

# COCO4CCI ACTION PLANS

Integrating COCO4CCI services in the regional business support infrastructure in the Stuttgart Region /Germany

Deliverable D.T4.1.3

COUNTRY: Germany

Prepared by: HdM and bwcon





## Status - short outline of the COCO4CCI results

The COCO4CCI activities in Germany were implemented through a tight collaboration of two local partners: the Stuttgart Media University (HdM), being the contact points for your creative and cultural and creative industries and bwcon GmbH, a business network and innovation service providers, being the reference for production and advance manufacturing companies as well as startups and entrepreneurs.

Stuttgart Media University (HdM) is a higher education institution that trains media specialists for companies, organizations and institutions. As a University of Applied Sciences, HdM has a special focus in academic training with strong connections businesses. HdM has gained expertise and plays an active role in the field of learning didactics and method.; ICT for blended and distant learning, ICT based learning platforms, and improving academic training, especially with respect to promoting multimedia didactics and eLearning methods. HdM possesses a long lasting experience in organising Entrepreneurship Education, and in teaching Entrepreneurship skills. A strong start-up network fosters best-practice and the exchange and cooperation within the start-up scene of the region of Stuttgart. The Generator HdM Startup Center is also offering office space for Media University start-ups. This incubator function guarantees an extensive knowledge of and a strong closeness to the needs of the self-starting companies. Events like the Generation Media Start-up fair, the Games Day and the Media Night are well established occasions to foster the permanent and lasting exchange of ideas as well as knowledge and experience within the start-up scene and raise huge awareness in general public. Through various international HdM has created a remarkable network throughout well-known European Entrepreneurship Universities.

Baden-Württemberg: Connected e.V. (bwcon) is the leading business initiative for the promotion of the high-tech sectors in the region of Baden-Württemberg. With its approximately 600 members since 1997, the main goal is to foster key-technologies in order to strengthen the region's economic development. bwcon GmbH was founded by bwcon e.V. together with Steinbeis in 2014 for the operative implementation of the association's goals. It is an integrated innovation service provider and supports companies in the transformation process along the entire value chain.

bwcon GmbH sees itself as a service provider offering support to companies in the digital transformation process by managing ideas, designing new business models and making innovation processes more flexible. One of the services of bwcon GmbH is the development of methodological knowledge, which is necessary to initiate the digital transformation process. This includes the moderation of innovation processes and the subsequent consultation on business process development including financing.

The collaboration of these two local actors has been particularly intensive in the definition of a model for the COCO4CCI pilot and in the resulting testing and implementation. The key activities



of the pilot consisted in the definition of a challenge with AVM companies that was then addressed by CCI during several co-creation events with the aim of developing a solution for it. Around this key process, workshops and training were offered to support the CCI in understanding the mindset of advanced manufacturing companies and to provide them with solid knowledge around the technology and the business model necessary for the developed solutions.

**Cooperation Collider**  
VERNETZUNG MIT EXPERT\*INNEN AUS DESIGN, MEDIEN UND SOFTWARE  
cocobw.de

Der Cooperation Collider hilft Ihnen innovative Lösungen für Ihre unternehmensrelevanten Fragestellungen in einem Co-Creation Prozess mit Designer\*innen, Medienexpert\*innen und Softwareentwickler\*innen zu generieren.

**WIE FUNKTIONIERT DAS?**

- CHALLENGE WORKSHOP:** In einem moderierten Workshop helfen wir Ihnen Pain-Points, Bedarfe und Herausforderungen in Ihrem Unternehmen zu identifizieren, die mit der Unterstützung von Expert\*innen aus Design, Medien und Software adressiert werden können.
- COOPERATION SPRINT:** Wir suchen für Sie geeignete Problemlöser\*innen aus den Bereichen Design, Medien und Software, die Ihre Challenge bearbeiten können. In einem online Cooperation Sprint begleiten unsere Expert\*innen den Co-Creation-Prozess unter Anwendung von Design Thinking und weiteren Innovationsmethoden.
- FINALER PITCH:** Am Ende steht ein finaler Pitch, bei dem die ausgearbeiteten Lösungen präsentiert werden.

In particular, the following activities have been set up for this scope:

- An *Info day* to present the COCO4CCI project and the upcoming activities and offerings for CCI and AVM
- Three *companies tours*
- Three *dimension workshops* focusing on mindset, technology, future trends (among some of the topics: Artificial intelligence becomes creative, Innovation & creativity techniques etc..)
- Three *specialised trainings* (among the topic touched: Idea generation through design thinking, Profile Dynamics & Co-Creation Canvas, Business modelling using the Storytelling Canvas)
- Three *round of pilots*, to concretely test cooperation formats among CCI and AVM
- Two *Matchmaking events*
- *Online material and training* posted on the cocobw.de website (focusing on technology topics as AR/VR, Intellectual property right, toolbox and methodologies for creatives).

The training and workshop were offered as additional offerings to support people participating in the pilot activities but were also open to any other interested parties. Following, the main results from the three pilot rounds are presented.

### 1st Round of Pilot: the Cooperation Sprint

The Cooperation Sprint was the first testing of the pilot form held in January 2021. It was conceived as a process to be stretched over three months. Due to the pandemic, it was then redesigned in a compact online event format of three appointments in which players from different



industries faced a common challenge and tried together to look for solutions in a co-creation process using design thinking and other innovation methods. Three main challenges of AVM were addressed during the cooperation sprint in the field of:

1. Digitalization and new business models
- 2 Marketing and communication
3. Further training and digital skills in everyday work

### **2nd Round of Pilot: Hackathon Freiburg**

After the first pilot edition, the format of the pilot was further improved and translated into a Hackathon in June 2021. The format of the Hackathon consisted in a two-full-day development marathon where teams of creatives participated to create solutions for challenges designed by other CCI and AVM Companies. Following challenges co-designed with companies were addressed: Sharing spaces and technology for arts and culture professionals; Ticketing system for arts and culture professionals; Art in public space; Signposting for cultural events in public places; Financial support; Making lost art visible. In just 48 hours, 5 teams created impressive, diverse concepts and apps. Three teams were finally awarded by an expert jury.

### **3rd Round of pilot: the Blockchain Hackathon**

The Blockchain format proved to be a valuable way to bring together CCI and AVM in a compact and effective setting to work together on the challenges previously identified with AVM. It was therefore decided to replicate this format, focusing specifically on challenges that AVM have in connection with the use of new technologies such as blockchain and artificial intelligence. For that, in November 2021 a final hackathon was organised with three main focus areas “Industry”, “Finance” and “Mobility” each addressing a specific challenge. Seven projects were finally presented as a result of the collaboration established during the Hackathon.

Furthermore the HdM and bwcon also organised a training for BSO and parties outside the partnership as well as a stakeholders consultation

### **Partner Training & Stakeholder Consultation**

On 16 September 2021, a two-part online workshop was organised, which was dedicated to both stakeholder consultation and partner training and was designed internationally from the get-go. The first part was dedicated to partner training, the second part to exchange and feedback on COCO4CCI.



During the partner training with 12 international participating institutions general information about the project, the steps of the Cooperation Collider, the above mentioned Cooperation Sprint and challenges and matchmaking formats were presented.

During the stakeholder consultations with 9 participants we received valuable feedback on the status quo and on the continuation of the project. Everybody agreed that cross-sectoral cooperation will become more important than ever and that, in general, there is a great openness and interest in initiating and simplifying cross-sectoral cooperation. But the magic formula has not yet been found. When trying to connect two worlds/mindsets, it takes more than a process. It takes people who can build this connection. Making CCI ready for AVM alone is not the right approach. The industry also needs to be trained to know all the benefits and capabilities of CCI. Furthermore, it is a challenge for companies to think of a (open innovation) challenge and thus (lengthy) challenge formats can be tiring and frustrating. CCI is such a broad field that a cooperation needs to be much more focused. Which areas of CCI are particularly attractive for AVM? This should be analysed in more detail. In addition, it was advised to focus more on SMEs for they can benefit most quickly from a cooperation with CCI.

## Objective

Baden-Württemberg's industry is traditionally characterised by a strong SME sector, which is facing more new challenges than ever, be it in the area of digitalisation, topics such as corporate branding or the establishment of agile innovation processes - all topics in which companies from the cultural and creative industries can be helpful. Such cooperation between SMEs and (young) CCI companies offers diverse potentials: the typical characteristics of e.g. start-ups, such as fresh ideas, high innovation potential and short development cycles, can create a win-win situation for both parties when combined with SMEs and their established networks, customer contacts and business models. Furthermore, the pressure to digitalise and innovate has intensified in the Corona crisis and demands requires faster adjustment capabilities. Nevertheless, small and medium-sized enterprises in particular still make too little use of the opportunities offered by platforms, events or regional networks. The Stuttgart COCO4CCI partners want to change that.

Over the next three years, bwcon and HdM would like to establish themselves in the Stuttgart region as initiators and facilitators of cooperations between SMEs and CCI.

Through the action plan, bwcon and HdM aims to define how the activities of COCO4CCI can be integrated in their own portfolio so to make them sustainable beyond the funding period and how to efficiently continue the productive cooperation on a regional and international level started within COCO4CCI.

Both partners can rely on the following network of stakeholders:

HdM has a broad and lively regional, national and international university network that is being successively expanded and deepened and also cooperates successfully in many projects with the



relevant institutions from the innovation ecosystem of Stuttgart and the region. These include, in particular, the Ministry of Science, Research and the Arts of Baden-Württemberg, the Ministry of Economics, Labour and Tourism of Baden-Württemberg, the Fraunhofer IAO, the Chamber of Industry and Commerce, the Stuttgart Region Economic Development Department, the Medien- und Filmgesellschaft Baden-Württemberg and various corporate partners from industry and the creative sector, especially in the context of the Digital Hub.

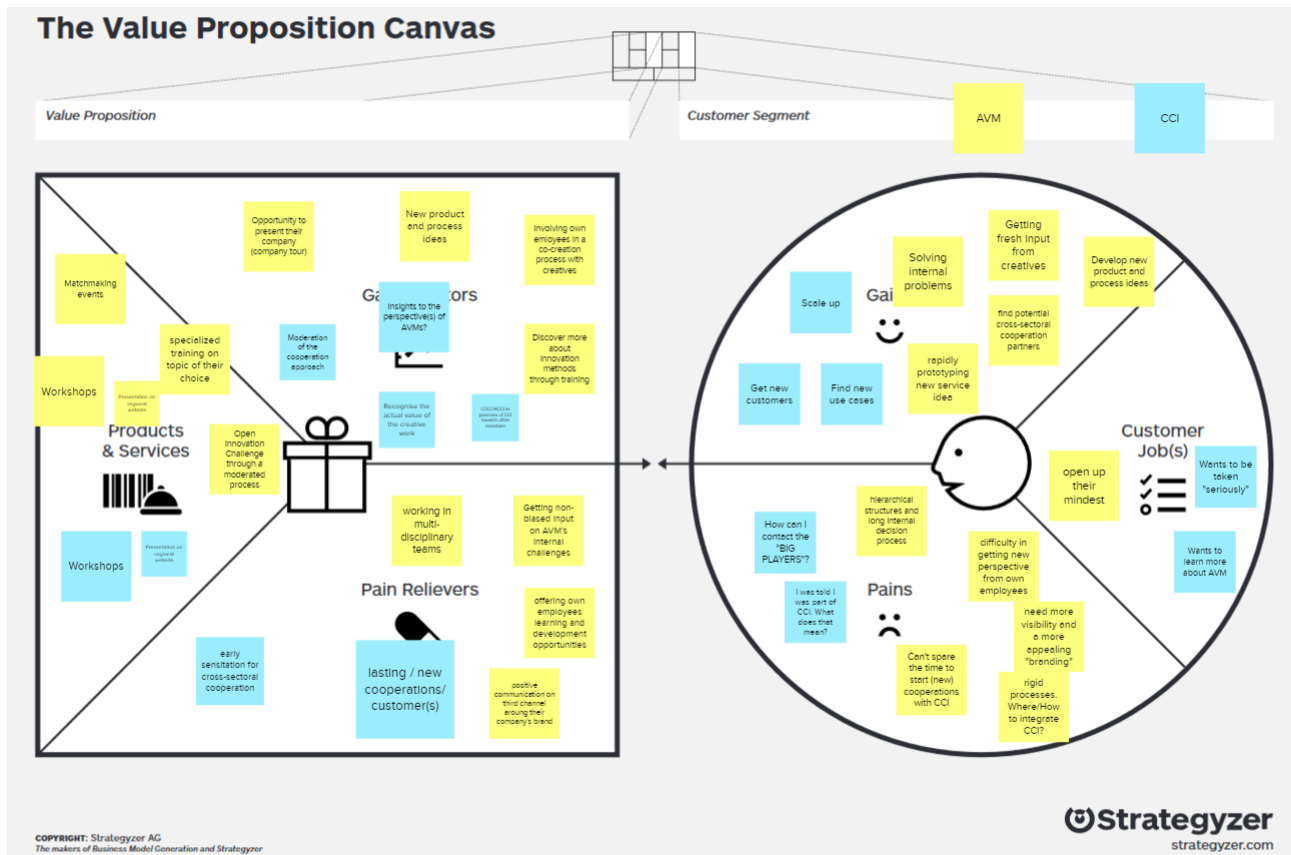
bwcon has a wide network of over 600 ICT and production companies based in the region of Baden-Württemberg. Some of these companies were already involved in the pilot and in further project activities. Furthermore, several German research centres and universities are also parts of the bwcon's network. bwcon is active in many European and national projects. The common feature and goal of these projects is the support of Baden-Württemberg's high-tech companies, which have been able to establish themselves on the market after an initial phase of growth and are either already bwcon members or with whom a partnership is sought.

## Testimonials

Margit Wolf (Project Manager at the Stuttgart Region Economic Development Corporation): "We would indeed like to call on clients to enter into more cooperation with creative professionals. Creative professionals are problem solvers, idea developers and innovation drivers. Creative professionals are used to reacting quickly and flexibly to new situations, challenges and trends. The regional proximity between client and service provider is a decisive advantage despite online communication. As a strong creative location, the Stuttgart region is home to numerous service providers from the creative industries. Experts from the fields of design, scenography, games, communication, advertising, design, film, music, photography, animation or VR/AR help in the search for and development of new products, business models or digital communication channels. We have launched various measures for this purpose, and not just since Corona."

## Actions

In order to clearly define the actions to be undertaken, bwcon and HdM engaged already in July 2021 in a workshop to define the value proposition of their offering. The results are shown in the value proposition canvas below.



Through the activities performed within the COCI4CCI pilots, it was possible to identify two clear target groups as well as their needs and pains.

The first target group are production and AVM companies. In the discussion with representatives of these companies a few pains emerged: they often have hierarchical structure and a long internal decision process and they sometimes struggle to get new perspectives and inputs from their own employees as these letters focus on processes they are familiar with and become involuntarily blind in finding alternative solutions. Such companies might benefit from external stakeholders who can provide them with new input and fresh perspectives. Such companies might benefit from an increase in visibility and from a more appealing branding as this would help them to attract new employees as well as additional clients and potential cooperation partners. Through collaboration with external stakeholders and especially with creatives they hope to get actionable input that they can use to improve internal processes as well as out-of-the-box ideas that might be translated into new products and services.



As for CCI, we need to help it build its own self-image and thus radiate more self-confidence. In addition, CCI company founders need to be empowered to think cross-sectorally much earlier, preferably during their studies. CCI companies are very keen to learn more about AVM, but they want to be taken just as seriously. They are well aware that they are first and foremost contractors and service providers, but the gap this creates early on creates an attitude that stands in the way of cooperation that goes beyond the service. However, they often lack not only the information or courage to initiate deeper cooperation at eye level, but also the right framework conditions that create a fear-free space, so to speak. Facilitation and individual matchmaking between CCI and AVM is therefore all the more urgent.

For these two target groups two main value propositions could be identified that will see respectively bwcon and HdM as service providers.

bwcon aims to offer moderated open innovation processes to production and AVM companies that involve young creatives, CCI and external stakeholders

Through such an open innovation process driven by a challenge, established companies can address internal problems and pains they have while getting input from external stakeholders. At the same time, young creatives can get access to contact to companies and potentially expand their network of clients.

By means of such open innovation process, companies can rapidly prototype new product or services, they can get fresh input from the outside

Key activities:

- Workshop to define internal challenges with companies
- Definition of an open innovation process accompanied by training on topics of interested for the involved parties
- Companies visits to better understand the companies' needs.
- Matchmaking process among companies and young creatives and talents

**HdM**

Value proposition: We would like to implement an awareness-raising and qualification process in order to take away fears of contact with industry, especially for young companies in the cultural and creative industries, and to inspire and enable them to cooperate with industry at an early stage.

Key activities:

- Informal talks in which industrial companies present themselves
- "How-to-network" workshop for young CCI companies
- Best practice examples of already existing cross-sectoral collaborations





- Marketing support for CCI companies open for cooperation (portfolio on the website, interviews, pitch videos)

## Resources

Bwcon will integrate the activities developed in COCO4CCI within its Innovation Academy. Currently this bwcon's unit already focuses on the open innovation process, but so far the focus has not been specifically in involving and connecting AVM and CCI.

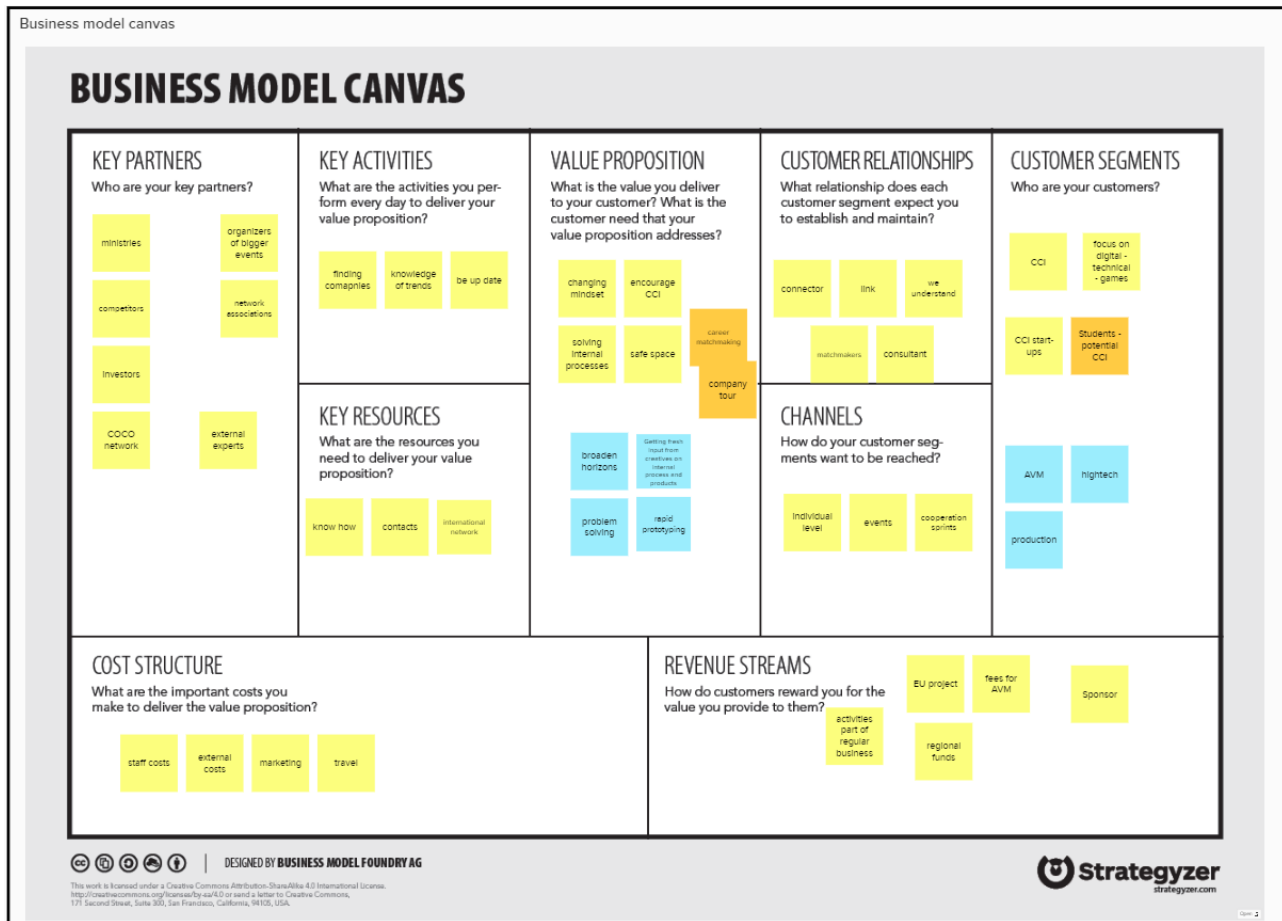
The main costs connected to these activities are staff costs, connected to the project managers that will manage the open innovation process. Beside that, we foresee some costs related to the marketing and promotion of the open innovation process, especially for what concerns a well-thought communication campaign to attract participants and solvers in the process.

bwcon aims to finance this activity through a service fee or sponsorship paid by the companies defining the challenge to be addressed within the open innovation process. This fee might vary according to the complexity of the open innovation process, the timeframe of its realisation, the number of external stakeholders involved and the number of successful solutions created as a result. The fee does not cover any additional reward or contracts for the solver that should be handled by the company providing the challenge separately.

Furthermore, bwcon will find synergies with some of its existing events to optimize costs.

At the HdM, the above-mentioned activities can be based at the Startup Centre, preferably as part of the Sandbox accelerator programme, which makes young companies in the fields of media, design and software fit for market entry.

Since the topic of entrepreneurship education has traditionally been a high priority at the HdM anyway and the Startup Center continually develops and offers new cross-faculty formats for this purpose, the appropriate formats and events can be launched here to increase networking expertise. However, since the HdM is a state university, it cannot charge fees for the activities, so funding would have to be sought for this.



## Regional and transnational context

In many regions throughout Germany, contact points have been created to facilitate the coming together of companies. These have set themselves the goal, for example, of connecting SMEs and corporates with new innovation partners from science and the start-up scene. A key activity is the organisation of exchange formats to facilitate new contacts and new contacts and to point out cooperation perspectives. Generally speaking, these are "intermediaries that create networks" (Wrobel et al. 2017, 89).

But the Corona pandemic is developing opposing forces. On the one hand, the pressure to act on digitalisation and innovation is increased; on the other hand, crises often lead companies to focus primarily on their core competences. This also influences cooperation behaviour. Both start-ups and established companies have become more cautious.

Further efforts are needed to strengthen cooperation between SMEs and startups. Facilitated contact opportunities are indeed an important prerequisite, but they are not yet sufficient. In addition to the identification of common topics, a technological and cultural fit is also needed, which must be worked out in a process at eye level. Competences for shaping cooperation include not only technical expertise but also social skills and empathy. A COCO4CCI matching platform



should therefore offer complementary individual and made-to-measure advisory and support services and support the process of learning and finding each other in the course of workshops and events.

Overall, there is still a lack of visibility of successfully implemented cooperations between SMEs and startups, especially in the area of CCI. These so-called model cooperations can contribute to more established companies taking advantage of the opportunities offered by start-up cooperations. This is a starting point for international cooperations in which intermediary organisations present best practices from other countries in order to increase the critical mass of prime examples and to increase interest in cross-sectoral cooperations among companies that have been reluctant so far.

Often, SMEs are simply not in a position to implement activities to initiate cooperation on their own. The reason for this is often the high workload.

Therefore, a joint sector-specific and therefore also international approach with other SMEs and also with other business development institutions is recommended. A joint approach, for instance in the implementation of competitions or the establishment of (virtual) innovation labs, opens up synergy effects and promises long-term success. The participation of companies from different countries can provide fresh and valuable impulses.

Specifically, bwcon and HdM will look into the opportunity to open up some of the open innovation process initiated in Germany to companies and creatives coming from the COCO4CCI's partners network. This process is nowadays made particularly difficult due to different legal frameworks, cultural backgrounds and working environments of companies coming from different European Regions. Not at last, also the language represents a barrier in the communication among different actors involved in the open innovation process, since people coming from different industries and sectors often already have different mindset and a different way to approach and describe problems.