Smart 4 Europe
Catalysing Digitisation throughout Europe

Deliverable

D3.4 Outreach Evaluation Report

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Project co-ordinator name, title and organisation:
Dr. Rainer Günzler, Hahn-Schickard
Tel: +49 7721 943-188
Fax: +49 7721 943-210
E-mail: Rainer.Guenzler@Hahn-Schickard.de
Project website address: http://www.smart4europe.eu

Responsible: Meike Reimann
Contributor(s): All
Reviewer: Stephan Karman, Rainer Günzler
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Short description of the content of the deliverable

The Smart4Europe Outreach Evaluation Report describes the projects outreach activities and the associated assessment of these.

The outreach activities included a variety of specific actions, especially to build and bound the community within and around the Smart Anything Everywhere (SAE) Initiative, to expand it to newcomers and to support sustaining the ecosystem created.

Main successes of Smart4Europe outreach activities, where the large number of diverse stakeholders reached, including start-ups, SMEs and midcaps, representatives from national/regional initiatives, as well as policy makers and investors. Great interest could be raised within events and social media and the initiative/branding was promoted widely and efficiently across Europe.

Version history

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<td>-</td>
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Statement

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1. Executive summary

The Smart4Europe Outreach Evaluation Report describes the projects outreach activities and the associated impacts achieved. The projects outreach activities were performed to boost the growth of the Smart Anything Everywhere Initiative and stimulate its sustainability. The outreach strategy was to use the relevant channels accessible via Smart4Europe partners and to recruit newcomers at fairs, events, through related media and other relevant platforms for digital technologies. Moreover, the excellent existing linkages to national/regional initiatives as well as investor networks were exploited. The stakeholder database (D3.1) and outreach plan (D3.2) build the basis for the outreach activities. Smart4Europe outreach activities focused on the following activities:

- Analysis of the target groups and continuous growth of the stakeholder database
- Outreach via the Innovation Portal, (social) media and events
- Attracting start-ups, SMEs and mid-caps throughout Europe
- Promotion of open calls of all cluster projects / Innovation Actions (IA)
- Cooperation with other initiatives and networks
- Connecting to national/regional initiatives and investors

All partners were very active in promoting the benefits of the SAE Initiative in selected media and events, throughout their broad networks and by leveraging from national/regional contacts.
2. Objectives and Goals of Smart4Europe Outreach Activities

The objectives of the Smart4Europe outreach activities are to support the growth and sustainability of the Smart Anything Everywhere (SAE) innovation ecosystem. The ultimate aim is to attract relevant new stakeholders to the SAE initiative which can accelerate the design, development and update of advanced digital technologies and increase the technical as well as geographical coverage of the initiative. Smart4Europe wants to ensure that any industry in Europe, wherever situated and in any sector, can fully benefit from digital innovations. The overall aims of the outreach activities are to:

- Increase the awareness of the SAE Initiative and attract newcomers across Europe
- Extend the SAE-ecosystem in a strategic manner and trigger organic growth
- Maximise the impact of SAE-aligned projects, promoting their open calls and success stories
- Foster linkages with related communities, projects and initiatives (I4MS)
- Create linkages between the SAE ecosystem and national and regional initiatives
- Stimulate and leverage new funding models and SAE sustainability

Therefore, Smart4Europe addresses a diversity of target groups (table 1) and outreach activities are channeled towards the partners’ contacts and multipliers gathered in stakeholder database (D3.1).

Outreach, collaboration and dissemination activities of Smart4Europe are complementary. While WP2 focuses on the SAE *internal collaboration*, the WP3 activities concentrate on *external collaboration* and with this linking to newcomers, related initiatives, as well as future customers and investors.

![Figure 1: Smart4Europe stakeholders for internal (WP2) and external (WP3) collaboration](image-url)
3. Overview on Smart4Europe Outreach Activities

This chapter gives an overview about the manifold of activities. Several individual actions are highlighted in chapter 5 of this deliverable. Summarising tables including figures are reported in Deliverable D5.4 about Dissemination and Exploitation.

3.1 Growth of stakeholder base and SAE community

The Smart4Europe outreach activities build on the stakeholder database (D3.1), the broad networks of all partners and a diversity of tools and activities to reach a large number of newcomers (including Innovation Portal, (social) media, workshops, fairs and events) to grow the SAE community. Smart4Europe partners attended a vast number of relevant events (see also D5.4) and fairs to recruit newcomers to the initiative and engaged in peer-to-peer promotion of the initiative and its opportunities throughout their accessible networks. The annual SAE events / DIH days represented highlights bringing the entire community together. Furthermore, satellite events to major conferences and seminars of SAE relevant topics were considered to multiply the reach of respective SAE / Smart4Europe events and workshops.

3.2 Promotion of Open Calls

Smart4Europe promoted the open calls of the Innovation Actions via established channels including the Innovation Portal, the SAE newsletter and social media and intensified promotion activities for each round of open calls for application experiments when launched (see Figure 1). Moreover, open calls were promoted at events, fairs and workshops throughout the project lifetime.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Project</th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2019</th>
<th>2020</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cyber-physical and embedded systems</td>
<td><a href="#">fed4SAE</a></td>
<td>Nov.</td>
<td>May</td>
<td>Nov.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 2: Overview of SAE open calls timeline and indication for Smart4Europe outreach rounds

3.3 Cooperation with other initiatives and networks

In order to enhance the visibility and reach of SAE partners used links to their own networks and contact pool, however cooperation with other European initiatives such as I4MS as well as national and regional initiatives such as Allianz 4.0 Baden-Württemberg, Digital Catapult UK, or La French Tech Initiative enhanced the SAE stakeholder base in a substantial manner. In addition, networks of
related academic communities (CPS, SSI, IoT, OLAE) were exploited. Furthermore, the communication channels of the running Innovation Actions were also used. Particular attention was paid to ‘filling the gaps and white spots’, the map of regional and national initiatives (D3.3) was used to identify the regions where further stakeholders could be attracted. This action was particularly meant to increase the technological and geographic coverage of the initiative. Within that context new funding opportunities were encouraged and potential synergies exploited where possible. Activities of the European platform of national initiatives on digitizing industry were followed closely and relevant events were communicated throughout the consortium.

3.4 Attracting SMEs and mid-caps

Start-ups, SMEs and mid-caps from technical areas as well as non-technical areas (e.g. food and beverages, agriculture, textile production) were informed at European, national and local events such as the ‘KMU-Beratungstage’ (SME Consultancy-Days) or ‘Unicorns or Transformers’ events organised by S2i, mailings to SMEs by each partner or direct contact at trade fairs, where they were briefed about SAE offerings and opportunities.

3.5 Stimulating complementary funding and leveraging further investments

Complementary funding was stimulated within the framework of Task 3.4 lead by partner BLU. SAE offerings and results were communicated to e.g. Digital Innovation Hubs, funding bodies, the European Investment Bank or European Investment Funds. The main objective was to seek face-to-face contact / schedule meetings during which the initiative was promoted. Partner BLU, with its vast network, was the main responsible in attracting funding bodies and investors.

3.6 Facilitating Smart Anything Everywhere Brokerage

SAE brokerage and match-making activities were performed, where future consortia for application experiments, users and suppliers, future customers and developers of new digital technologies were brought together. SAE brokerage and match making events took place as ‘own events’ and satellite events to major conferences or in collaboration with EEN or ARTEMIS-IA events (see D3.5). Furthermore, a SAE/Smart4Europe data base providing information on the technologies and services developed within SAE cluster projects is featured on the Innovation Portal.

4. SAE stakeholders and target group specific activities

SAE stakeholders comprise three main groups: i) SMEs and mid-caps with an interest in digital technologies as well as SMEs and mid-caps from non-tech sectors, ii) users and suppliers of digital technologies, users of SAE related offerings such as potential customers for SAE technological solutions developed within the application experiments of the SAE cluster projects and iii) any stakeholder with strategic interest such as policy-makers, multipliers, representatives of regional and national digitization initiatives as well as potential investors. The Smart4Europe partners identified a wide range of specific contact points within the consortium and via multipliers. Specific outreach activities were performed to reach the related target groups efficiently. The following table shows the respective target groups and associated contact points within the consortium as well as activities performed.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TARGET GROUPS</th>
<th>SPECIFIC SMART4EUROPE CONTACT POINTS</th>
<th>SMART4EUROPE OUTREACH ACTIVITIES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Smart Anything Everywhere Initiative, SAE stakeholders, partners</td>
<td>Coordinators of IAs first round (HS, CEA, BLU, FOR) and second round (CEA, RWTH Aachen, Intrasoft); project partners (GateOne, CPSE Labs, SmarterSi, EuroCPS, FED4SAE, Tetramax, Diatomic and SmartEEs); SMEs involved in application experiments; EC</td>
<td>Joint promotion of cluster projects and open calls for application experiments, Innovation Portal - gathering and providing one platform for information, SAE brochure, mailings, social media, newsletter, flyers, organizing SAE collaboration events (WP2), ecosystem building and brokerage events (WPS and WP3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMEs and midcaps (suppliers and users of digital technologies)</td>
<td>Extensive contacts and networks of partners, networks of associated partners/members (see Letters of Support), multipliers EEN, NCPs, Chambers of Commerce, clusters</td>
<td>S2i Consultancy Days, local/regional events, regional, national and international fairs, dedicated activities at European events, mailings to SME-clients, bilateral meetings, brokerage events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMEs from non-tech sectors with an interest in digitisation</td>
<td>Specific contacts and networks of partners and associated partners, multipliers (SME associations, NCP, EEN, ...), Chambers of Commerce, AFIL</td>
<td>S2i Consultancy Days, local events, regional fairs, seminars and workshops (e.g. events organised by national chambers of commerce), mailings/newsletters of partner organisations, EEN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMEs/mid-caps in Eastern European Countries</td>
<td>Project partner in Hungary with close contacts to SMEs, Pannon Business Network Hungary, S2i/SEZs technology transfer activities in the east, Arise Europe program of EIT Digital, part of the EIT Regional Innovation Scheme (EIT RIS), EEN contact points, NCPs, Chambers of Commerce</td>
<td>Dedicated events in eastern Europe, connecting to NCP and holding joint information days (on EC and SAE calls), connecting with Danube focused projects (building up Technology Transfer Centers), brokerage / match-making in Warsaw and Bratislava</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multipliers</td>
<td>Steinbeis-Network, Hahn-Schickard Association, Catapult, NCP, EEN, BLU, MADE CC</td>
<td>Co-organized events with EEN (Unicorn or Transformer), using the Blumorpho, Steinbeis, and Hahn-Schickard network, contacting NCPs and chambers of commerce across Europe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clusters, associations, platforms, Managers and members of relevant clusters and networks</td>
<td>Members of ECSEL, Artemis-IA, ITEA, EPoSS, VDMA, OE-A, EEN, EFFRA, NESSI, INCOS, EIT DIGITAL, EIT Manufacturing, Embedded France, ICES competence network, Industry 4.0, Alliance 4.0 BW, microTec Südwest, Silicon Europe Alliance, Technology Mountains, Medical Mountains, Digital Mountains, BW-CPS, Kompetenzzentrum Textil Vernetzt, Zentrum Digitalisierung Bayern (ZD.B), Vanguard Initiative</td>
<td>Smart4Europe partners are members of many related associations, be it thematically (CPS, SSI, Computing, OLAE, manufacturing / I4.0) as well as focussing on SMEs in the area (S2i is regional contact point for SMEs of the ministry). Smart4Europe partners have informed and stimulated the representatives of such associations and clusters to promote the SAE initiative to their members and networks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Related European initiatives and projects</td>
<td>ECSEL/ARTEMIS-IA/EPoSS/ITEA, running/starting DEI focus area and other ICT/FoF projects, I4MS, EIT DIGITAL, AIOTI, IoT-EPI, ConnectedFactories, iHub, DIHNET.EU</td>
<td>Direct contact to coordinators was fostered, many Smart4Europe partners were also partners or members of the projects/associations, many representatives of sister initiatives were participants in Smart4Europe meetings (EU-consultation meeting, DIH days), very close contacts were made to the sister CSA I4MS, DIHNET.EU nad CSA Industry4.E as focal points to the communities as well as EFFRA, ECSEL/EPoSS/ARTEMIS</td>
</tr>
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</table>
### Research Community / Academia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Smart4Europe communities on CPS, IoT, SSI, OLAES, low energy computing, robotics, 5G, and other enabling technologies that are identified by the Technology Radar. Smart4Europe partners are deeply rooted within the scientific communities. Relevant conferences were visited and related experts invited to contribute to the Smart4Europe Technology Radar.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### European Commission, other policy-makers at national and regional levels

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DG CONNECT, Digitising European Industry Initiative and Focus Area, Factories of the Future ppp, (ICT-CPS/IoT, FoF and related); other interested policy stakeholders; European Parliament</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Full presence at all Digitising European Industry Stakeholder Fora, and participation in all EC DIH Working Group meetings. Excellent connection to national regional initiatives / ministries and joint events (SAE/ministry) in Grenoble and Stuttgart. Close links (and participation) in regional and national Digital Innovation Hubs. Bilateral meeting with Member of the European Parliament to plan a coordinated dissemination action.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### National, regional initiatives and funding bodies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Innovate UK, Digital Catapult UK, Transport Catapult, Midlands Aerospace Alliance, NESTA, Industry 4.0, Ministries of BW + Bavaria, Open innovative Centre, UK KTNs, La French Tech Initiative, Hungarian Innovation Agency, CyberForum, DE:HUBs, DIZ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Close links to national / regional funding bodies were established. Joint events were held, Smart4Europe representatives were invited to kick-off meeting of regional DIHs in Baden-Württemberg by ministry to inform on EU activities. Smart4Europe partners assisted with the registrations in the DIH catalogue.</td>
</tr>
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</table>

### Private investors, venture capitalists, business angels

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Blumorpho network of over 300 investors, UK Business Angels Association, PPMOost (NL), MKB-Nederland, The Carlyle Group, KKR, Blackstone Group, TPG Capital, CVC Capital Partners, 3i, Arch Venture, Aster Capital, b-to-v, Robert Bosch Venture Capital, BPI France, Panakes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Private investors were informed about the SAE portfolio and individual SMEs/Application Experiments that have benefitted from the SAE scheme had been invited to pitch and trained for it was at a dedicated investors event/ A technology/investors matching tool was established on the SAE portal, a webinar on how to attract investors was held and published on the portal.</td>
</tr>
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### Investment Banks/Funds

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<td></td>
<td>European Investment Funds (EIF), European Investment Bank (EIB) and European Structural Investment fund (ESIF)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>BLU attended related events among which workshops organised by the EIB on the assessment of access-to-finance conditions for DIHs and the digitalisation of SMEs. BLU was responsible for sustainability issues of the overall SAE initiative and promoted the initiative as such, met bilaterally to promote the SAE offering and results and proposed sustainability models.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### General public

<table>
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</thead>
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<td></td>
<td>All Smart4Europe partners, Smart4Europe Communication/Dissemination manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Promotion of the SAE Initiative via the Innovation Portal, (social) media, (online) magazines and trough communication &amp; dissemination activities (WP5 / D5.4)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 1: Target groups and matching outreach activities**
The table below shows the number of target group representatives contacted / informed during the project including participants in Smart4Europe Events, direct recipients of newsletters and mailings and face-to-face interactions at workshops or bilaterally. It does not include visitors of the website or followers on social media.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>HS</th>
<th>S2i</th>
<th>THK</th>
<th>BME</th>
<th>BLU</th>
<th>CEA</th>
<th>FOR</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SMEs and mid-caps</td>
<td>320</td>
<td>837</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>2418</td>
<td>540</td>
<td>280</td>
<td>4465</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large industry</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>191</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1000</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>1536</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academia, RTOs</td>
<td>352</td>
<td>866</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>1000</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>2379</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clusters / associations</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>445</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multipliers</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>168</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy-makers</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>125</td>
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<td>Funding bodies</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investors</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>368</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>389</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU-initiatives</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>109</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nat/reg initiatives</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1215</td>
<td>2048</td>
<td>174</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>5023</td>
<td>693</td>
<td>477</td>
<td>9745</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: Target groups contacted / informed

Next to direct contacts of the partners and through events and workshops, the outreach activities also build a lot on the Innovation Portal (WP1) gathering all the information of the SAE Innovation Actions, its overall offer, information on open calls, SAE related events, webinars, brokerage possibilities and social media channels. The Innovation Portal was well visited over 10,000 times (See D1.5) especially after main Smart4Europe / SAE events. The SAE newsletter subscription reached 170 in August 2019. The Twitter channel was very active, with many retweets and the followers reached over 600 towards the end of the project.

Communication, Dissemination and outreach materials were developed in WP5, such as the SAE flyer, SAE brochure, newsletters, SAE Video ([https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JLRalgelK3c](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JLRalgelK3c)), posters,…

Whenever needed, (event) specific material was produced, in cases of regional events also in respective languages.

5. Outreach Activity Highlights

As a large range of outreach activities were performed, the following chapter will concentrate on some of the highlights. Moreover a complete overview of all outreach, communication and dissemination activities can be found in D5.4.

5.1 SAE Events, Conferences, Fairs, Workshops and Brokerages

Main highlights during the first reporting period were already summarised in deliverable D5.3. Among them were the presentation of the SAE Initiative and Smart4Europe project at the I4MS/SAE Digital Innovation Hub Event in Madrid (09/2107), and much interest has been raised within the audience to become part of the SAE community (50 newcomers).
Another SAE specific session has been organised by the TETRAMAX IA at the HiPEAC Conference in Stuttgart in (10/2017), including a Smart4Europe presentation followed by a thorough discussion with the audience. Further related events, presenting Smart4Europe to wider audiences included the EPoSS Annual Forum (10/2017) and the ICT proposers days in Budapest (11/2107) where the project partner BLU as representative of the GateOne-project was awarded the ‘Best Early Stage Innovation Award’, giving great visibility to the SAE initiative. Towards the end of 2017, Smart4Europe was present at the EF ECS (European Forum for Electronic Components and Systems - 12/2017) with a joint booth with the SAE IA Smarter-SI. In early 2018 Smart4Europe held a dedicated SAE session at the HiPEAC conference in Manchester (01/2018) and had a brokerage, presentation and posters in the ARTEMIS brokerage event and EPoSS proposers day in Berlin (02/2018). This deepened the links to the ECSEL, ARTEMIS, EPoSS, Aeneas Community, the sister projects and other H2020 projects and engaged many newcomers in the SAE initiative. A SAE presentation was held at the TechInnov 2018 in Paris (02/2018), which was visited by about 1500 participants with a large majority being SMEs and start-ups. Interviews were performed with SMEs present. Over 7500 visitors were attending the SIDO “the IoT showroom” 2018, Lyon (04/2018) including start-ups, SMEs & midcaps and investors.

In spring 2018 Smart4Europe was present at the Hannover Messe (04/2018). The SAE initiative was invited to participate on the stand of the EC organised by I4MS project Fortissimo. Individual ‘pods’ displayed the SAE initiative (represented by Smart4Europe) and its aligned projects (Smarter-SI, GateOne, CPSE Labs, EuroCPS and FED4SAE). Smart4Europe organised a workshop related to cascade funding together with the sister initiative I4MS with presentations about the FSTP scheme, testimonials from parties who benefitted from it and an overview about the upcoming open calls using this funding possibility. In order to give more visibility to the booth, Smart4Europe proposed to organise a digital communication event involving all the DIHs and Innovation Actions from I4MS and SAE initiatives attending the EC booth. Moreover, a ‘Twitter contest’ to invite people to tweet the demonstrators they found the most impressive was stimulated, which the EC accepted to publish it on its website. Hence, Smart4Europe vastly contributed to and benefited from this dynamic activation, that enhanced visibility of SAE and I4MS partners. It was positive not only for communication purpose but also to strengthen relationships between projects partners inside SAE and with I4MS.

A main highlight in 2018 was European Innovation Hub Day (EIH-Day), organised at CEA Tech in Grenoble (06/2018). The full day event was dedicated to DIHs and the use of associated European research and innovation programmes. The event brought together over 80 key-players from the EC, Regions, Regional Clusters, Research and Technology Organisations (RTOs) and SMEs (about 30%) from over 15 countries to exchange views on existing and future innovation hubs. Next to presentations from DIHs of different countries and regions, SME testimonial about experiences, successes and lessons learnt were given (SMEs from UK, France and Hungary). The event included a panel discussion of successful SMEs that already benefited from the SAE calls, demonstrating the effectiveness of the initiative. The event stimulated the dialogue between the initiatives and SMEs and also the policy making of different regions.

During the second year of the project Smart4Europe partners continued to having booths at the EF ECS in Lisbon (11/2018) with over 100 visits with minimum 25 SME newcomers, DIH Annual Event in Warsaw (11/2018) and ICT-2018 in Vienna (12/2018) with over 300 visits of which 30% SME newcomers. The stands informed about activities of all SAE Innovation actions and partly were done
jointly with the I4MS sister project, to serve SMEs with the extended portfolio. The chosen events were rather large, but were very effective, as this gave the opportunity to inform SMEs on a European level.

Figure 3: SAE Booth at EF ECS in Lisbon (left); SAE-I4MS Booth at ICT-2018 in Vienna (right)

Smart4Europe gave a presentation on its upcoming open calls and held a networking session jointly with the I4MS sister project at the ICT-2018 proposers day (Imagine Digital) in Vienna (12/2018).

Figure 4: SAE presentation (top right); SAE-I4MS networking session (top left and bottom)

The networking session ‘From Experiment to Market: SAE & I4MS support in cascade funding projects’ (https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/events/cf/ict2018/item-display.cfm?id=21611) presented best practices of this type of supporting programs and discussed ideas for improving them with the audience. Moreover, it provided a space for an audience interested in the open calls to meet and eventually build consortia. During the DIH Annual Event, SAE Application Experiment success stories were showcased and visited by representatives of the Polish ministry as well as Mariya Gabriel, the current European Commissioner for Digital Economy and Society.
As a second SAE annual event and follow up of the European Digital Innovation Hub day in Grenoble the Digital Innovation Hubs Day was held in May 2019 in Stuttgart.

Figure 5: SAE Ferd4SAE Application Experiment showcased at DIH Annual event in Warsaw

Figure 6: Banner of the Digital Innovation Hubs Day 2019 registration page

The event brought together more than 70 representatives from regional, national and European Digital Innovation Hubs (DIHs), as well as start-ups, mid-caps and SMEs and policy makers. In several interactive ‘share and learn’ and brokerage sessions they presented the concepts, impacts and further plans of their individual initiatives and discussed experiences, SME needs and future cooperation possibilities. Chairman Max Lemke (DG CNECT, European Commission) set out the European context and perspective of the DIH community. Keynote speaker Peter Mendler (Ministry of Economic Affairs, Baden-Württemberg) expressed the desire for concerted actions and a sustainable network supporting the digital transformation of the regional, national and European industry. SMEs were informed about the offer on regional, national and European level, and had the chance to connect with DIH as well as suppliers and users of digital technologies.

Figure 7: Introduction to the DIH Day in Stuttgart by Max Lemke
The networking sessions discussed topics like optimising the DIH offer and organisation on regional, national and European level, fostering European collaboration of DIHs and the sustainability of digital initiatives. A particular focus was set on the needs of SMEs and how they can benefit from DIH services to upgrade their products and services or improve their processes by digital innovations. Information about SAE cascade funding and how to apply for open calls addressed SMEs directly. The participants from over 10 countries continued their networking via the Smart4Europe LinkedIn channel. A film team was present performing interviews and capturing statements of the participants (https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC_tsL114HH5oaxp5HBy-gHzA).

Smart4Europe organised various brokerage events (see also D3.5), including the brokerage at the DIH Annual Event in Warsaw (11/2018), the brokerage at the DIH Day in Stuttgart (06/2019) and at the Unicorn and Transformer Event in Stuttgart (07/2019). Brokerage activities also included participation in ARTEMIS and EPOSS brokerage events, brokerage at the Minealogic CPS Thematic Day, the Smart and Digital Future Event.

5.2 Participation to the Digitizing European Industry / DIH Working Group DIH Catalogue

The Smart4Europe Partners are all active in the Digitizing European Industry (DEI) Initiative on an individual basis but also representing the Smart4Europe project. All partners are active in presenting the SAE initiative and its offer to interested stakeholders and newcomers, and discuss the SAE objectives and results at various events and in different working groups. HS, S2i, CEA and FOR are actively involved in enhancing collaboration between DIHs and building the bridge regarding national and regional initiatives. While BLU is active regarding concepts for financing and sustainability and leading interviews with financial and political authorities, THK is involved in the future EU strategies in various ways. The partners have actively participated in all working group meetings of the DEI DIHs WG. Presentation on collaboration of DIHs, national & regional DIHs, skills development and networking DIHs were given at the respective events. Four Smart4Europe partners were present at the Digitizing European Industry Stakeholder Forum (2017 and 2018). Moreover, HS, CEA, FOR and S2i are registered in the Catalogue of DIHs (http://s3platform.jrc.ec.europa.eu/digital-innovation-hubs-tool).

SME Perspective – Please Simplify Interface

Figure 8: THK presentation on SME needs at the 7th Working group meeting (07/2019)
5.3 Linking to National/Regional Initiatives and Ministries Funding Bodies

Smart4Europe has linked the SAE initiative to national/regional activities from beginning on. Already shortly before the project start (07/2017), two Smart4Europe partners (HS and S2i) visited information events of local funding bodies in Baden-Württemberg to promote local DIHs (“Initiative Wirtschaft 4.0 BW Förderaufruf Regionale Digitalisierungszentren”) and discussed the synergies between the initiatives. During the first project year, HS has become partner in two of the 10 winning regional DIH projects. Presentations to link the two initiatives were given at the DIH working group meetings, as well as at the Ministry of economics in Baden-Württemberg and the related funding bodies (CyberForum). Great interest to exploit synergies was raised and follow-up activities were performed. HS and S2i are deeply involved in the regional ecosystem and were invited to activities of the regional and national DIHs to give presentations and consult SMEs on opportunities on EU level and to explain and assist registration in the ‘catalogue’.

At the Digitizing European Industry Stakeholder Forum, Smart4Europe became active in visiting the initiatives’ exhibitions of the member states and connecting with the various stakeholders present, informing them on the SAE initiative and offers. In line with the development of a “Blueprint of a sustainability plan” BLU conducted 4 interviews of national and regional representatives of Industry4.0 initiatives in order to get an overview of their perception of the collaboration that is being built between DIHs and their initiatives. Smart4Europe was present in the DIH working group meeting on “Collaboration between DIHs and national and regional initiatives”, with a presentation on Smart4Europe (S2i) followed by many discussions with NCPs and policy makers thereafter and a national / regional example (HS see above). In the European DIH Day event in June 2018 in Grenoble, Smart4Europe has brought together EU national and regional initiatives to discuss benefits and synergies of DIHs. Moreover, various ICT Info days were held in conjunction with national/regional initiatives (NCP/Innovation agency and Smart4Europe partners S2i in Stuttgart and BME in Budapest).

During the DIH Day in Stuttgart, over 20 representatives from regional and national initiatives, clusters and the ministry were present (DigiHubs Baden-Württemberg, DE:HUBs, Baden Württemberg Ministry representatives). Fruitful discussions took place, e.g. between EC, SAE and ministry representatives.
Moreover, presentations were given at national research funding events, e.g. government organised events targeting SMEs and policy makers alike. Additionally, bilateral meetings with regional funding bodies by S2i director, being the Commissioner for Europe of Baden-Württemberg, were held with the Ministry of BW and board member in the Vanguard Initiative.

A major new forum is the Bavarian Centre for Artificial Intelligence that is established at the Smart4Europe partner fortiss. Results on Smart4Europe research priorities are communicated to public authorities, e.g. BMBF/BMWI as well as BITKOM and Acatech as well as in the context of the EIT Digital innovation network with the goal of initiating added-value CPS innovation projects based on the findings of Smart4Europe.

Moreover, links were built by THK with the Vanguard Initiative (NL) as well as Smart Industry with strategic links to Field Labs (30+) and the Smart Agriculture sector as well as with InnovateUK in the areas of AI, Manufacturing, Electric Vehicles, Aerospace and Ocean Plastic Pollution. THK presented Horizon 2020 and Digital Europe funding opportunities at an Innovation Event in Sheffield (50 attendees from Universities and SMEs) and built links with the Vinnova funding body in Sweden which has funded a new centre on Trustworthy Edge Computing.

To strengthen the links between national initiatives, a Trilateral working group meeting (FRA-IT-GER) was visited, presenting Smart4Europe and its offer. Moreover, meetings to further exploit synergies between national, regional and EU activities were held. The key digitising manufacturing initiatives of Germany, France and Italy have agreed on a trilateral cooperation to support and strengthen the digitisation processes of their manufacturing sectors as well as to promote European efforts in this field. German Plattform Industrie 4.0, French Alliance Industrie du Futur and Italian initiative Piano Industria 4.0 have developed a shared action plan with several action items and deliverables. During the Trilateral Working Group 2 (SME outreach and Testbeds) meeting organised in Metz, France on 11 and 12 of September 2018. The participants (about 25) exchanged ideas on digitalisation strategies to adopt toward SMEs. It included testimonies from SMEs. The 4th meeting of Trilateral Working Group 2 (SME outreach and Testbeds) was held in Nuremberg, Germany on 24th -25th of January 2019. This presented another excellent opportunity for Smart4Europe to disseminate its strategy and results to European experts, potential multipliers and SMEs as well as to get an insight and build synergies regarding complementary and alternative strategies. S2i presented the SME outreach strategy of Smart4Europe.

5.4 SME Campaigns and Brokerages

Outreach to European start-ups, SMEs and mid-caps are at the heart of Smart4Europe. Nevertheless, they are sometimes difficult to reach, as they tend to travel less, have little time and sometimes prefer information in their own language. Smart4Europe partners have a long track of collaborating with and supporting start-ups / SMEs across Europe and within their regions and are well aware of their needs.

Smart4Europe partners are closely interlinked with the start-ups, SMEs and mid-caps of their country and regions. As an example, S2i represents the SME contact point of the Baden-Württemberg ministry, with the mission to build the bridge between regional entities and Europe. S2i acts as an access point and multiplier regarding regional DIHs and as a support for the ministry of the state of
Baden-Württemberg to inform about and connect with European Strategies (DEI) and DIHs. S2i is closely interlinked with regional DIHs as well as national DE:HUB situated in Karlsruhe (AI) and Stuttgart (Digital Industry). Moreover, S2i is an active partner in the EEN network brokering between users and suppliers of digital technologies and **Start-up Ambassador of the EC**. CEA, FOR, BME and HS are also deeply involved in the regional DIH ecosystem, HS being partner in 2 of the 10 regional DIH reaching out to start-ups, SMEs and mid-caps in Baden-Württemberg. THK is an SME itself and well aware of their needs and challenges. BLU is an innovation accelerator for SMEs and start-ups and has built a large network during the past years. All these Smart4Europe partners have leveraged from their contacts and multiplier to reach a vast amount of SMEs from high-tech as well as non-tech sectors.

Next to promoting the SAE initiative through their websites, mailings, newsletters and social media channels, telephone calls, ... different face-to-face events were held. They included SME specific activities within larger European events, as well as SME specific campaigns and brokerages on a more regional/local level.

Within **larger events** like ICT-2017, EFECS 2017 and ARTEMIS-brokerage 2018, Smart4Europe partners have approached the SMEs specifically by presenting at or participating in the SME related sessions, and informing them about SAE. At such events, plenary presentations had been given with the chance to receive more detailed information at a poster/stand over the 1-3 days.

Regional events included info events like on the ICT program (e.g. conducted by S2i together with the NCP-ICT in Stuttgart, Germany or BME and the NCP-ICT in Budapest, Hungary), where the SAE initiative as well as the possibilities offered by open calls were presented and discussed. Moreover, the Digital Summit (2018/2019), represented good opportunities to present the SAE offer and engage SMEs, with over 1000 participants whereof over 50% SMEs. Follow up-discussions took place.

![Figure 10: Digitalgipfel (Digital Summit) 2019 in Stuttgart, Germany](image)

Fortiss is continuously engaging in discussions with companies to identify barriers to digital transformation and devise ways to address them. Fortiss uses various platforms where Smart4Europe results and technology are presented to industrial partners in Bavaria, including organisation of own events such as the fortiss TechDays, close cooperation with the thematic digitisation platforms of the Zentrum Digitalisierung Bayern, the associated ICT cluster network BICCNnet, or events in coordination with the Bavarian Industry Association and the Chamber of Commerce and Industry for Munich and Upper Bavaria.
Another example on approaching SMEs was the SME information campaign, approaching SMEs in 12 different cities across Baden-Württemberg with SME consulting days. Here, funding possibilities specifically for the SME instrument, but also including the SAE open calls were presented and discussed intensively with smaller audiences (about 20-25 SME per consulting day). At the Minalogic thematic day ‘CPS modeling’ in Grenoble, (11/2017) about 20 SMEs were informed in detail about the opportunities of the SAE initiative by CEA.

On July 8th 2019 a large event ‘Unicorn or Transformer’ was held in Stuttgart to inform about the EIC – pathfinder and accelerator ‘SME Instrument’ and at the same time on ‘other funding opportunities’ for start-ups, SMEs and mid-caps. This event was co-organised with the EEN network. Over 600 start-ups and SMEs registered and 90 thereof booking a face-to-face consultancy on SME related instruments. The face-to-face consultancies on SME funding opportunities were conducted by S2i, and the SAE initiative was mentioned in all cases and promoted as a possibility where appropriate. Follow-up discussions took place at S2i premises.

Figure 11: Banner of the ‘Unicorn or Transformer’ registration page

5.5 Outreach targeted at geographical coverage

Specific actions were also carried out to reach SMEs in Eastern countries, including a SAE open call promotion at the Danube Competitiveness in Practice workshop (Pecs, Hungary), ICT proposers day in Budapest, Smart and Digital Future Event – Vienna-Brno-Bratislava, information via the EEN network, information to the coordinators of DIH and TC related projects. Two dedicated info sessions about the SAE were held at BME in January and May 2018 in Budapest, Hungary.

The “Smart and digital future event Vienna-Bro-Bratislava” was visited in September 2018, where various SAE presentations were held, and a brokerage/match-making organised (about 80 SMEs from eastern countries were present). More events reaching out to Eastern countries included the UM Internationalisation Days in Maribor, Slovenia and contacting the coordinators of the Danube Transnational Programme. The European Week of Regions (two events dedicated to DIHs in EU13 states), networking event organised by PWC (widening towards Eastern Europe) as well as the Annual DIH Day in Warsaw (November 2018) are further opportunities to include participants from currently white spots in Eastern Europe. In all these events Smart4Europe is presented prominently. Smart4Europe was present at the DIH annual event in Warsaw (11/2018) and organised the pitching
and brokerage session there. Smart4Europe elaborated a Deliverable (D3.3) identifying the white spots in terms of funding initiatives across Europe and transferred the finding into actionable recommendations in D4.5. White spots were specifically targeted in all kinds of outreach activities and the SAE data base revealed a much better European coverage after the 2 years of the project (see D2.5, D5.4 and graphs below). Smart4Europe / SAE achieved 21 EU countries as newsletter subscribers (170 subscribers in 08/2019), 22 EU countries in Application Experiments, full coverage regarding website visits. Core countries are still Germany, Spain and France, but enhancement towards the eastern countries and other countries underrepresented could be detected clearly.

![Figure 12: EU coverage in terms of newsletter subscribers (left) and granted Application Experiments (right)](image)

**5.6 Outreach targeted at technological coverage**

To ensure a good coverage across the technological domains (CPS, SSI, OLAIE, customised computing), the project partners visited a large number of scientific conferences (ECSEL, ARTEMIS, EPoSS, IEEE), workshops and fairs (e.g. LOPEC and Hannover Fair) as described in D5.4 (Dissemination Plan). Next to this and also to bring the different domains together, the Technology Radar workshop and EU Consultation Meeting served to jointly evaluate future technologies which could benefit from the SAE scheme. Participants of such meetings discussed future technologies and application fields resulting in Deliverables D4.1 - D4.4. The results of the technology radar were presented at a range of events and received many positive feedbacks by interested stakeholders.
Next to this, the EC consultation meeting on strategies for future SAE technologies and application areas, provided grounds for discussion towards developments in Horizon Europe (D4.5), which was widely spread within the community. The event was held with 20 selected participants representing a mix of DIH initiatives and innovation experts to validate and refine recommendations to be fed into Digital Europe. The draft Smart4Europe Recommendations were already provided to EC early on, as interest expressed in these by Andrea Halmos and Max Lemke.

5.7 Outreach to and collaboration with related projects

Close collaboration with sister Innovation Actions and related projects (especially CSAs as contact points to the communities e.g. I4MS, DIHNet.EU, HIPEAC, Platforms4CPS, 5E, ConnectedFactories, InSlight, SmartFactories, CSA Industry4.E Lighthouse above others) was established and deepened, joint events organised and information and insights shared. Related organisations/associations like ARTEMIS-IA, EPoSS, EFFRA were used as dissemination channels for industry and the scientific community, as well as EEN, NCPs and clusters as channels mainly towards SMEs and midcaps. The collaboration with the closest sister project I4MS was specifically intense, as regular telephone conferences, joint booths, workshops and meetings were organised, to inform SMEs on the very related opportunities in a joint manner.

5.8 Leverage further investment / Outreach to Investors

Outreach to private investors

Smart4Europe has regularly informed a wide investor’s network of over 80 investors on the SAE outcomes especially from the Application Experiments supported with cascade funding from the IAs. They were sent SAE newsletters and invitations to events.

Furthermore, a group of 14 investors, selected among BLUMORPHO’s contacts for their interest in investing in European DeepTech, were specifically targeted to receive dedicated information concerning the SAE initiative and it’s IAs. They were also interviewed concerning the sustainability of the SAE initiative and their perception of the challenges of the technologies addressed in SAE IAs.

Each year, in conjunction with WP3 Outreach and Strategy to leverage further investment, the opportunity had been given to companies having benefitted from the SAE IAs technical and business support to improve their fundraising strategy through 2 webinars and 1 workshop and to pitch in front of investors with the coaching of BLU to do so.
In October 2018, an investor’s event gathering more than 40 of them, the INPHO venture Summit was held, where the Application Experiment partners were given the opportunity to pitch their ideas and meet venture capitalists and corporate ventures in one-to-one meetings. 4 companies having benefiting from SAE decided to take this opportunity. In this context, BLU organised a webinar on the EIB financing instruments InnovFin – EU Finance for Innovators. This webinar was an introduction in preparation of a workshop that took place in the course of the event during which companies had the opportunity to meet EC & EIB InnovFin experts and ask questions. The webinar and the workshop gathered respectively 92 and 52 participants. (see Y1 dissemination deliverable for more details).

Figure 15: InnovFin Webinar and Inpho Venture Summit

Through those actions, Smart4Europe was given the opportunity on one hand to offer partners’ Application Experiments a privileged access to private investors and new public funding instruments while on the other hand, disseminating information through innovative companies about the services Innovation Actions can provide them with.

In order to disseminate information on the SAE Innovation Actions, BLU prepared a brochure that was included in the INPHO global program brochure:

Figure 16: Brochure featuring SAE for the Inpho Venture Summit
During Summer 2019, following the same process, BLU send an invitation to all the companies involved in one of the SAE initiative IAs to participate to a webinar on “How to get investors falling in love with your company” and to benefit from BLU coaching to pitch in front of private investors during digital pitching sessions. The webinar was recorded and made available on SAE website: https://smartanythingeverywhere.eu/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/SAE-workshop-How-to-make-investors-falling-in-love-with-your-company.mp4.

It gathered 38 participants among which 26 SMEs having benefiting from SAE innovation acceleration programs and 2 SMEs partners of one of the programs. 14 countries were represented (Spain, Czech Republic, United Kingdom, Greece, Germany, Slovenia, Belgium, France, Switzerland, Lithuania, Portugal, Cyprus, Bulgaria and Romania)

**Outreach to policy makers and public investors**

To facilitate implementation and sustainability of Digital Innovation Hubs across regions, BLU got in touch with members of the **European Parliament** in order to disseminate the information on the economic impact of DIH and Innovations Actions. This action also aims at highlighting the positive impact of European legislation and investments in R&I and in digitalisation of European companies.

The inputs gathered by BLU through those contacts have been very inspiring for the D2.6 Blueprint for a Sustainability plan. Furthermore, discussions to organise a meeting at the European Parliament on the issue of access of digitalisation and innovation by SMEs have been engaged that could be pursue by the next CSA.

The sustainability of the SAE Initiative and its IAs has also been at the core discussions between BLU and Nitan Patak from the European Investment Funds (EIF) and with Arnold Verbeek from the European Investment Bank (EIB). In March 2019, BLU took part to the webinar organised by the EIB and their consultant Gartner concerning their study on access to finance for DIH & SME Digitalisation. The inputs gathered through those contacts are highlighted in more details in the D5.5 Recommendations on DIHs sustainability.

### 6. Assessment of Outreach Activities / Smart4Europe KPIs

The following list and table provides key activities and performance indicators according to which the success of outreach activities were measured.

- Above 12.500 visits of the SAE innovation portal
- Over 1.000 SAE brochure and 8 issues of the SAE newsletter spread
- 5 booths (LOPEC, EFECs 2017 and 2018, Hannover Messe, ICT-2018)
- 13 SAE/DIH events organised or co-organised (conferences, workshops, brokerages,...)
- Presented the SAE at over 20 events/conferences/workshops
- Visited over 30 related events/conferences/workshops (bilateral discussions and flyers)
- Presented at 4 DIH working group meetings, were involved in all further working groups
- Held 1 investor meetings, 2 investor related webinars, face-to-face meetings with EIF and EIB
- Organised 3 brokerage events and participated in many more
- Had over 10 meetings with ministries/local/national policy making
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Partner(s) responsible</th>
<th>Activity / Task</th>
<th>Timeline</th>
<th>Expected outcome</th>
<th>KPIs</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ALL</td>
<td>Promote Innovation Portal</td>
<td>M01 - M24</td>
<td>Increased online traffic on portal</td>
<td>1,500 visitors per month</td>
<td>Depending on measurement, traffic increased</td>
<td>Current status: over <strong>12,500</strong> visits Traffic was specifically increased after Outreach/Dissemination Events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S2i (all)</td>
<td>Gather contacts for D3.1 stakeholder database</td>
<td>M01 - M24</td>
<td>Contact database to support outreach and dissemination activities</td>
<td>More than 2,000 contacts available at project end</td>
<td>achieved</td>
<td>Current status: more than <strong>9,700</strong> contacts available and contacted informed about SAE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BLU</td>
<td>Contact 60+ businesses in non-tech sectors</td>
<td>M01-M24</td>
<td>Recruit non-tech business to as SAE stakeholder</td>
<td>At least 60 to be contacted</td>
<td>achieved</td>
<td>Current status: <strong>200+</strong> informed (about 10% of SMEs contacted)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>Establish contact to 100+ stakeholders from national, regional initiatives, funding bodies</td>
<td>M01-M24</td>
<td>Stimulate linkage and cooperation, leverage investment, extend geographical coverage</td>
<td>100+ stakeholders from national/regional initiatives met</td>
<td>achieved</td>
<td>Specific events like the DIH days, DIH annual events and DIH working groups gathered a vast number of stakeholder including over <strong>100</strong> from national/regional initiatives. Close relationships were built with the regional and national DIHs, their funding bodies and respective ministries. Face-to-face meetings were held.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BLU</td>
<td>Establish contact to 50+ private investors</td>
<td>M01-M24</td>
<td>Stimulate linkage and cooperation, leverage investment</td>
<td>50+ investors contacted</td>
<td>achieved</td>
<td>BLU and other partners have informed their Investor networks about successes of the SAE initiative (about <strong>400</strong> investors). Specific events like the investors events were held (over <strong>40</strong> investors present), and additional face-to-face consultancies by BLU (over <strong>80</strong>).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>Recruit stakeholders at Brokerage Events</td>
<td>M01-M22</td>
<td>Newcomers to the initiative, match making</td>
<td>At least 40 newcomers</td>
<td>achieved</td>
<td>At the SAE brokerage events as well as satellite events over <strong>200</strong> participants were informed, whereof over 50% newcomers (see D3.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALL</td>
<td>Attract SMEs and mid-caps</td>
<td>M01-M24</td>
<td>e.g. SME-Consultancy Event at Chamber of Commerce, talk to relevant SMEs and promote initiative</td>
<td>At least 50 newcomers</td>
<td>achieved</td>
<td>SME campaigns, KMU Beratertage (<strong>50+</strong> stakeholders informed) and Smart4Europe events (over <strong>500</strong> participants at Unicorn event,...), informed a large number of</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*NOTE: The table contains activities and corresponding details for specific partners responsible for each task. The table includes expected outcomes, KPIs, and status updates. Comments provide additional context on the progress and achievements of each activity.*
**Table 3: Smart4Europe Outreach related KPI**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THK</th>
<th>Extend technological coverage</th>
<th>M01-M24</th>
<th>Use Innovation Radar</th>
<th>At least 3 more technologies identified</th>
<th>achieved</th>
<th>Over 100+ new technologies identified, technology radar promoted widely</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>Annual SAE Event</td>
<td>M01-M24</td>
<td>Ecosystem building, links to national regional initiatives</td>
<td>2 annual events held</td>
<td>achieved</td>
<td>2 DIH days: Grenoble 2018 and Stuttgart 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>Service Centre, face-to-face consultancies direct support to SMEs</td>
<td>M01-M24</td>
<td>Increase number of SMEs participating in SAE</td>
<td>Give advice to 200+ SMEs</td>
<td>achieved</td>
<td>Direct support was given to SMEs via the Innovation Portal and more specifically at targeted events on EU and regional level and individual consultancies and brokerages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>Achieve full EU-28 coverage of SAE</td>
<td>M01-M24</td>
<td>EU-28 coverage (including participants in application experiments), extend geographical coverage</td>
<td>Full coverage</td>
<td>Depending on measurement, Application Experiments have covered EU widely</td>
<td>The SAE data base (D2.5 reveals a good coverage of AEs in 26 countries (22 EU countries), 21 EU countries as newsletter subscribers and full coverage regarding website visits.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>Participation in 4 major industry fairs</td>
<td>M01-M24</td>
<td>Either participation with talk or booth, recruit newcomers to the initiative</td>
<td>achieved</td>
<td>1) LOPEC 2) Hannover Fair 3) EF ECS 2017 and 2018 4) ICT 2018</td>
<td></td>
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7. Conclusion

In Smart4Europe a range of broad and specific outreach activities were performed. Outreach activities complemented the SAE internal collaboration activities (WP2) and were supported by the dissemination efforts (WP5) as well as the features and activities of the Innovation Portal (WP1). The collaboration between these work packages, and the exchange and feedbacks between them turned out to be of great value and very effective.

The SAE Stakeholder Database (D3.1) and Outreach Plan (D3.2) created early within the project were used substantially throughout the project and revealed to be useful tools to support outreach activities efficiently. D3.3 revealed an excellent overview of existing digital initiatives and was used to identify and connect to national regional players as well as to identify and target ‘white spots’ on the landscape. This map was also used by EC representatives of different units to get a clearer picture of the funding landscape. It also fed into the recommendations for the future evolution of SAE / DIHs in the Horizon Europe and Digital Europe Programs. The Task 3.4 ‘leverage further investment and outreach to investors’ has been critical to better address the different needs for funding from innovative companies depending on their maturity and their objectives. This gave Smart4Europe the opportunity to build on strong relationships with private investors interested in deep tech and to highlight the impact their actions can have on the challenges faced by high-tech companies in Europe.

The Brokerage Events (D3.5) were very effective when conducted at a European level at events where a large proportion of SMEs participated, or on local/regional level where SMEs could be attracted more easily, as they don’t have to travel too far. There are a large number of SME focussed events on regional level, and connecting with the respective ministries and clusters turned out to bring very positive linkages for the project duration and beyond.

Stakeholders deeply rooted within the SAE ecosystem like the coordinators and partners of the SAE Projects, individual Digital Innovation Hubs from IAs, and Application Experiment Partners were excellent ambassadors, to promote the benefits and opportunities provided by the SAE initiative. Such stakeholders, who had already experienced the SAE Initiative, were deeply convinced of the positive impacts and promoted SAE with their learnings and success stories. They were invited as speakers to Smart4Europe / SAE events and participated in joint booths. The outreach activities leveraged a lot from overall ecosystem build in WP2, which already has grown into a solid SAE community.

The events organised by or with support of the European Commission (DIH working group meetings, DIH stakeholder events and DIH annual events) turned out to be excellent opportunities to reach a vast number of stakeholders from academia, SME/industry, policy-making, national/regional initiatives as well as related initiatives (e.g., I4MS, DIHNET.EU). During such events, especially the DIH working group on connecting with national/regional initiatives, skills, sustainability and networking of DIHs, Smart4Europe had a prominent role giving presentations and connecting relevant stakeholder.

Smart4Europe visited a vast number of events, fairs, conferences, workshops and brokerages to spread SAE related information widely and recruit newcomers from a broad technical and geographical area. After such events, the visits on the Innovation portal increased significantly (see
also D5.4, D1.5). Next to this, Smart4Europe held a vast amount of own events, targeted at SMEs, national/regional initiatives or investors. Main highlights were the yearly ecosystem-building event, the Digital Hub European Innovation Hub Day in Grenoble (06/2018), and the DIH day in Stuttgart in spring 2019 in close collaboration with the respective ministries. They effectively brought together regional, national and EU initiatives and stakeholders, clusters, DIHs as well as SMEs and policy makers to exchange experiences and perspectives and exploit possible synergies. These events led to close collaborations and follow-up activities between the European and national/regional initiatives and clusters. The Smart4Europe / SAE events were well visited and received very positive feedbacks. Moreover, Smart4Europe organised various brokerage events, including in eastern countries, with ARTEMIS and EPOSS and in collaboration with EEN. Specific activities and campaigns for start-ups, SMEs and mid-caps were performed on European but also regional level, partly in the respective languages and as one-to-one consultancies. Outreach activities for SMEs were most effective when there was enough time to explain the complex context of how to concretely get involved in the variety of open calls, or when the ‘Smart4Europe intermediate’ could recommend the tailored opportunities to individual SMEs. A recommendation put forward by Smart4Europe is to simplify and homogenize the open call process and procedure (within SAE but also between SAE and I4MS), to be able to explain, understand and capture the opportunities easier. Currently the topics and processes vary a lot between each individual IA, and many discussions with SAE stakeholders confirmed this opinion.

Thanks to Smart4Europe outreach actions towards private investors, companies from the SAE IAs application experiments had the opportunity to pitch in front of private investors and to be coached to do so. Those who benefitted from this opportunity really appreciated it and it offered them some further business opportunities. 130 innovative SMEs took part in Smart4Europe webinars and workshops during which EU financial instruments for entrepreneurs were explained, EIB experts answered questions and BLU advised them how to strengthen their strategy towards private investors.

With Smart4Europe outreach and dissemination activities, a broad European coverage could be reached, which nevertheless still includes countries underrepresented. Smart4Europe established a map of national and regional initiatives, detected the white spots and formulated recommendations to better integrate such countries (D4.5).

Looking into the future, Smart4Europe has discussed the evolution of the SAE Initiative, including the technological, application and geographic coverage and dedicated outreach activities to further grow and sustain the initiative in various related deliverables (D3.3, D4.1 - 4.5 and D5.5).