (Alpha Diamant II, France Active Investissement, Alliance for Impact, 123 IM, Impact Senior, F2i, etc.) and regional (France Active association contribution funds, Pargest in PACA, etc.) which intervene in equity and quasi-equity in SSE companies and thus multiply their action.

In parallel with its direct or indirect investments, the Banque des Territoires supports support schemes that allow social innovation companies to emerge and develop: the Place de l'Emergence from France Active, the Local Support Schemes (DLA – Dispositif Local d'Accompagnement), the i fund for the upscaling, or more targeted mechanisms such as Vivalab created with the CNAV to support innovative projects with a strong social impact for the benefit of the elderly, etc.

To bring out social innovation projects on its themes of interest, the Banque des Territoires launches calls for expressions of interest such

as on food transition or digital inclusion: they select projects that they finance with grants for experimental phases or engineering.

Finally, the Banque des Territoires is a state operator for whom it carries mandates on digital inclusion, education, vocational training and the food transition in order to finance innovative projects.

Website: [Banque des Territoires](https://www.banquedes territoires.fr)

Need for support

The SSE sector is changing in a profound and rapid way: it is moving from a model historically based on subsidies towards the development of activity income which will make companies in the sector more autonomous and more sustainable, and it needs financial long-term support for this transition, this is the role the Banque des Territoires seeks to play, by also leveraging other investors. Thus the sector can develop its capacity for action by strengthening its equity and quasi-equity. It optimizes its business models towards the best standards of companies from the general economy and adopts indicators to value its beneficial extra-financial impacts.

For example, the Banque des Territoires has invested in the company Simplon, which trains job seekers in digital professions and has supported several thousand people since its creation.

Who benefits from the support?

The beneficiaries of the actions carried out by the Banque des Territoires are numerous, and include, among others: local authorities, social enterprises, or even key players in the ecosystem such as Avise or France Active.

Thus, Avise benefits from funding from the Banque des Territoires, enabling it to fulfill its mission of developing the SSE and social innovation in France: grant funding for its operation but also a loan which makes it

possible to cover its WCR needs induced by the ESF financing that it delivers as an Intermediate Body.

Describe a concrete example of the support you provide

The Banque des Territoires is a direct investor in social enterprises. Prior to its investment, the Banque des Territoires often supports its target companies in engineering, which allows to build a coherent business plan. The realization of the investment then allows the company to develop and carry out the targeted social actions. Throughout its investment, the Banque des Territoires remains active in the governance of the company in order to support its development by playing its role as an active investor. This can involve putting the company in contact with the Banque des Territoires' public and private partners.

The support provided

- Methods and tools for promoting social innovation
- Opportunities for cross-sectoral cooperation
- Linking up social innovators, public authorities and "traditional" private enterprises
- Advisory services for social innovators
- Methods and support for upscaling social innovations
- Financing
- Assistance with or information on financing

What do you see as the most innovative aspects of your support initiatives?

The Banque des Territoires' particularity is to be a long-term investor in the general interest. Its operations will therefore seek as much as possible to create the most sustainable business models possible, which combine a fair balance between economic profitability and social impact. It has therefore set up the i fund. This fund is intended to support social enterprises in their scale up phase. It works according to a repayable advance principle, which means that companies must repay the amount they have received if they achieve the objectives set at the start of the process. This "give back" mechanism ensures the sustainability of fund i, which was created

by several social investors. After an initial selection, a diagnosis of the companies is carried out and then support is put in place. Within the framework of the i fund, our objective is also to create a "community of coaches" which will allow a capitalization of experience guaranteeing optimization for the follow-up of companies. The most innovative aspects of the Banque des Territoires' actions are therefore based on the search for a business model and the establishment of relationships between investors, coaches and project leaders.

Are your initiatives supported by local/ regional/national policies?

The Banque des Territoires is a public institution that supports the actions of the State and local authorities: its social innovation actions are therefore designed to support public policies, in a logic of complementarity with them: it provides "investor" funding which public entities only rarely do, or it is an operator of State actions within the framework of the "Programme Investissement d'Avenir" or "Investissement dans les Compétences".

The last illustration is the Banque des Territoires' involvement at the request of the State in the "France relance" plan to support the economic, social and ecological recovery of the country in the face of the health crisis. For all of the Caisse des Dépôts' interventions, this represents a provisional contribution of €26 billion to this €100 billion recovery plan.

Are they supported by financing, research or other forms of support?

The financing mobilized by the Banque des Territoires for its actions for social innovation comes either from the Caisse des Dépôts' own funds, or from State financing when we intervene within the framework of a mandate. Finally, the Banque des Territoires supports social housing thanks to the savings of French people from the centralization of the Livret A and the Livret de Développement Durable. Since its creation, the Banque des Territoires has mobilized more than 58 billion euros for the development of territories, 80% of which for more inclusive territories (period 2018-2020).

Outcomes of your actions

The Banque des Territoires' practices for evaluating its actions are still under development. In terms of indicators of resources mobilized, they can identify the funding they provide and their financial leverage effect. In terms of impact measurement, one difficulty is the diversity of their actions, which makes a homogeneous analysis of the actions carried out complex.

Two examples, among many others, can be mentioned:

For the DLA, the Banque des Territoires mobilizes approximately €6M/year, 6,000 companies on average are supported each year, and almost all of them declare that this support has a beneficial effect on their structure at several levels: creation and consolidation of jobs (more than 810,000 jobs have been affected since the creation of the program in 2002), assistance in strengthening their strategic vision and their development and 59% of the structures supported have noted an improvement the economic and financial health of their structure (2019 figures).

In terms of financing the SSE, the Banque des Territoires has invested €24.5m (out of a fund total of €71.5m) in the NovESS fund, which has just completed its investment period. 48 companies have benefited from financing, enabling the consolidation of 7,717 jobs, and overall more than 282,000 beneficiaries of the various measures. (Third places, business services, medico-social and aging, etc.)

Upscaling of your actions

The Caisse des Dépôts group ensures an institutional presence in Europe and internationally, and promotes the long-term investor model. The Group develops partnerships with other Caisses de Dépôt, and supports countries wishing to acquire such tools. Finally, through its participation in the World Forum of Caisses de Dépôt (which brings together 13 worldwide), the Group contributes to the exchange of best practices among peers. Its actions can therefore and are transferred to other countries when these have such investors.

What are the main success factors for your work?

Any investment project is based on the construction of an affectio societatis between investors and an entrepreneur/project leader: it is therefore human factors that condition the success of the Banque des Territoires' projects. This is why it has always worked to enrich the relationships between the different players in social innovation: investors, coaches and entrepreneurs. The objective is that the quality of these relationships leads to, or allows, the construction of a common language, understood by all, which will allow the success of the projects.

What are the barriers? How could you provide better support for social innovation?

Some areas are still struggling to find an investor model, and public policies have been put in place for this; this is the case for digital inclusion, which for this reason is largely covered by the launch of large-scale programs by the State, the operational management of which has been entrusted to the Banque des Territoires.

The evolution of the business models of SSE organizations is not yet complete, and the Banque des Territoires will continue to support these structures by mobilizing around it (this is its role as a trusted third party, market structurer) its financial and human resources in order to co-construct market solutions and even tools with its private/public partners. The objective is to respond to the major challenges taken up by these projects led by companies, associations but also in partnership with foundations.

Best Practice

Cap Impact

A summary of your support

« Cap Impact » is a training program launched by Avisa in 2020 on the topic of social impact assessment dedicated to support organizations specialized in the sector of social and solidarity economy (SSE). This program offers a skill training based on the first steps of social impact assessment so that support actors can be able to offer such a support to social innovation projects on this topic (without replacing the job of consulting experts in that field of expertise).

Thanks to « Cap Impact » support actors can:

- Identify the need of a social impact assessment and qualify it
- Identify tools and methods adapted to the organization's context
- Broadcast existing good practices, methods and resources
- Redirect organizations towards dedicated experts (consultants, researchers, etc.)

Need for support

Social impact assessment is a rising issue in France at the moment which social innovation projects are aware of but whose implementation remains complex. Various tools and methods are being developed but there is a real need for support / mentoring in order to identify the ones which are adapted to one organization's context, issues and to facilitate their appropriation.

However, social impact assessment experts (consultants) are mainly concentrated in the big cities and their cost can be relatively high for social innovation projects which are 2 challenges for them. That's why, by reinforcing the skills and knowledge of support structures dedicated for the SSE in France, « Cap Impact » enables each social innovation project / SSE organization to benefit from an affordable first step support program.

Who benefits from the support?

Direct beneficiaries: the support actors dedicated to social innovation projects / SSE organizations (mainly SSE incubators, etc.). These actors support social innovation projects/ SSE organizations from their creation to their development and upscaling on various topics (business model, HR, legal issues, etc.)

Indirect beneficiaries: Social innovation projects / SSE organizations that are supported by the support organizations.

Describe an example of the support you provide in a concrete example

We organize a training program on the topic of social impact assessment which is adapted to the needs and constraints of support actors. We identify also how social impact assessment can be used, be integrated in their support practices (example: link between assessment and a social innovation organization's strategy, identification of the conditions for starting an assessment procedure, etc.) and what tools would be relevant.

The support provided

Methods and support for assessing social impact

- Various training tracks: training days (1 or 2) or a whole individual and collective training course over 9 months
- Provision of tools and resources to support organizations dedicated to social innovation and SSE
- Meeting arenas/spaces to share best practices on social impact assessment

What do you see as the most innovative aspects of your support initiatives?

The most innovative feature of our action is the profile of the beneficiaries of Cap Impact. We decided to target support organizations who can themselves train the social

innovation project owners and diffuse the message about social impact assessment which brings more impact to the program even though there are only a few trainees per year.

The second most innovative is that we try to integrate the social impact assessment support in their general training / mentoring program so that the training is the most effective and so that actors have everything in their hands to apply what they have learned.

Are your initiatives supported by local/ regional/national policies?

Secretary of State to SSR, Public Bank (Banque des Territoires), ESF

Are they supported by financing, research or other forms of support?

Financing yes, research no.

Outcomes of your actions

We sent a satisfaction survey to the participants who are mostly satisfied of the training which answers their needs.

We also ask the trainees a few months after the training if they have been able to practice their newly acquired skills in specific mentoring missions on that topic. Some of them did with a real enthusiasm.

Upscaling of your actions

Yes, possible to be replicated in other regions / countries conditionally upon the existence of a structured network of support organizations dedicated to social innovation projects (incubators, scale up support organizations, etc.).

What are the main success factors for your work?

- Understanding of the mentor / accompanier's job and design of a training content adapted to their scope of action
- Adaptation to their availability, priorities and constraints: 3 different formats > 1-day training, 2 days training, full training over 9 months.
- Capacity to enable access to a complex topic
- Following-up on the evolution of the trained accompaniers / mentors' competences on social impact assessment.

What are the barriers? How could you provide better support for social innovation?

- The rather scarce time that mentors can dedicate to such a training program
- The need for more tools to stimulate engagement on the topic: shared work space, Alumni community, shared resources, shared experiences (but those tools will be offered soon)
- The need to reinforce links between trained actors and other actors from the social impact assessment field in order to facilitate the next steps of their skills improvement path.

Best Practice

FAIR

Contact: Flore Latournerie, in charge of international projects at Fair

A summary of your support

FAIR was created in 2021 by merging Finansol and the Impact Invest Lab (iiLab), the incumbent stakeholder and innovation lab on impact. FAIR draws together stakeholders in social impact financing in France. It is also a French centre of expertise in this field on the international scene, gathering over 110 enterprises in the solidarity economy, banks, management companies, NGOs, elite schools and prominent supporters. FAIR manages the Finansol label, which distinguishes solidarity-driven savings products from other savings products in the eyes of the general public. There are currently over 170 Finansol-accredited products and enable the funding of social innovation projects, among other things.

Who receives your support?

FAIR's action meets the needs of three types of recipients:

- **Citizens**

Need: To be made aware that their savings have an impact and that they can choose the product in which they save.

- **Financial and banking establishments**

Need: To promote the good practices of solidarity finance and to communicate on Finansol-accredited products towards the general public.

- **SSE and social impact enterprises:**

Need: Obtain funding support through solidarity finance products or directly among the general public.

Describe a concrete example of the support you provide

- Business conventions: qualified meetings between investors and project owners
- Peer learning in working groups

Example 1: "Solidarity investment" Working Party: for one year, work with enterprises that

open up their capital to citizens.

On the programme: first-hand accounts by enterprises and specialists, production of deliverables: Primer on social and solidarity investment for use by social enterprises. https://www.finance-fair.org/_dwl/autres/fair_guide-actionnariat-solidaire.pdf

Example 2: "Europe" Working Party on advocacy for social and solidarity finance with financial establishments. The main project is to make universally accessible the use of 90/10 funds in Europe (i.e. 90% allocated to listed investments and 10% to unlisted projects in the social and solidarity economy).

The support provided

- **Knowledge and development of skills in social innovation**

Awareness raising and introduction to social finance for citizens and for social innovation projects.

FAIR is the competence centre for social impact contracts.

- **Methods and tools for promoting social innovation**

FAIR develops tools for promoting social finance (webinars, guides, etc.)

- Meeting spaces, networks

Fair leads an active community of more than 120 members that gathers for working groups, etc.

- **Linking up social innovators, public authorities and "traditional" private enterprises**

- Assistance with or information on financing

What do you see as the most innovative aspects of your support initiatives?

- Solidarity finance, as such, is specific to France. The aim is to leverage French people's savings to finance enterprises with a social and environmental impact.

Concrete example: the 90/10 fund (90% is invested on the stock exchange and 10% is allocated to unlisted projects in the social and solidarity economy).

- The diversity and multi-disciplinary nature of the network's membership: financial and banking establishments, enterprises in the solidarity economy.

Are your initiatives supported by local/regional/national policies?

Yes, on several scales: by the Agence française de développement (AFD) and the Directorate General of the Treasury at national level, but also the Brittany region, the Grenoble metropolitan area, Lyon's city office...

Are they supported by financing, research or other forms of support?

- Financial support from public policies or structural partners.
- Several links with research: Scientific board set up by Fair to produce academic studies on subjects related to solidarity finance. A PhD student writing a thesis on solidarity funders' impact practices, in the FAIR team

Outcomes of your actions

Some outcomes and key figures on solidarity finance to which Fair's action contributed:

- Steady increase in the total amount of solidarity savings collected during the year (2019: €15.6 billion in France / 2020: €20.3 billion in France)
- Increase in the financing carried out during the year (2019: €450 million of new financing for enterprises in the solidarity economy / 2020: €513 million of new financing for enterprises in the solidarity economy)
- FAIR's active advocacy has made it possible to improve the tax conditions for a saver who invests in the capital of a social enterprise (tax reduction from 18% to 25%, opening of the tax opening system to more shares of SSE...).
- Following participation in the "solidarity shareholding" working group, the Emmaüs real estate company opened its capital to citizens and obtained the Finansol label.

Can your support initiatives be replicated or transferred to other cities, local authorities, regions or countries?

Yes, it's possible. Fair moreover believes it is a topical challenge to create networks between organisations, facilities and financing at European and international levels, and duplicate French innovations or, in any case, foster the development of impact finance in other countries.

What are the main success factors for your work?

- Strength of the network's members, the active mobilisation of the stakeholders, and the participants' commitment.
- Quality of the data communicated on solidarity finance.
- Transparency, particularly in the sector of impact finance: one of the criteria for being awarded a Finansol label, which popularity grows every year.

What are the barriers? How could you provide better support for social innovation?

- Better popularization of social finance and mobilization of citizens on a subject deemed complex.

Best Practice

Godin Institute (Institut Godin)

A summary of your support

The Institut Jean-Baptiste Godin is a non-profit organisation founded in 2007 (under the French law of 1901) at the initiative of stakeholders in the former Picardy region. It is the leading centre for the **transfer of solidarity and social innovation practices** in France.

Its activities are structured around two main focus areas: **R&D (research and development) and the various forms of transfer.**

- **Basic research** (doctoral theses, articles, books, contributions, scientific conferences and seminars) => to produce research drawing on the work of the Institute's doctoral graduates and students
- **Applied research** (by theme, territorialised) => starting out from the questions posed by the stakeholders
- **Experimental development** (tools such as the sensors and markers of social innovation) => construct tools based on the applied research projects
- **Transfer** (conferences, debates, expert appraisals, transfers of tools) => to enable the stakeholders to onboard the tools and the research

Website: <https://institutgodin.com/>

Need for support

The Institut Godin's work essentially has two main focuses:

- **On one hand, the needs of the public authorities:** the need to clarify and delimit their public policies, which are built around major themes that are sometimes overly vague (e.g. "local economy"). The Institut Godin's work helps map out the boundaries of these concepts, which in turn enables a more effective allocation of public funding.
- **On the other hand, the needs of the economic stakeholders on the ground:** the need to demonstrate how their actions lie within the scope of public policies so that they can more easily secure public funding.

Who benefits from the support?

Project owners, local authorities, decision makers, the academic community, support structures, professional networks, financial institutions, among others.

Describe a concrete example of the support you provide

- **For the production of knowledge and research:** the book entitled "L'innovation sociale : Principes et fondements d'un concept", published in 2013 by L'Harmattan, which sets out to clarify the emergence of social innovation, the different approaches and its distinguishing features with a view to proposing a definition and a methodology for evaluating social innovation.
- **For the production and transfer of tools:** social innovation markers, a tool for analysing the factors that bring about social innovation and which can be used to conduct an objective evaluation of social innovation projects.

The support provided

- Knowledge and development of skills in social innovation

What do you see as the most innovative aspects of your support initiatives?

The Institut Godin's main distinguishing feature is the researcher-stakeholder relationship that is developed there. This relationship is often seen as a form of intermediation, such as the Science Shops: on one hand, an organisation collects the needs of stakeholders in the field and, on the other, tries to identify researchers, with a view to enabling them to work together.

The Institut Godin has taken a different approach, in that the researchers it hosts work directly with economic stakeholders. This means that, when a department approaches them about creating a public policy tool, it is the institute's teams who go

and ask the questions and try to understand the need, before setting to work. It is a dual task of research and discussion with various stakeholders in the field, both public and private. **Details of the Institut Godin's method can be found online [here](#).**

Are your initiatives supported by local/regional/national policies?

The Institut Godin receives financial support from various public stakeholders, including the economic department of the Hauts-de-France region, the General Secretariat for Regional Affairs (SGAR), the European Commission (through the European Regional Development Fund, ERDF).

These partnership agreements with Europe, the State and the Region represent roughly 80% of the Institute's economic model, while various services (provided to the Pas-de-Calais department, for example) account for the remaining 20%.

Outcomes of your actions

The Institut Godin's actions have not been formally evaluated.

Even though the utility of its actions has not always been apparent outside the institution, in particular during its early years, the Institut Godin was subsequently able to demonstrate and explain its usefulness through its production of methods, knowledge and transfers.

Upscaling of your actions

The transfer of expertise, tools and knowledge related to solidarity and social innovation practices are one of the two key focus areas of the institute's activities.

The team is also collaborating on an international level as part of various projects. [The Living Lab Markers](#), for example, are the product of collaboration with the international non-profit association Académie du Management and two Living Labs in the Walloon Region in Belgium: the WeLL (Wallonia e-health Living Lab) and the SGL (Smart Gastronomy Lab).

However, these collaborative initiatives are confined to the French-speaking world for the moment.

What are the main success factors for your work?

The role played by the association's president, Rachid Cherfaoui, for the past 15 years, through his ability to obtain the right information, to link up the local, regional, national and European scales, and to generally transmit his entrepreneurial, proactive mindset to the teams of a research institute.

What are the barriers? How could you provide better support for social innovation?

One of the factors inhibiting the Institut Godin's development is the fact that the proposed researcher-stakeholder relationship is a solution to a non-existent problem. The question is not raised, apart from a few rare calls for projects, because it is not seen as a problem to be solved or a motive for innovation. When it becomes a real cause for thought, we will see interesting prospects open up at the Institut Godin. In the mean time, a scientific interest group was set up in 2021, made up of research laboratories and stakeholders on the ground, to try to take collective action on the issue.

Moreover, failure to grasp the meaning of the institute's work is also an obstacle, as it has been for the past 15 years. Even the institute's financiers do not always understand it, even though the outputs are of good quality and appreciated by all.

Finally, the fact that the institute's output currently exists only in French may represent an obstacle to a wider circulation of its work.

Best Practice

I Fund (Fonds I)

Contact: Charline Martin-Ramelli, Project manager, Avise

A summary of your support

The I Fund is gathering different financing stakeholders based in France and offers projects with a strong social impact and wishing to scale-up a new form of support. The I Fund process starts with a complete diagnostic of the project designed to better define the needs of the project before scaling up. After that phase, the I Fund can offer the project a refundable advance to help the project finance the counselling and support necessary to unlock the scaling-up plan. The amounts and due dates for reimbursing this advance are jointly defined by the I Fund and the project, based on the achievement of the project deployment objectives.

Need for support

The I Fund enables projects with a strong social impact to remove the obstacles to their deployment by providing multi-stakeholder counselling and support.

Who receives your support?

The criteria are as follows:

- Organisations with a strong social utility and which must contend with numerous transformations. The aim is to achieve nationwide coverage in the medium to long term (in 5 to 10 years)
- All sectors/focus areas
- Any legal structure, if there is demonstrated social utility
- Organisation in existence for over three years
- Organisation with a minimum of €500,000 in annual operating income and/or five FTEs

For example: AGEVIE is an association that strives to enable the elderly to remain actively involved in society and to age with dignity; The Association française des aidants guides and supports carers; Solicycle is a work-integration project that runs bike-repair workshops for

members of the general public.

Describe a concrete example of the support you provide

The I Fund supports the association Les invités au Festin, which provides accommodation and support solutions for people with a mental illness in Besançon with the community psychiatry approach. Within this framework, the I Fund has enabled the association to receive support and guidance from a consulting firm, combined with strategic support from an expert in psychiatry to replicate the project in other regions.

The support provided

- Linking up social innovators, public authorities and "traditional" private enterprises

The I Fund is endeavouring to persuade consulting firms in the traditional economy to work for social innovation

- Methods and support for upscaling social innovations

Diagnostic and multi-stakeholder support and guidance

- Financing

Refundable advances (€40K on average, paid back after about 2-3 years)

What do you see as the most innovative aspects of your support initiatives?

The procedure provided by the I Fund, which includes:

- A diagnostic that helps specify the need for support;
- A tailored process that draws together different fields of expertise;
- A refundable advance, based on the achievement of the project's objectives.

The refundable advance is one of the most innovative features, since it enables the project to share the risk posed by the challenges of upscaling. The I Fund effectively advances the funds to the project, which uses them to obtain guidance and support for its upscaling strategy. The funds are reimbursed at a later stage, when the objectives set are achieved. This enables the supported projects to invest in their strategy at a pivotal point in their development.

Are your initiatives supported by local/regional/national policies?

No

Are they supported by financing, research or other forms of support?

The I Fund was set up by six founders who co-financed its actions:

- **Private stakeholders:** AG2R La Mondiale, Fondation Caritas France, Fondation Daniel et Nina Carasso, Le rameau
- **Public stakeholders:** Banque des territoires, French Ministry of National Education, Youth and Sport

Outcomes of your actions

The initiative is too recent as yet for the outcomes and effects of the action to be apparent.

Upscaling of your actions

The I Fund works on a nationwide scale in France, where it is already in the process of upscaling from 11 projects supported in 2021 to a projected 25 projects in 2022.

What are the main success factors for your work?

Multi-stakeholder cooperation in both the I Fund's organisation (founders and operators) and the support and guidance processes for the projects supported.

What are the barriers? How could you provide better support for social innovation?

One of the main barriers is educating stakeholders about the refundable advance, in a sector that usually receives subsidies.

Best Practice

Initiative Factory (Fabrique à Initiatives)

A summary of your support

The Initiative Factory is a social innovation scheme coordinated by Avise and supported by the organisations that guide business start-ups in 30 areas. Their task is to develop new economic activities that address the region's social and environmental stakes by linking up public and private stakeholders and citizens to construct suitable entrepreneurial responses that lie within the field of the social and solidarity economy (SSE). Through its tailored methodology and its expertise in regional management and economic modelling, the scheme identifies the needs and the seeds of ideas, generates productive partnerships and mobilises the engineering necessary to reach a solid project.

Website: <https://fabriqueainitiatives.org/>

Need for support

Where social innovation is concerned, the regional stakeholders identify numerous needs and services to be created. But, for want of a project owner that has the network, financing, skills, inclination and time available to hone and launch them, many projects are not carried through to fulfilment. The Fabrique à initiatives offsets this lack of engineering by temporarily taking charge of the construction of the project and by providing various types of expertise: needs analysis, benchmarking of solutions, coordination of a collaborative approach, economic and legal modelling, identification of a project owner, support for raising funds, etc. For example, the Fabrique à initiatives stepped in at the request of a town council to specify a project involving the silver economy and digital technology in a vacant building in the town centre, and plans for a digital and intergenerational third place was born.

Who benefits from the support?

The Fabrique à initiatives is available to serve **all of a region's stakeholders**, including associations, networks, local authorities, foundations and its citizens. Through its regional coordination function, it mobilises a very diverse range of stakeholders, who play a part in constructing the projects. The issues and challenges with which it deals are extremely varied, as are the beneficiaries: they include resources to help people with a disability or who are excluded from the job market secure employment, plans for short supply chains to promote local producers, neighbourhood services for local residents and elderly people, and activities to repurpose waste.

Describe a concrete example of the support you provide

Première Brique is a social innovation incubator that runs the Fabrique à initiatives in the Toulouse Metropolitan Area. It launched a shared sewing area for women in a high-priority district, with three activity hubs: a co-working and production area (reception and introduction to entrepreneurship); a sewing workshop that doubles as a job-search project; a collective entrepreneurship organisation. To achieve this, it:

- Conducted an exploration in the districts to gather the most urgent needs, in partnership with the city, the metropolitan area and the Occitanie region.
- Met with around 30 stakeholders involved in socio-cultural activities, job-search and business start-up activities to clarify the goals and possible solutions.
- Surveyed the existing projects and met projects on similar themes in France.
- Conducted a questionnaire and a collective workshop with the women who were future beneficiaries of the scheme.

- Identified around 30 women and partners interested in forming a collective to handle the project.
- Supported the economic and legal modelling of the project, identified premises and a project owner, and supported the creation of the association and the raising of funds.

The support provided

- **Knowledge and development of skills in social innovation**
Avisé supports the development of expertise in suitable structures, based on social innovation models and their co-construction mechanisms, through training sessions, exchanges of practices and knowledge-building through tools and publications.
- **Methods and tools for promoting social innovation**
Tested new social innovation methods, and ran awareness-raising activities to help local stakeholders understand the initiative.
- **Meeting spaces, networks**
The Fabrique à initiatives draws together 30 promising organisations into a network. Locally, it builds connections among numerous stakeholders in partnership committees (over 1,400 partners in 2020).
- **Opportunities for cross-sectoral cooperation**
The methodology involves stakeholders from a variety of sectors, who cooperate on devising new projects.
- **Advisory services for social innovators**
Support for the project owners identified, through to the creation of the activity
- **Methods and support for upscaling social innovations**
In some cases, an existing social innovation in a different area is identified and spun off, after adjusting it to the local situation on the ground.
- **Assistance with or information on financing**
Yes, support for fund raising for the projects developed.
- **Methods and support for assessing social impact**
- **Linking up social innovators, public authorities and "traditional" private enterprises**
- **Other types of solutions:**
Spotting needs and opportunities, through collective intelligence workshops and a prospective approach.

What do you see as the most innovative aspects of your support initiatives?

The Fabrique à initiatives develops a unique methodology based on an inversed, gradual, collaborative process: a wide variety of stakeholders are mobilised at each stage to play a part in creating solutions that are useful, viable, collective and complementary to what already exists; the project owner is established during the process and once the idea's feasibility and usefulness have been approved.

Are your initiatives supported by local/regional/national policies?

Yes, at national level by Avisé's partners, including the Banque des Territoires, the European Social Fund, the National Agency for Regional Cohesion (ANCT) and the Secretary of State for the social, solidarity and responsible economy; At local level by numerous local authorities (region, department, community of communes, communes).

Are they supported by financing, research or other forms of support?

Yes, in partnership with certain foundations and enterprises committed to local development, along with certain universities.

Outcomes of your actions

The impacts identified and the positive outside factors for the regions are:

- Wake up the region: mobilise the stakeholders and involve them in local development. In 2020, 1,400 partners cooperated with the Fabrique à initiatives on initiatives and projects.
- Build bridges: develop regional cooperation and create innovative partnerships;
- Create a laboratory for thinking and collective innovation: foster co-construction and experiment with new solutions. Over the past 12 years, more than 600 ideas for projects have been put forward.
- Encourage the emergence of local entrepreneurship: contribute to the creation of businesses and jobs, and showcase the region's assets. In all, nearly 130 businesses or enterprises were set up in the SSE

Upscaling of your actions

Yes, the Fabrique à initiatives is a scheme that has mushroomed over the years, growing from five promising organisations when the trial scheme started up in 2010, to 30 in 2021.

What are the main success factors for your work?

The main success factors are having a broad ecosystem of stakeholders mobilised, being familiar with the social innovation models that exist in France thanks to the networking, relying on the region's resources (human, land, heritage, natural), and a flexible, made-to-measure methodology that is gradually expanded within the national network.

What are the barriers? How could you provide better support for social innovation?

Given the increasingly heavy demands placed on the system, the main challenges consist in strengthening the financial partnerships over the long term in order to assist more projects, in a flexible and appropriate manner, and develop the scheme in the handful of regions not yet covered.

Best Practice

La Communauté Emergence & Accélération

A summary of your support

Since 2015, Avise has been leading the Emergence & Acceleration Community (CE&A), which in 2022 brings together more than 120 stakeholders offering support mechanisms and programs for the emergence and acceleration of social innovation projects throughout France.

- **Ambition:** to strengthen the French social innovation and social economy (SSE) support ecosystem
- **Goal:** to support and strengthen our members' impact.
- **Priority areas:** contributing to the professionalization of support structures, developing their collaborations with local stakeholders and between themselves.

Website: [La Communauté Emergence & Accélération](#)

Need for support

The French law of July 31, 2014 on the Social and Solidarity Economy enabled the legal recognition and the formalization of the principles characterizing entrepreneurship in the SSE. While some specific incubators already existed by then (Inter-Made (2001), ADRESS Normandie (2005), ATIS (2010), etc.), many others were created following this law.

2015: creation of the community CE&A, in order to provide a national meeting place for SSE support structures, and:

- Build collective capacity on support tools and methods dedicated to social innovation and SSE projects (regarding business models, governance, etc.)
- Encourage best practices exchange and feedback between peers
- Promote mutual understanding between these support structures to foster

cooperation

- Improve the support ecosystem's visibility among project leaders and potential partners at national and local level

2022: the community keeps growing, because:

- The above-mentioned needs are still relevant
- Development of new programs and expertise by members: more and more support needs for multi-activity and complex projects such as third places; contribute to the development of new sectors such as sustainable food or energy transition; needs on social impact assessment, etc.
- Thanks to their actions, members contribute to the emergence of SSE projects which are more likely to be sustainable, to develop economic and social activities essential to the ecological and inclusive transition.

Who benefits from the support?

The 120 members of the Emergence & Acceleration Community are:

- **Support structures** dedicated to the creation and acceleration of projects or businesses: incubators, project generators, social innovation platforms, collaborative workspaces, etc.
- Offering at least one **support program dedicated to social innovation or SSE;**
- Offering **affordable support** (symbolic fee or free of charge).

These stakeholders often belong themselves to the social economy (associations or cooperatives of social utility), whose reach can be national or local. For example, ATIS, an association created in 2010 which supports the emergence and development of social innovation projects and businesses in the SSE in the Nouvelle Aquitaine region (project generator + incubator). [Find out more.](#)

Describe a concrete example of the support you provide

- Organization of **thematic videoconferences** (e.g. supporting third places, supporting people far from entrepreneurship - people with migrant background, seniors, etc.) and working groups (e.g. support programs dedicated to replication, developing partnerships with local authorities, etc.)
- Facilitation of **online co-development workshops** between the members
- Collective **creation of tools and publications**: ecosystem mapping; thematic guides; White Paper, etc.
- Provision of **tools for sharing and capitalizing on knowledge**: 400 people subscribed to a mailing list allowing direct exchange between members to share their feedback and ask their questions to the entire Community; Drive online to share resources (feedback sheets, workshop reports, videoconference replay, shared tools, etc.).
- **Sharing information, tools, support and advice**

Videoconferences and working groups' topics are identified in advance through exchanges between Avise and the members, as well as a yearly survey.

The support provided

The support provides:

- Knowledge and development of skills in social innovation
- Methods and tools for promoting social innovation
- Meeting spaces, networks
- Opportunities for cross-sectoral cooperation
- Linking up social innovators, public authorities and "traditional" private enterprises
- Advisory services for social innovators
- Methods and support for upscaling social innovations
- Methods and support for assessing social impact

What do you see as the most innovative aspects of your support initiatives?

For the members of the Community, these support actions enable them to:

- Save time (in sharing information, capacity building, etc.)
- Get inspiration and hindsight on their practices
- Meet each other and reduce the isolation that some might feel, in rural areas for ex.

For Avise, the animation of the Community and the in-depth knowledge of the ecosystem enables:

- A **comprehensive and relevant understanding** of the French SI ecosystem.
- To **identify the most relevant and appropriate actions** to implement to support SSE and social innovation
- To **closely monitor the ecosystem's** main topics

Are your initiatives supported by local/regional/national policies?

National : Secrétariat d'Etat à l'ESSR, Banque des Territoires

Are they supported by financing, research or other forms of support?

Funding:

- National: Secrétariat d'Etat à l'ESSR, Banque des Territoires
- European: ESF

Outcomes of your actions

No social impact assessment as such, but feedback collected through a yearly survey. In 2020, as rated by the members:

- Overall satisfaction rating of the community leadership: 17/20.
- Satisfaction with the quality of the exchanges: 17.5 / 20
- Satisfaction with the quality of webinars and videoconferences: 16/20
- Satisfaction with the use of the mailing list: 17.5 / 20
- 57% of members displayed their membership (on their activity reports, with their partners and funders, etc.)

Upscaling of your actions

This best practice can surely be replicated in other countries, even in smaller territories, at a regional or local level.

What are the main success factors for your work?

- The **involvement of members in designing the program**
- Have **dedicated time** for the facilitation and animation of the community
- The **teams' ability to adapt and react** (create a flexible, modular program that can vary over the year depending on the priorities or contexts of the stakeholders)

What are the barriers? How could you provide better support for social innovation?

- **Difficulties in funding these animation activities** (less visible effects for funders vs. direct funding towards SI project owners)
- Difficulties for these stakeholders as well, in **funding their support action and dedicate time to participate** more actively in the life of the community
- Wish to be able to **develop more collaborations and bridges with support structures from the "traditional" economy.**

Best Practice LabCom Destins

Contact: Alice Le Dret, consultant & researcher for Ellyx, co-founder of LabCom Destins

A summary of your support

LabCom Destins is a joint laboratory co-created by the Maison des Sciences de l'Homme et de la Société (Research Centre for the Human and Social Sciences, MSHS), which is part of the Université de Poitiers, and the private consulting firm, Ellyx. A joint laboratory is an arrangement that is enabled by the ANR (National Research Agency) and funded for three years to facilitate cooperation on research between the private sphere and the traditional sphere of research. These types of cooperation go further than the usual research.

The LabCom was set up for a three-year period from 2019 to 2022, to address the lack of scientific perspective and endeavour to understand and support the development of disruptive social innovation along four lines:

- a) Analysis of the courses taken by the emergence and consolidation of disruptive social innovations;
- b) Description of the ecosystem's stakeholders and the frameworks for operation and funding;
- c) Sharing of values, legal environment and regulations;
- d) Measurement of the impact of disruptive social innovations by analysing the ecosystem.

Definition of disruptive social innovation:

Disruptive social innovation refers to a dynamic combination of innovations in services, products, public policies, economic and organisational models, which break with the existing situation, along with a radical and lasting change in the cultural, institutional and cognitive frameworks and social practices.

Need for support

The LabCom's action is needed to remedy a lack of tools dedicated to social innovation and developed in a scientific and legitimate

approach in order to be able to equip the people and organisations that wish to develop disruptive social innovations.

Who receives your support?

- 1) Organisations that develop social innovation approaches (enterprises, associations, ...)
- 2) Social innovation support stakeholders in general, who benefit from the shared feedback and research: local authorities, network and public bodies.

Describe a concrete example of the support you provide

Example taken from our work on impact measurement:

Current methodologies cannot be used to measure the impact of a disruptive social innovation because these projects take time to yield their results. It makes greater sense, and seems more appropriate, to give project owners indicators with which they can assess whether they are on track to achieve the desired impact. The LabCom has accordingly produced a study of the development of tools that can assess whether the project is effectively carrying out activities that will enable it to achieve the desired impact in the future.

The support provided

- Knowledge and development of skills in social innovation

Social impact assessment

Description of the social innovation

Social R&D

- Methods and tools for promoting social innovation
- Opportunities for cross-sectoral cooperation

The LabCom's support for social innovation

projects has been made possible by cooperation

between theoretical research, applied research and social innovation project owners.

- Linking up social innovators, public authorities and "traditional" private enterprises

What do you see as the most innovative aspects of your support initiatives?

- Shared governance between the innovators
- Research on new frameworks that allow for cooperation between different public and private actors and the civil society, which leads to reconsidering the place of innovative public procurement, from support agreements to innovative approaches, ...

Are your initiatives supported by local/regional/national policies?

The creation of the LabCom and its development over three years was made possible by national funding from the National Research Agency (ANR). The program is particularly supported by the Regional Council of Nouvelle-Aquitaine. It is also part of partnership approaches with local authorities and structures which constitute as many fields of experimentation.

Are they supported by financing, research or other forms of support?

Post-Doctoral students carry out tasks for the LabCom Destins.

Moreover, a scientific board of 10 researchers has been set up among the common laboratory's governing bodies.

Outcomes of your actions

The results of our actions relate both to the publication of a certain number of works on the LabCom website (4 works produced and R&D notes in free access) but also and above all to the modification of support systems to social innovation or the improvement of the conditions of support for social innovation stakeholders.

Upscaling of your actions

Yes.

What are the barriers? How could you provide better support for social innovation?

- Organization of inter-institutional cooperation in favor of socially innovative approaches
- Modification of the approach to innovation in R&D support systems, focusing essentially on goods/services registered in a commercial and prospective logic
- Work culture issues between researchers from one university and private enterprise
- Various human science issues vs. social innovation

Best Practice

Local Support Scheme (Dispositif Local d'Accompagnement)

A summary of your support

The local support scheme (dispositif local d'accompagnement, DLA) is a public initiative present in each department and which enables employer organisations in the social and solidarity economy to receive tailored guidance and support (diagnosis of their organisation and implementation of a support plan) so that they can develop their operations, consolidate their business and create or maintain jobs. These employer organisations include associations that employ staff, organisations that help job seekers through economic activity, cooperatives with a social purpose, Social and Solidarity Economy (SEE) enterprises certified Solidarity Enterprises of Social Utility (SESU), and other social utility enterprises.

Need for support

SEE structures developing socially-innovative solutions face various development challenges, from their creation through to their upscaling. To achieve this, they need to step back from their context and identify specific requirements related to certain key issues, in order to maintain their action and the jobs created over the long term. This includes consolidating the economic model, honing the job-consolidation strategy, developing partnerships, reorganising their governance or internal organisation, etc. Often these structures have little money to invest in expert guidance and support.

Who benefits from the support?

Any SEE enterprise as defined by the Act of July 2014 on the social and solidarity economy. In practice, over 90% of these are employer associations and the majority of the structures accompanied have fewer than 20 employees.

All sectors are eligible for support, provided social utility is a core focus of the organisation's project; in practice, the main sectors supported are culture, social initiative, sport, health and social care.

Describe a concrete example of the support you provide

LSS work in five steps and are led by an LSS manager:

- 1. Initial interview:** determine whether guidance and support are appropriate and, if necessary, refer the applicant to other alternatives.
- 2. Shared diagnosis:** analyse the organisation's challenges and needs
- 3. Map out the development path:** prioritise the development focuses and choose which stakeholders to involve, including:
 - Consulting firms (individual and/or collective consulting services)
 - Professionals and experts in various sectors and focus areas (network leaders, training organisations, other support bodies, etc.)
 - LSS manager, directly
- 4. Provision of the support:** coordination of the various initiatives.
- 5. Monitoring:** evaluation of the support and identification of potential new requirements.

The duration of the support provided varies between 2 months and 2 years, depending on the organisation's requirements.

The organisations receiving support are involved at every stage of the support. The initiative must be voluntary, the diagnosis is conducted jointly by the LSS manager and the organisation involved, and the organisation is expected to be prepared to devote time to this support.

The support provided

Advisory services for social innovators:

The LSS provides access to consulting services in accordance with the support and guidance requirements pinpointed by a diagnosis conducted by an LSS policy officer.

What do you see as the most innovative aspects of your support initiatives?

- Public scheme present throughout France (at department and region level)
- The ability to offer a thorough diagnosis of the organisation by professionals trained in this type of analysis, to gain a big-picture view of the context and the needs
- The diagnosis, guidance and support are publicly funded, so at no cost to the recipient
- Free guidance and support
- The scheme is easy to access: present in all French départements
- A voluntary, participatory approach, driven by the organisation receiving the support
- Personalised guidance and support on a long-term basis
- An extensive network of expert consultants and professionals in the social and solidarity economy (SSE) devoted to helping the organisations supported >> the local support scheme consists of a network of over 1,500 expert consultants, along with professional networks in the SSE, which can be called in during the period of support and guidance.

Are your initiatives supported by local/regional/national policies?

Yes, by national public policy, adapted to the departmental level

Are they supported by financing, research or other forms of support?

Yes, by public and European financing

Outcomes of your actions

According to a performance measurement carried out in 2017:

- Strengthening of strategic vision
82% believe that the LSS helped them strengthen their strategic vision
- Development of partnerships and local alliances (*)
54% developed alliances with operational partners

- Creation and consolidation of jobs
Over 5.8% increase in the organisations' workforces, and the existing jobs were made permanent
- Improvement in the organisations' economic and financial health
Two-thirds of the organisations saw their economic and financial foundation improve (*) between 2015 and 2017

Upscaling of your actions

The support scheme is already present in each French department, so effectively covers the whole of France. This type of scheme could be replicated in another country.

What are the main success factors for your work?

- The regional coverage and the proximity of the stakeholders providing support to the organisations receiving it
- The scheme's established regional base: it mobilises all of the stakeholders in the support and SSE + LSS ecosystems, managed locally by specialised organisations underpinned by the social and solidarity economy
- The participatory, voluntary nature of the scheme: the organisation initiates the request for guidance and support and is actively involved in it
- The tailored nature of the support path
- The public financial support is stable over time: the scheme has been operating for over 20 years and combines agility, strong regional roots and dedicated, recurrent resources >> this type of action makes the LSS a backbone scheme for the SSE in France and gives the scheme credibility
- The scheme's leadership (links between the various stakeholders and between the guidance officers, and upskilling of the guidance officers): key role for the quality of the scheme run by the national operator and the regional LSSs

What are the barriers? How could you provide better support for social innovation?

The following points illustrate, instead, points to watch:

- Even though this is an extensive scheme (6,000 organisations per year are given

guidance and support), it is still insufficient by comparison with what the SSE represents and organisations' needs;

- It currently supports the sectors most heavily represented in the SSE (sport, culture, medico-social sector) > needs to anticipate the future requirements of tomorrow's SSE sectors (e.g. industry segments set for future growth);
- Regional management, which makes it possible to adjust the system to regional requirements, may lack flexibility;
- Currently there is no support and guidance for organisations with a national scope and reach.

Best Practice

P'INS (Le programme P'INS)

A summary of your support

The P'INS programme is a spin-off support programme led by the Fondation Macif (an insurance company foundation) and Avisa. For 10 months, the programme will guide and support the strategic planning of a director (or a management collective) of a social innovation organisation on the subject of replicating the company at national level in one or more new French regions.

Need for support

To model a strategy of upscaling and in particular replication in new regions, we need to take time and take a step back from an organisation's day-to-day activity. It also requires us to work on analysing other regions, anticipating the needs of the organisations or people taking over the project, and producing tools to facilitate the handover. In order to tackle all of these issues, it is sometimes necessary to have support from people outside the organisation, peers, specific experts, coaches or facilitators so that we can step back from the initial project.

Who benefits from the support?

The beneficiaries of the P'INS programme are the directors of social innovation organisations working in a variety of sectors: housing, healthcare, mobility, social ties and solidarity finance. These organisations are in the process of upscaling and either aim to spin off their organisation into other regions, or have already started to do so.

Describe a concrete example of the support you provide

The P'INS programme consists of the following:

- Personalised, individual support for 8 to 10 months
- 6 days of collective guidance and support on key topics related to replication
- Financial support from the Macif Foundation to the value of €20,000
- An engineering fund offering the possibility of calling on experts for advice

- A system for transferring know-how, by seasoned entrepreneurs
- The P'INS programme's alumni community
- Networking and visibility by the leaders of the P'INS programme

The support provided

Meeting spaces, networks

- In 2019, the P'INS programme launched a P'INS alumni community, which meets annually and has a dedicated mailing list.

Opportunities for cross-sectoral cooperation

- Within the framework of the alumni community.

Advisory services for social innovators

- Thematic experts and dedicated P'INS support staff, who support senior managers' strategic thinking.

Methods and support for upscaling social innovations

- A comprehensive, 10-month programme of guidance and support on spin-offs.

Financing

- A €20,000 financial package to enable the director to set time aside for providing guidance and support.

What do you see as the most innovative aspects of your support initiatives?

- A programme dedicated to supporting replication and fertilisation strategies at national level
- A programme combining collective and individual support
- A "long" programme over 10 months
- Ongoing work in the Alumni community beyond the 10 months

Are your initiatives supported by local/ regional/national policies?

No. This is a private initiative jointly run by an insurance foundation, the Fondation Macif, and an association called Avisa, which is an engineering agency for the development of the social and solidarity economy and social innovation.

Are they supported by financing, research or other forms of support?

Co-financing by the Fondation Macif and Avisa, through funds from the Banque des Territoires or the European Social Fund.

Outcomes of your actions

2019 figures following a survey of 20 respondents:

- over 50% of the alumni created sub-branches or independent organisations following their involvement in the programme
- + 100% of the employees in the organisations supported

A programme impact study will be conducted throughout 2022.

What are the main success factors for your work?

- The programme's ongoing improvement from one year to the next, following the award-winners' feedback
- Monitoring of and connection with the other national and local programmes of spin-off support

What are the barriers? How could you provide better support for social innovation?

- Increase the funding allocated to the support programme so more time can be dedicated to it
- Increase the amount of funding allocated to the thematic experts in order to be able to examine specific issues in even greater depth.

Best Practice

Regional Economic Cooperation Hubs (PTCE – Pôles Territoriaux de Coopération Economique)

Contact: Marie Vernier, Executive Director of Le Labo de l'ESS, French think-tank dedicated to Social and Solidarity Economy, member of the national coordination unit for PTCEs (clusters of social innovation)

A summary of your support

According to the French Law n° 2014-856 on the Social and Solidarity Economy (July 31st, 2014), "the regional economic cooperation hubs are formed by grouping together, in the same region, enterprises in the social and solidarity economy, [...] which work in partnership with enterprises connected with the regional authorities and their groups, research centres, higher-education and research establishments, training bodies or any other physical or legal person, to implement a common, ongoing strategy of pooled resources, cooperation or partnership, to serve economic and social projects that are socially or technologically innovative and bring sustainable local development."

Some PTCEs may be created to support a local industry dynamic.

Need for support (why is your initiative necessary?)

- PTCEs foster the development of innovative collective responses addressing the needs of the region's citizens and enterprises.
- PTCEs also contribute to strengthening the local business fabric.

Who receives your support?

3 types of recipients benefit from the action of the PTCE:

- The members of the PTCEs: regional enterprises that are members of the PTCE
- The members' beneficiaries: the users/ customers/beneficiaries of the PTCE's member organizations, which see business

boosted as a result of the cooperation, along with the impact.

- The region itself, through the economic development generated by the cooperation dynamic launched by the PTCE.

Describe a concrete example of the support you provide

Example of the Pôle Sud Archer, which brings together local employment actors in Romans (Drôme).

The cluster brings together around fifteen "activity clusters", by pooling management, financial management and human resources, while leaving technical and commercial autonomy to each cluster.

The support provided

- Meeting spaces, networks
- Opportunities for cross-sectoral cooperation
- Linking up social innovators, public authorities and "traditional" private enterprises: *A number of PTCEs have the legal structure of an SCIC (collective interest cooperative company), so automatically include the public authorities in their governance, alongside the economic stakeholders.*
- Business development for social innovators: *PTCEs allow the clientele/beneficiaries to grow, through greater recognition of the stakeholders that join forces in a superstructure.*

What do you see as the most innovative aspects of your support initiatives?

- The creation of an organisation dedicated to cooperation among stakeholders to create new regional projects;
- The removal of artificial barriers between different industry sectors: collective dynamics to create new value chains (distributor, public, etc.);
- Ability to involve local stakeholders in the governance.

Are your initiatives supported by local/regional/national policies?

PTCEs may be supported financially at every level and saw their status recognised by law in 2014, in the French Act on the Social and Solidarity Economy.

Are they supported by financing, research or other forms of support?

PTCEs are able to get conventional stakeholders and research stakeholders to work side by side, as provided for by law. In practice, some PTCEs employ a researcher under an industrial agreement for training through research (CIFRE), in order to carry out impact-measurement assignments or research and development work with laboratories.

Outcomes of your actions

In a survey conducted by the social and solidarity economy laboratory in 2017, which polled 115 organisations belonging to 24 PTCEs:

- 8.2% of the total sales of organisations with a trading business was generated by their belonging to a PTCE
- Belonging to a PTCE fosters the development of innovative collective responses that address the needs of the region's citizens and enterprises
- Belonging to a PTCE helps strengthen the local business fabric

Can your support initiatives be replicated or transferred to other cities, local authorities, regions or countries?

Yes.

What are the main success factors for your work?

- Ability to work from the bottom up: gather local stakeholders on local issues to which they are trying to provide swift, local responses;
- Support and strength of the collective body for the member organisations: work together in order to work better and be stronger;
- Coordination of local economic development: ability to coordinate with peers, cooperate and create non-competitive, but complementary, projects.

What are the barriers? How could you provide better support for social innovation?

- It is difficult to establish a physical presence in a region because the organisation does not necessarily have bricks-and-mortar premises (though certain PTCEs try to overcome this barrier by developing a third place at the same time).
- Promote peer-to-peer partnerships
- Financing cooperation time and/or reinforcing capitals

Best Practice

Ronalpia (“Implantation” scale-up programme)

Contact: Romain Truchi, Rhône region manager, Ronalpia

A summary of your support

Through its “Establishment” programme, the Ronalpia incubator offers to host the company in the region and provide nine months of guidance and support to social innovation organisations interested in setting up business in the Rhône-Alpes region.

Numerous tools are made available to the entrepreneurs being supported, including: hosting at the Ronalpia co-working facility, networking with local stakeholders, collective training, co-development sessions with peers, individual guidance and support by the local manager, membership of a community of 260 social entrepreneurs, and tailored guidance and support with the region’s economic development agency.

Need for support

When a social enterprise upscales and moves to a new region, it needs to understand the region, adjust its business model and its partnership strategy and connect with local stakeholders (associations, social enterprises, local authorities, development agencies, “traditional” enterprises, etc.).

Ronalpia offers to guide and support these social enterprises in their initiative as they face the economic, human and social challenges posed by establishing a social innovation in a new region.

Who receives your support?

The beneficiaries of the Establishment programme are selected on a variety of criteria:

- The organisation must address a social or environmental need that is insufficiently or inadequately met in the planned area of Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes.

- It must have stabilised its business model and demonstrated its social impact in one or more regions
- It plans to expand in the months following its application and has the resources to do so.

A few examples of social innovation that received support with their establishment: SINGA Lyon, Article 1, Auticiel, Viens voir mon taf.

The support provided

- Meeting spaces, networks
- Linking up social innovators, public authorities and “traditional” private enterprises
- Advisory services for social innovators
- Methods and support for upscaling social innovations

What do you see as the most innovative aspects of your support initiatives?

- **Spotting social innovations in the regions**

The programme’s mission is to spot social innovations in the regions with a view to duplicating them in other regions, based on the principle that sometimes there is no point reinventing the wheel when others have already developed solutions that work. In practice, Ronalpia and its partners travel around France, visiting certain regions in the hope of discovering interesting social innovations there. Besides, through collaborations with Belgian or Canadian incubators for example, Ronalpia also intends to spot social innovations from abroad.

- **Collaboration with investment promotion agencies**

Ronalpia helps adapt these “recipes” to the local context by working closely with the region’s investment promotion agencies.

The latter are tools used by the "traditional" business sector, so Ronalpia has developed a smart cooperation with them to serve stakeholders in the SSE and social innovation.

Are your initiatives supported by local/regional/national policies?

The Establishment programme is supported by numerous partners, including investment promotion agencies (ADERLY, Invest in Grenoble Alpes) and local authorities (Greater Lyon Metropolitan Area, Grenoble Metropolitan Area, Valencia Romans built-up area), among others.

Are they supported by financing, research or other forms of support?

- The programme receives financial support through public and private subsidies and services, on behalf of:
- The above-mentioned local authorities
- Private stakeholders: EDF, Le Rameau, AG2R La Mondiale, among others.
- Not forgetting the Fondation La France

Outcomes of your actions

- 339 social enterprises have been supported by Ronalpia across all of its programmes, including 48 in the Establishment programme since 2017
- 149 guides and coaches have been mobilised, including 55 on the Establishment programme
- 79% of the organisations supported are still in business
- 80 public and private partners alongside Ronalpia on the Establishment programme
- 105 direct, local jobs created by the 48 enterprises that received support with their establishment
- 9 regions were met, including two abroad, during a tour of France aimed at spotting social innovations, with various partners.

Upscaling of your actions

Ronalpia, which pioneered the subject of providing support for businesses to settle in France, hopes that other incubators will take up the subject in their respective areas, while Ronalpia is designed to remain in the Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes region. Within this

region, Ronalpia scaled up this program, first offering it in Lyon, and later also in Loire, Isère, Drôme and other rural areas.)

After leveraging the content of their support package and contending with numerous appeals from other incubators, the Ronalpia teams are wondering about transferring their know-how.

What are the main success factors for your work?

- **Collaborating with the region's economic development agencies.** This lets Ronalpia leverage these stakeholders' professionalism, tools and resources (HR, property, networks, visibility, project spotting techniques, etc.), which are sometimes lacking in the SSE sector. At the same time, Ronalpia accustoms these stakeholders to social innovation issues.
- **Close ties with other stakeholders providing upscaling support:** La France s'engage foundation, PIN'S programme, Antropia, ATIS, etc. This is an opportunity to pool efforts to spot (and recommend) social innovations that are ready to be replicated in other regions, and also to discuss the subject with industry peers.

What are the barriers? How could you provide better support for social innovation?

- **Lengthy period of project spotting:** from the initial contact through to when the stakeholders apply to join the Ronalpia programme, it often takes two years to source the social innovations that will receive support.
- **Limited number of programmes providing support with upscaling and establishment:** the more competent stakeholders are handling these subjects, the more the spotting and mutual prescription of projects will be expanded to the national scale and the more these stakeholders will be able to exchange best practices in their line of business and sharpen their skills.

Best Practice

Social impact bonds

A summary of your support

Social impact bonds were created in Great Britain, then first launched in France in 2016. Social impact bonds are a new tool for financing social innovation. They aim to foster private fund-raising to finance social programmes for social experimentations.

The general principle of social impact bonds is as follows: a private or public investor finances a social project initiated by an organisation in the social and solidarity economy, and assumes the financial risk involved, thereby avoiding the need to draw on public subsidies. At the end of the project, an independent assessment must be carried out to objectively and validly establish whether the programme's objectives have been achieved and, depending on the project's success and observed social impact, promote reimbursement in the investment, with interest, by the public authority. In the event that the objectives set when the social impact bond was drawn up are not achieved, the investor will not be reimbursed by the public authority.

Following three calls for projects issued in 2020 and 2021, nearly 50 million euros of financial support were awarded to the winners.

Need for support

Social impact bonds serve a number of purposes, including the following:

- **For social innovators:** a new source and means of financing the upscaling of their project, which may involve substantial funds.
- **For national government agencies:** a new means of financing public policy initiatives, in which the risk is borne by a third-party investor. It also enables the expenditure and the budgetary gain associated with the impact produced to be aligned in time.
- **For investors:** a socially-responsible tool that is well-suited to CSR policies.

Who benefits from the support?

The beneficiaries of social impact bonds are social innovation projects selected through themed calls for projects launched by national government agencies.

The last three calls for expressions of interest were launched between 2020 and 2021, and selected projects in the fields of the "circular economy", "equal economic opportunity" and "innovating for access to employment".

Examples of beneficiaries: ADIE, Apprentis d'Auteuil, Article 1, Impact Partenaires, La Cravate Solidaire and Wimoov, for which six social impact bonds were created following the first call for projects, launched in 2016.

The support provided

- Methods and support for upscaling social innovations
- Methods and support for assessing social impact
- Financing

What do you see as the most innovative aspects of your support initiatives?

Social impact bonds are a new source and means of financing the upscaling of social enterprises. It involves numerous stakeholders (project owner, public and private investors, national government agencies, independent assessors, etc.) through a form of collaboration previously unknown in France, and concerns large sums of money.

It makes it possible for national government agencies to finance initiatives related to the public policies it implement, while leaving it to the investor to bear the financial risk in the event of non-achievement of the objectives set.

Are your initiatives supported by local/regional/national policies?

Public-private partnerships, social impact bonds concerning specific public policies, selected by the national government.

Are they supported by financing, research or other forms of support?

The private and/or public investor pre-finances the project and assumes the risk of failure in exchange for a pre-arranged remuneration in the event of success. The State reimburses only on the basis of the outcomes actually achieved and objectively recorded by an independent assessor.

Outcomes of your actions

- Over 13 million euros invested in the first eight social impact bonds, following the 2016 call for projects
- Close to 50 million euros used following three calls for projects issued in 2020 and 2021.

Upscaling of your actions

Social impact bonds were created in Great Britain in 2010 and have been developed in a number of countries around the world in a more or less similar manner.

What are the main success factors for your work?

The "Lavenir" report (2019) states that social impact bonds are by no means suitable for any public initiative. The projects selected should present the following characteristics:

- Contingencies in upscaling the project, despite its proven effectiveness. It is easy for a project that does not involve any risks to obtain "traditional" public funding, but difficult for a project whose impact is uncertain to find investors.
- The project's impact should be measurable in a quantified and consensual manner by the stakeholders. Moreover, measuring the project's impact should be inexpensive by comparison with the value of the investment, and operationally feasible.

Many other success factors for social impact bonds could be mentioned, such as ensuring a common "language" among the stakeholders, whose cultures may differ between stakeholders such as associations, investors, public authorities, etc.

What are the barriers? How could you provide better support for social innovation?

While it is too early yet to draw any conclusions from the social impact bonds issued during the latest calls for projects (2020-2021), a number of difficulties were identified in 2019 on examining the first social impact bonds. They include:

- The legal complexity of the arrangements, at least for the first social impact bonds, and especially for non-profit stakeholders lacking the necessary financial and legal expertise;
- The public authorities' difficulties in committing themselves as partners and third-party payers;
- The tool is more difficult to access for local authorities;
- The project was overly dependent on people rather than organisations or processes, which created uncertainties about the lack of guarantees over and beyond the people involved.