D7.5 Supporting Toolkit for Startup Competitions

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Dissemination level

PU	Public	PU
CO	Confidential, only for members of the consortium (including the Commission Services)	

Deliverable administration

No & name	**D7.5 Supporting Toolkit for Startup Competitions**				
Status	Released	**Due**	M48	**Date**	2023-09-30
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Description of the related task and the deliverable. Extract from DoA	The information included in D7.4 will be edited in the form of a package (an "executive toolkit") that will be used to communicate the pre-commercial procurement. The targets are external entities (mainly innovative start-ups and SMEs) present in the geographic area defined in D7.4. GOPA Com. will actively disseminate the tool kit to promote participation. Action will include promotion through social media, the SPARCS newsletter, SPARCS website, etc. Statistics will be kept on first recipients, applications received, etc. After the pre-commercial or, if applicable, the public procurement process are completed, GOPA will communicate and promote the results to the SPARCS community.				
Participants	GOPA, VTT, BABLE, SUITE5				
Comments	n/a				

V	Date	Authors	Description
0.1	26/07/2023	WP Leader	First draft submitted to WP7 leader for comments
0.2	04/09/2023	WP Leader	Second draft submitted to internal reviewers
0.3	22/09/2023	WP Leader	Deliverable checked by WP leader and released to the Coordinator and the Quality Manager for quality check and subsequent submission to the EC.
1.0	29/09/2023	VTT	Coordinator submits the deliverable to the EC

About SPARCS

Sustainable energy Positive & zero cARbon CommunitieS demonstrates and validates technically and socioeconomically viable and replicable, innovative solutions for rolling out smart, integrated positive energy systems for the transition to a citizen centred zero carbon & resource efficient economy. SPARCS facilitates the participation of buildings to the energy market enabling new services and a virtual power plant concept, creating VirtualPositiveEnergy communities as energy democratic playground (positive energy districts can exchange energy with energy entities located outside the district). Seven cities will demonstrate 100+ actions turning buildings, blocks, and districts into energy prosumers. Impacts span economic growth, improved quality of life, and environmental benefits towards the EC policy framework for climate and energy, the SET plan and UN Sustainable Development goals. SPARCS co-creation brings together citizens, companies, research organizations, city planning and decision making entities, transforming cities to carbon-free inclusive communities. Lighthouse cities Espoo (FI) and Leipzig (DE) implement large demonstrations. Fellow cities Reykjavik (IS), Maia (PT), Lviv (UA), Kifissia (EL) and Kladno (CZ) prepare replication with hands-on feasibility studies. SPARCS identifies bankable actions to accelerate market uptake, pioneers innovative, exploitable governance and business models boosting the transformation processes, joint procurement procedures and citizen engaging mechanisms in an overarching city planning instrument toward the bold City Vision 2050. SPARCS engages 30 partners from 8 EU Member States (FI, DE, PT, CY, EL, BE, CZ, IT) and 2 non-EU countries (UA, IS), representing key stakeholders within the value chain of urban challenges and smart, sustainable cities bringing together three distinct but also overlapping knowledge areas: (i) City Energy Systems, (ii) ICT and Interoperability, (iii) Business Innovation and Market Knowledge.

Partners

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The following toolkit was developed on the basis of recommendations outlined in D7.13 ('How to Implement a Startup Competition'), as well as in response to challenges and learnings from recent startup competitions hosted in Leipzig, Germany, and Espoo, Finland, outlined in D7.4 ('Smart City Challenge Report and Lessons Learned').

As mentioned in D7.4, (Lighthouses Cities Start up Smart City Challenges and Lessons learnt") establishing 'necessary timeframes, schedules, and programmes to avoid unexpected or unrehearsed situations' is of utmost importance in planning such competitions. Defining an entire workplan in advance allows for foresee challenges and ensure that stakeholders such as juries and mentors dedicate sufficient amount of time to take part.

This toolkit also takes into account other findings discussed in D7.4, such as the question of whether to assign specific weights to different criteria. As per the criteria table in section 3.4, the decision has been left up to organisers. 'It is … necessary', write the authors of D7.4, 'in the hands of possible future replications to decide as to whether equally weighted criteria or criteria with different coefficients create a more adequate assessment template. This decision is in the hand of future implementors of such start-up city challenges.' In other words, competition organisers should adapt their approach based on the individual characteristics of the competition.

Organising a start-up competition requires considering the size and maturity of start-ups when engaging them in competitions and, if possible, to provide financial assistance to smaller companies. Additionally, it is recommended to incorporate sustainability concepts in the challenge and engage start-ups with sustainability principles during the competition.

In addition to helping clarify for competition organisers the purpose of their endeavour, this toolkit was chiefly designed to prompt organisers to consider all the factors that could impact the success of their competitions.

Further to this, GOPA Com. has put together a condensed communication plan to promote the use of the toolkit amongst various stakeholders.
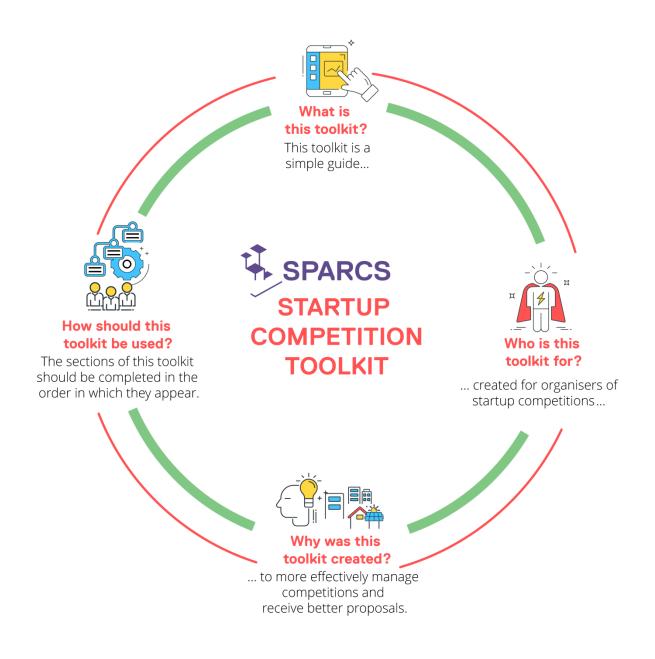
INTRODUCTION

This toolkit is a simple step-by-step guide that organisers of startup competitions can use to help ensure they effectively manage competitions from start to finish and find proposals that fulfil their goals.

The sections in this toolkit are meant to be completed in the order they appear. In other words, you must first state the purpose of your competition and end by producing a comprehensive timeline. Doing so will ensure you stay on track at all times and not have to fill in any gaps as you organise your competition.

What is this toolkit?
This toolkit is a simple guide…

Who is this toolkit for?
… created for organisers of startup competitions…

Why was this toolkit created?
… to more effectively manage competitions and receive better proposals.

How should this toolkit be used?
The sections of this toolkit should be completed in the order in which they appear.

SPARCS STARTUP COMPETITION TOOLKIT

PART 1: THE FUNDAMENTALS

1.1: Purpose

A competition (or anything, for that matter) without a clear purpose is destined to fail. In no more than one sentence, describe the core reason behind the competition:

(Tip: keep asking yourself 'why' questions until you reveal the root cause — also taking into account that, these days, people highly value companies that can make a meaningful impact on society and/or the environment.)

1.2: Approval

Do you have full approval to host this competition?

_____ Yes   _____ No

If not, identify whom you need to obtain approval from. Only include those with the authority to reject your proposal.

(Add/remove rows to/from the table as necessary)

Name	Title	Organisation	Contact Information

1.3: Funding

How much will organising this competition cost, approximately?

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Will you be able to cover the entire cost yourself?

_____ Yes   _____ No

If not, from where do you plan to source funds?

(Add/remove rows to/from the table as necessary)

Source	Amount (in EUR)	Person to Contact	Contact Information

How do you plan to allocate the funds? For example, how much do you envision setting aside for social media promotion?

(Add/remove rows to/from the table as necessary)

Purpose	Earmarked Amount (in EUR)	Percentage of Total Necessary Funds

1.4: SWOT Analysis

'SWOT' stands for strengths, weakenesses, opportunities, and threats. A SWOT analysis is a simple tool used by businesses to assess notable internal and external factors that are affecting, and that can affect, the success of a venture (e.g. a campaign or the launch of a new brand). The idea is to leverage strengths to compensate for weaknesses; seize opportunities; and prevent and mitigate any possible threats.

In the context of this competition:

- What are your organisation's strengths and weaknesses?

- What opportunities can you take advantage of?

- What could threaten the success of your competition?

Plot these strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats in the chart below:

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
OPPORTUNITIES	**THREATS**

How will you leverage your strengths?

How will you address your weaknesses?

How will you seize these opportunities?

How will you reduce the risk of these threats occurring? And, if they occur, how will you deal with them?

(Tip: play Devil's advocate and think of everything that could possibly go wrong.)

PART 2: THE PEOPLE

2.1: Team

Who will be involved in organising the competition, and what specific roles will they play?

(Add/remove rows to/from the table as necessary)

Name	Organisation	Title	Agreed to Participate Yet? (Yes or No)	Role in Competition	Contact Information

2.2: Partners

What organisations will you partner with in organising this competition? What specific roles will they play?

(Tip: start by listing the partners upon whom the success of your competition depends the most.)

(Add/remove rows to/from the table as necessary)

Organisation	Agreed to Participate Yet? (Yes or No)	Role in Competition	Contact Person	Contact Information

2.3: Jury

Who will serve as jury members? What are their credentials?

(Add/remove rows to/from the table as necessary)

Name	Organisation	Credentials	Agreed to Participate Yet? (Yes or No)	Contact Information

PART 3: THE COMPETITION

3.1: Stages

How many stages will there be in this competition, and what will happen in each stage?

(Add/remove rows to/from the table as necessary)

Stage #	Description	Duration

3.2: Prizes

How many prizes will be awarded? What are these prizes?

(Add/remove rows to/from the table as necessary)

Prize Place (e.g. 1st, 2nd, 3rd, etc.)	Description

What will happen in the event of a tie?

3.3: Applicant Requirements

What are the minimum requirements applicants must meet in order to be eligible to participate? Consider such things as:

- Location/country of incorporation
- Citizenship
- Language proficiency
- Political affiliations

3.4: Criteria

What criteria will you use to evaluate proposals? What weight will you assign to each criterion (i.e. how relatively important is each one)? What stage does each criterion apply to?

The following are examples of criteria organisers have used in past competitions:

- Degree of innovation
- Realisation potential
- Understanding of challenge
- Team quality
- Presentation quality
- Scalability
- Sustainability (social, environmental, and economic)
- Customer value
- Inclusiveness

(Add/remove rows to/from the table as necessary)

Criterion	Description	Percentage Weight	Relevant Stage

3.5: Event(s)

How many events will be held during the competition? Where and when will these take place? Who will attend them? Who will host them? What KPIs (key performance indicators) will you use to gauge their success?

(Add/remove rows to/from the table as necessary)

Event Description	Date	Type (In-Person, Online, or Hybrid?)	Venue (if Applicable)	Attendees	Host	Key Performance Indicators

PART 4: COMMUNICATION

4.1: Media

What paid, earned, shared, and owned media will you use to promote the competition?

- **Paid media** are media you have to pay to publish. Examples of paid media include advertisements and advertorials you would pay for to promote the competition.

- **Earned media** are media that are generated as a result of your communication efforts (i.e. you do not pay for earned media). Examples of earned media include newspaper articles written about the competition.

- **Shared media** are media about you that are shared by others. Examples of shared media include retweets of your posts on Twitter and Facebook posts published by you that your followers (and others) share with their friends.

- **Owned media** are media you have the ability to publish at any time (i.e. their publication does not depend on anyone else). Examples of owned media include your blog articles, press releases, and newsletters about the competition.

Fill in the chart below:

(Tip: think about how to use paid and owned media to generate earned and shared media.)

PAID	EARNED

SHARED	OWNED

4.2: Publications and Media Outlets

What publications and media outlets might be interested in publishing articles and/or advertorials about the competition? Who should be contacted in each case?

(Add/remove rows to/from the table as necessary)

Publication/ Media Outlet Name	Subject	Language	Article or Advertorial?	Person to Contact	Contact Information

4.3: The Pitch

To persuade journalists to write about the competition (whether before, during, or after it), you will need a compelling pitch. Your pitch should answer the question, 'Why would anyone want to read a story about this competition?' It may be obvious to you, but it won't necessarily be to editors.

Your email pitch to editors should include:

- Your key messages (no more than three, and no longer than a sentence each; e.g. 'This competition will help the city of X solve Y problem.')

- Any 'pegs' that can add further relevance to the story (e.g. does the competition coincide with any significant events or anniversaries? Why is it especially important that this story be published *now*?)

- Information that showcases your credibility (e.g. have you or your organisation been featured in any prominent publications? Are there any quotes about you or your organisation from notable individuals you can use?)

What key messages do you want to communicate to editors?

(Tip: choose ones their readers would be interested in hearing.)

What pegs can add further relevance to your pitch?

(Add/remove rows to/from the table as necessary)

Event/Occasion	Description	Date

What information can you use to showcase your credibility?

In 250 words or fewer, write an email pitch to an editor:

4.4: Potential Participants

Are there any startup companies you think would make particularly good applicants? What are they, and how can they be contacted?

(Add/remove rows to/from the table as necessary)

Organisation	Description	Contact Person	Title	Contact Information

4.5: Language Barriers

How will you deal with any potential language barriers (internally and externally)?

PART 5: TIMELINE

5.1: Key Dates

Preparation of the organisation will begin on:

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The competition will end on:

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All activity surrounding the competition (e.g. promotion) will end on:

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5.2: GANTT Chart

The creation of a detailed timeline with all activities listed is key to ensuring the success of any project. Using Wrike (or a similar service), create a GANTT chart with every foreseen activity from the moment preparation for the competition begins to when all activity surrounding it ends.

To avoid any setbacks or crises, err on the side of caution and take into account all possible delays. For instance, consider that communication will be less frequent in summer months, and that you may therefore need to give jurors more time to confirm their availability. The more time you give yourself, the more room you will have to manoeuvre in the event of such delays.

Finally, while your GANTT chart should be as detailed as possible, the following are a few key deadlines that can help you get started:

- Final approval from those with decision-making authority

- Finalisation of board/committee

- Finalisation of jury

- - Securing of each funding tranche
- - Securing of venue(s)
- - Commencement of promotional communication
- - Finalisation of participant shortlist
- - Beginnings and ends of each competition stage
- - Public announcement of winner(s)
- - End of post-competition communication

PART 6: COMMUNICATION PLAN

The following is a condensed communication plan for the promotion of the SPARCS Startup Competition Toolkit (D7.5). It lists the goal and objective of the promotion of the Toolkit; identifies the Toolkit's key public and the key messages to be communicated to them; presents a strategy for disseminating the Toolkit (and information regarding it); mentions intervening publics (or, 'multipliers') that can help SPARCS spread the word about the Toolkit; and provides a basic timeline.

6.1: Goal, Objective, Key Public, and Key Messages

Goal	Objective	Key Public	Key Messages
The goal of this campaign is to increase usage of the SPARCS Competition Toolkit.	To achieve the stated campaign goal, SPARCS will need to see that at least fifty copies of the Toolkit are downloaded from the SPARCS website by September 2024.	To achieve the stated objective, SPARCS will need to persuade all potential organisers of startup competitions. Psychographically, these active and eager individuals can be labelled 'bootstrappers'.	To persuade the 'bootstrappers', SPARCS will need to communicate the following key messages: 1. The SPARCS Startup Competition Toolkit can help organisers of SPARCS startup competitions more effectively manage competitions and receive better proposals *Supporting message: The Toolkit has been developed especially for SPARCS startup competitions and is an official SPARCS document* 2. The Toolkit is easy to use *Supporting message: The Toolkit contains clear instructions and explanations that require no specialist knowledge. All one needs to do is complete the sections in the order in which they appear.*

6.2: Dissemination Strategy

To increase usage of the Toolkit, there are a number of channels and tools SPARCS can use. These are listed in the table below.

Given that the Toolkit will be predominantly used by those familiar with SPARCS, it is recommended that SPARCS focus on using owned media to disseminate it. In the process, it should take advantage of opportunities to promote its owned media (e.g. by 'boosting' social media posts) and leverage this media to create shared media (e.g. by encouraging audiences on social media to share its posts).

Channel	Tool(s)	Type	Notes
SPARCS website	- 'Materials' section - 'What's New' section	- Owned	- The Toolkit should be available to download in the 'Materials' section - A post announcing the availability of the Toolkit on the website should be posted in the 'What's New' section
Email	- Newsletter - Standalone emails	- Owned	- The availability of the Toolkit on the website should be announced in the SPARCS newsletter - A link to the Toolkit should be included in all emails related to it - The Toolkit can also be promoted in standalone emails to those who have opted in to receive emails from SPARCS
Official SPARCS Twitter/X account (@SPARCSeu)	- Tweets	- Organic tweets = owned - Promoted tweets = paid - Retweets = shared	- A link to the Toolkit should be included in posts regarding it - These posts can also be promoted/boosted to increase visibility - Relevant accounts (e.g. those belonging to the organisations listed in the Multiplier Strategy) can also be tagged in these posts
Official SPARCS LinkedIn account (SPARCSeu)	- Posts	- Organic posts = owned - Promoted posts = paid - Shared posts = shared	- A link to the Toolkit should be included in posts regarding it - These posts can also be promoted/boosted to increase visibility

			- Relevant accounts (e.g. those belonging to the organisations listed in the Multiplier Strategy) can also be tagged in these posts
Official SPARCS Facebook account (SPARCSeu)	- Posts	- Organic posts = owned - Promoted posts = paid - Shared posts = shared	- A link to the Toolkit should be included in posts regarding it - These posts can also be promoted/boosted to increase visibility - Relevant accounts (e.g. those belonging to the organisations listed in the Multiplier Strategy) can also be tagged in these posts

6.3: Multiplier Strategy

Various intervening publics (or, 'multipliers') can help SPARCS spread the word about the Toolkit – and thereby increase usage of it. First and foremost, SPARCS should solicit the support of its many partners, associate partners, and network organisations, as they are not only already supportive of SPARCS' cause and affiliated with it, but SPARCS also has direct access to them.

Partners	Associate Partners	Network Organisations
TEKNOLOGIAN TUTKIMUSKESKUS VTT OY	BMW Group	Scalable Cities
ESPOON KAUPUNKI	Espoon Asunnot	Smart Cities Marketplace
STADT LEIPZIG	Fortum	MAtchUP
MUNICIPIO DA MAIA	Sello	IRIS
REYKJAVIKURBORG	HSL	STARDUST
STATUTARNI MESTO KLADNO	Helsinki-Uusimaa Regional Council	+CityxChange
MUNICIPALITY OF KIFISSIA	HSY	ATELIER
LVIV CITY COUNCIL	Siemens	POCITYF
KONE Oyj	SPINLAB	RESPONSE
SIEMENS OSAKEYHTIO	STROMDAO	SmartEnCity
PLUGIT FINLAND OY	Leipziger Verkhersbetriebe	mySMARTLife
KIINTEISTO OY LIPPULAIVA	LVV Leipziger Versorgungs- und Verkehrsgesellschaft mbH	
SUOMEN RAKENNUSINSINOORIEN LIITTO RIL RY	Lvivelectrotrans	
ADVEN OY	Agência de Energia do Porto	

FRAUNHOFER GESELLSCHAFT ZUR FORDERUNG DER ANGEWANDTEN FORSCHUNG EV	Armis Group	
BABLE GMBH	Bio Rumo	
WSL WOHNEN & SERVICE LEIPZIG GMBH	Compta	
STADTWERKE LEIPZIG GMBH	Cidade Mais	
CENERO ENERGY GMBH	EDP NEW	
SEECON INGENIEURE GMBH	Instituto Politécnico da Maia	
UNIVERSITAET LEIPZIG	lipor	
SOCIEDADE PORTUGUESA DE INOVACAO CONSULTADORIA EMPRESARIAL E FOMENTO DA INOVACAO SA	Maiambiente	
CNET CENTRE FOR NEW ENERGY TECHNOLOGIES S.A.	MATEREO	
ORKUVEITA REYKJAVIKUR SF	Opertec	
CESKE VYSOKE UCENI TECHNICKE V PRAZE	Icelandic Association of Local Authorities	
SUITE5 DATA INTELLIGENCE SOLUTIONS LIMITED	Samgöngustofa	
NATIONAL ECOLOGICAL CENTRE OF UKRAINE	SIC	
LVIV MUNICIPAL ENTERPRICE LVIVAVTODOR	STCU	
GOPA COM.		
MOTOR OIL HELLAS		

How to Contact Partners, Associate Partners, and Network Organisations	How to Solicit Their Support
In addition to the newsletter and standalone emails mentioned in the Dissemination Strategy, SPARCS should also send personalised emails to key individuals at these organisations briefly describing the Toolkit and its benefits.	SPARCS should ask its partners, associate partners, and network organisations to: - Send emails regarding the Toolkit to those within their networks - Publish an article/blog post about the Toolkit on their websites - Make the Toolkit available to download on their websites - Share SPARCS' social media posts about the Toolkit - Publish social media posts of their own about the Toolkit and tag relevant individuals/organisations

6.4: Timeline

The following can be used as a timeline to promote the Toolkit until December 2023:

September 2023	- Upload Toolkit to 'Materials' section of website - Publish post about Toolkit in 'What's New' section - Send at least one email announcing the availability of the Toolkit on the website - Publish at least one post on Twitter/X; Instagram; Facebook; and LinkedIn announcing the availability of the Toolkit on the website - Social media campaigns on Facebook and LinkedIn in order to increase the visibility of the Toolkit
October 2023	- Publish at least one post on Twitter/X; Instagram; Facebook; and LinkedIn reminding audiences of the availability of the Toolkit on the website - Devoted SPARCS newsletter edition
November 2023	- Publish at least one post on Twitter/X; Instagram; Facebook; and LinkedIn reminding audiences of the availability of the Toolkit on the website - Social media campaigns on Facebook and LinkedIn to remind audience of the availability of the Toolkit and increase the number of downloads - Send at least one email reminding audiences of the availability of the Toolkit on the website
December 2023	- Publish at least one post on Twitter/X; Instagram; Facebook; and LinkedIn reminding audiences of the availability of the Toolkit on the website