



EPICENTRE PROJECT

Project Deliverable:

D1.1 Project Management Plan



EPICENTRE

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Glossary Terms

Acronym	Full name
WBS	Work breakdown structure
WP	Work Package
GA	Grant Agreement
EC	European Commission
CLDI	Associació clúster digital de catalunya
CBIOS	Distretto tecnologico campania bioscience scarl
LITMEA	Lietuvos maisto eksportuotoju asociacija
PEB	Project Executive Board
PC	Project Coordinator
SyGMa	System for Grant Management

Document history

Version	Date	Authors	Description
0.1	24.10.2022	Núria Serra Yeimy Ospina	1 st version of Project Management Plan.
0.2	17.01.2023	Núria Serra Yeimy Ospina	1 st version of Project Management Plan.

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This document is the deliverable “D1.1 – Project Management Plan” of EPICENTRE - EmPowering Industrial eCosystems to boost clustEr facilitated greeN and digiTal tRansition in Europe. The aim of this document is to ensure that all participants are aware of their roles and responsibilities as well to provide them with details about the project organisation, participants, meetings, deliverables, dates, Gantt chart, Quality Assurance Plan, within other relevant information. In this way, we will be able to ensure the achievements of indicators, milestones and deliverables foreseen and to evaluate and measure the impact of the implemented actions within the project.

The project management plan defines the procedures to compile results for proposed indicators, foreseen risks and ensure quality control measures. The document has been reviewed and discussed by all members of the consortium and is at the disposal of everyone for its consultation and guidance.

The consortia agreed to have a virtual meeting every first Wednesday of every month in order to control and discuss all the current and future tasks, deliverables, milestones and performance indicators and to implement corrective measures as needed.

2. PROJECT PLANNING

2.1 Scope definition

2.1.1 Work breakdown structure (WBS)

The main aim of EPICENTRE project is to create new cross-sectoral/border value chains by establishing a SMEs – Clusters – Corporate.

EPICENTRE will develop new cross-sectoral value chains in the following areas:

- ICT
- Fintech
- Health
- Agri-food

For a better understanding of the project scope, the work breakdown structure (WBS) is shown below: it illustrates the deliverables the project will produce in order to be completed and break them down into work packages at different levels.

WBS Diagram:

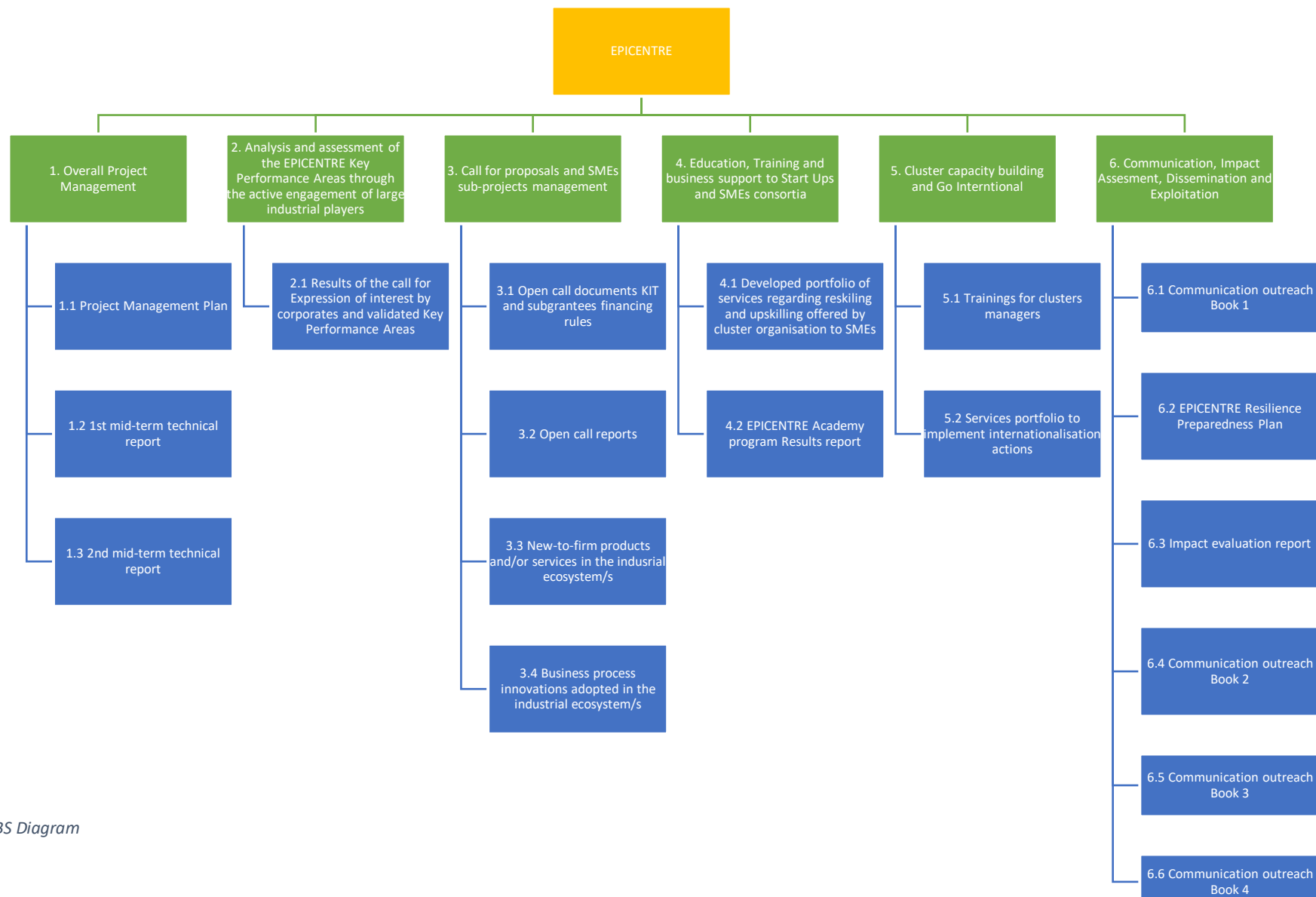


Figure 1. WBS Diagram

2.1.2 Deliverables list

WP No	Deliverable No	Deliverable name	Lead Beneficiary	Dissemination level	Due date (month)	Description
WP1	D1.1	Project Management Plan	CLDI	Sensitive	2	Document that defines a project management procedure to be followed during the execution of the project (electronic, English)
WP1	D1.2	1st mid-term technical report	CLDI	Sensitive	10	1st report on the progress implementation of actions undertaken by beneficiaries and support directed to SMEs and lessons learned (electronic, English)
WP1	D1.3	2nd mid-term technical report	CLDI	Sensitive	28	2nd report on the progress implementation of actions undertaken by beneficiaries and support directed to SMEs and lessons learned (electronic, English)
WP2	D2.1	Results of the call for Expression of interest by corporates and validated Key Performance Areas.	CBIOS	Public	6	List of corporates that have applied to the call for EoI, evaluation reports and list of selected corporates. Additionally, it will include the definition of the Key Performance Areas represented by selected corporates, with signed partnership agreements. (electronic, English)
WP3	D3.1	Open call documents KIT and subgrantees financing rules.	CLDI	Public	7	The output of task 3.1 comprises the required documentation to publish the open call for SMEs: Guidelines for Applicants, SMEBOOK application, templates of declaration of honour and sub-grantee agreement, and FAQ (following EC requirements). (electronic, English)
WP3	D3.2	Open call reports	CLDI	Public	20	Additional output of task 3.1 and reports on the results of each evaluation process by phase, scores, ESRs and evaluation board participation, statistics and conclusions. (electronic, English)
WP3	D3.3	New-to-firm products and/or services in the industrial ecosystem/s	CBIOS	Public	36	Document describing new products and services resulting from the Open Call process (at the end of Drive phase) (electronic, English)
WP3	D3.4	Business process innovations adopted in the industrial ecosystem/s	LITMEA	Public	36	Document describing business process innovations adopted by supported SMEs (at the end of Drive phase) (electronic, English)
WP4	D4.1	Developed portfolio of services regarding reskilling and upskilling offered by cluster organisation to SMEs	CLDI	Public	6	Document describing the scope of EPICENTRE Academia in terms of training services to SME (electronic, English)
WP4	D4.2	EPICENTRE Academy program Results report	CBIOS	Public	36	Report of the results of EPICENTRE Webinar and EPICENTRE Academy program. (electronic, English)
WP5	D5.1	Trainings for clusters managers	LITMEA	Public	14	Report of trainings for cluster managers organised (materials) (electronic, English)

WP5	D5.2	Services portfolio to implement internationalisation actions	LITMEA	Sensitive	24	Services portfolio to implement internationalisation actions created and distributed through SMEs, stakeholders and other interested entities (electronic, English)
WP6	D6.1	Communication outreach Book 1	CLDI	Public	3	This is produced by task 6.1 and includes all dissemination, communication and networking activities plan and its implementation during EPICENTRE and guidelines, as presented in section 3.2. It also includes the plans for engagement with policy and strategy making bodies. (electronic, English)
WP6	D6.2	EPICENTRE Resilience Preparedness Plan	CLDI	Public	36	This is produced by task 6.4 and includes individual and joint sustainability, exploitation and business continuity plans for EPICENTRE and discusses the potential for EPICENTRE replication and resilience across verticals and markets (electronic, English)
WP6	D6.3	Impact evaluation report	CLDI	Public	36	Results of the impact assessment will be presented in this report.(electronic, English)
WP6	D6.4	Communication outreach Book 2	CLDI	Public	12	This is produced by task 6.1 and includes all dissemination, communication and networking activities plan and its implementation during EPICENTRE and guidelines, as presented in section 3.2. It also includes the plans for engagement with policy and strategy making bodies. (electronic, English)
WP6	D6.5	Communication outreach Book 3	CLDI	Public	24	This is produced by task 6.1 and includes all dissemination, communication and networking activities plan and its implementation during EPICENTRE and guidelines, as presented in section 3.2. It also includes the plans for engagement with policy and strategy making bodies. (electronic, English)
WP6	D6.6	Communication outreach Book 4	CLDI	Public	36	This is produced by task 6.1 and includes all dissemination, communication and networking activities plan and its implementation during EPICENTRE and guidelines, as presented in section 3.2. It also includes the plans for engagement with policy and strategy making bodies. (electronic, English)

Figure 2. Deliverables list

2.2 Project Organization

2.2.1 Overall organization

The consortium and management structure will promote an optimal use of the knowledge, experience and expertise of the partners in fulfilling the objectives of the project, while providing effective project monitoring and control.

The organization within the consortium is done considering the following roles:

Structure	Partner
The project leader	CLDI
WP1 - Overall Project Management	CLDI
WP2 - Analysis and assessment of the EPICENTRE KPA through the active engagement of large industrial player	CBIOS
WP3 - Call for proposals and SMEs sub-projects management	CLDI
WP4 - Education, training, and business support to Start Ups and SMEs consortia	CLDI
WP5 - Cluster capacity building and Go international	LITMEA
WP6 - Communication, Impact Assessment, Dissemination and Exploitation	CLDI

Figure 3. Work Packages structure

- **Project coordinator** for this project is CLDI. The Project Coordinator is in charge of the proper implementation of the project and the correct execution of all the tasks.
- **The WP Leaders** will ensure the coordination between the different partners that collaborate with the aim of exchanging intermediate results. They will assure the timely execution of tasks included in each WP, stimulating the interaction between the various partners involved. They are also responsible for the consolidation of the specification reports and execution of the tasks that integrate each WP.
- **Task leaders:** All partners are responsible for tasks in different WP, including WP where they are not leaders, to ensure the participation and involvement of every partner with the same level of commitment throughout the project. The Task leaders report to the WP Leaders. They also communicate directly with the partners of the consortia that are participating directly on the execution of the specific tasks and get their feedback.
- **Project Executive Board**
PEB is coordinated by the project leader and includes at least one representative for each participant. It has a crucial role aimed to guide, provide support, and make the follow up of all the project activities. This organism maintains a continuous communication in parallel to the project meetings and oversees the discussion of important and unexpected issues as they arise (conference calls, phone calls, Skype or other communication channels).

2.2.2 Roles and responsibilities of project bodies

Roles	Description
Project Coordinator	The project coordinator has overall responsibility for proper implementation of the project and the correct execution of all the tasks.
Project Manager	The project manager will have a clear understanding of the work to be completed and the framework in which the project is to be executed. Since the Project Managers are responsible for completing the work for the project, they play a key role.
Quality Manager	The Quality Manager will ensure an effective quality management of the project, in terms of quality of the deliverables and successful implementation of WPs and tasks.
Communication Manager	The communication manager will create, implement and oversee communications programs, internal and external, that effectively describe and promote the project.
Administrative Manager	The Administrative Manager will be in charge of the funding of each partner and prepare the financial reports to be submitted to the EC.

Figure 4. Roles

2.2.3 Partners register

The partners register shows in more detail the participants, their involvement on WorkPackages and their roles:

Partner 1. Associació clúster digital de catalunya (CLDI)

CONTACT PERSON	ROLE IN THE PROJECT	WP MAIN CONTRIBUTION
Joan Pauté	Administrative Manager	WP1, WP3, WP4, WP6
Yeimy Ospina	Project Coordinator	WP1, WP3, WP4, WP6
Nuria Serra	Project Manager, Quality Manager	WP1, WP3, WP4, WP6
Rosa Porta	Communication Manager	WP6

Figure 5. Partners Register: Associació clúster digital de catalunya

Partner 2. Distretto tecnologico campania bioscience scarl (CBIOS)

CONTACT PERSON	ROLE IN THE PROJECT	WP MAIN CONTRIBUTION
Roberta Lauro	Project Manager	WP2

Figure 6. Partners Register: Distretto tecnologico campania bioscience scarl

Partner 3. Lietuvos maisto eksportuotoju asociacija (LITMEA)

CONTACT PERSON	ROLE IN THE PROJECT	WP MAIN CONTRIBUTION
Giedrius Bagusinskas	Project Manager	WP5
Laura Uturyté	Project Manager	WP5
Juste Vezikauskaite	Project Manager	WP5
Kestutis Skridaila	Project Manager	WP5

Figure 7 Partners Register: Lietuvos maisto eksportuotoju asociacija

2.3 Project internal communication

The Project Coordinator will take a proactive role in ensuring effective communications on this project. Thus, the communications matrix will be used as the guide for what information to communicate, who is to do the communicating, when to communicate it and to whom to communicate. A detailed communication plan will be delivered on November 2022.

2.3.1 Communication tools

- Microsoft Teams for:
 - o Quick meetings/calls if needed.
 - o Formal Meetings.
- Emails, information will be sent among the partners:
 - o Follow up reports.
 - o Deliverables to be checked.
 - o Meeting of Minutes
- WhatsApp group, for urgent matters.

2.3.2 Directory

The following table presents contact information for all persons identified in this project:

Partner	Name	Telf.	Email
CLDI	Joan Puaté	+34 692 18 94 77	joan.puate@clusterdigital.cat
CLDI	Yeimy Ospina	+34 627 18 67 17	yeimy.ospina@clusterdigital.cat
CLDI	Núria Serra	+34 669 24 49 54	nuria.serra@clusterdigital.cat
CBIOS	Roberta Lauro	+39 347 729 7847	r.lauro@campaniabioscience.it
CBIOS	Daniela Russo	-	daniela.russo@campaniabioscience.it
LITMEA	Giedrius Bagusinskas	+370 686 21855	info@litmea.lt
LITMEA	Laura Uturytė	-	laura.uturyte@gmail.com
LITMEA	Juste Vezikauskaite	-	juste@agrifood.lt

Figure 8: Directory

2.3.3 Meetings

General Assemblies

- **Participants required:** At least one representative from each consortium partner, giving a minimum of 3.
- **Participants allowed:** Any representative that each consortium partner considers necessary, previous communication to the Project Coordinator.
- **Function:** To set up and execute the strategic and/or organizational aspects of the project in relation to its implementation and risk assessment; their members are in charge of all operational and strategic activities and decisions, being also in charge of the temporalization of the foreseen activities, the overcoming of possible problems; to discuss relevant issues and in case of inconclusive results to take a decision on a vote basis.
- **Voting rights:** One vote per Project Executive Board member.
- **Format:** Virtual Meetings held in Microsoft Meetings, or face-to-face meetings.

- **Frequency:** Every 9 month.
- **Schedule:** First Wednesday of the month, coinciding with the Project Executive Board meeting, from 10am to 13pm. The 1st General Assembly meeting will be organised on May 3rd, 2023.
- **Minutes of Meeting:** To be provided by the project coordinator.

Project Executive Board

- **Participants required:** At least one representative from each consortium partner, giving a minimum of 3.
- **Participants Allowed:** Any representative that each consortium partner considers necessary, previous communication to the Project Coordinator.
- **Function:** To set up and execute the strategic and/or organizational aspects of the project in relation to its implementation and risk assessment; their members are in charge of all operational and strategic activities and decisions, being also in charge of the temporalization of the foreseen activities, the overcoming of possible problems; to discuss relevant issues and in case of inconclusive results to take a decision on a vote basis.
- **Voting rights:** One vote per Project Executive Board member.
- **Format:** Virtual Meetings held in Microsoft Meetings, or face-to-face meetings.
- **Frequency:** Monthly
- **Schedule:** First Wednesday of the month. From 10am to 11am. 1st PEB meeting will be organised in October 2022
- **Minutes of Meeting:** To be provided by the project coordinator

2.4 work plan and GANTT chart

2.4.1 Milestones

The milestones are specific moments in time where a key task or project activity should be successfully finalized, specific output reached and / or an important complex decision taken. The following are the project milestones identified:

Milestone No	Milestone Name	WP No	Lead Beneficiary	Due Date (month)
1	Successful EPICENTRE project kick off	WP1	CLDI	1
9	The Pact for Skills signed	WP5	LITMEA	4
3	1st Open call publication	WP3	CLDI	7
2	Partnerships signed with at least 10 large corporates and KPAS identified	WP2	CBIOS	8
4	2nd Open Call publication	WP3	CLDI	14
5	Launch phase finished after reception of SME consortia Video Pitches	WP4	CLDI	19
8	EPICENTRE joint internationalisation strategy with implementation roadmap created and designed	WP5	LITMEA	24
12	Indicators defined for Impact Assessment	WP6	CLDI	25
6	Sustain phase finished after the presentation of solutions in the final GALA	WP4	CLDI	29
7	Drive phase completed	WP4	CLDI	36
10	Collaboration agreements signed	WP5	LITMEA	36
11	Business agreements signed	WP5	LITMEA	36
13	EPICENTRE final Event	WP6	CLDI	36

Figure 9 Milestones list

2. 4.1 Timeline

3. QUALITY MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Quality Manager will ensure an effective quality management of the project, in terms of quality of the deliverables and successful implementation of WPs and tasks.

3.1 Quality Assurance

Quality assurance applies to all project activities, including deliverables. Quality assurance is a joint responsibility of all partners during the project lifecycle. The project coordinator (PC) has the authority for implementing and verifying compliance with all quality evaluation policies and procedures related to the project.

Quality Assurance is fundamental for all implementation phases in EPICENTRE project and should be implemented by all partners while working on their tasks. In this aim, partners shall:

- Maintain conformity in work methods throughout the project activities, in accordance with established policies, procedures, regulations and codes of practice that are analysed in the Consortium Agreement and in the deliverables D1.1 Project Management Plan.
- Regularly monitor and measure the quality of methods and expected outputs in order to ensure high quality standards, best value, and continuous improvement.

3.2 KPIs

The following Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) will be used in EPICENTRE related actions to guarantee the optimum quality of the project outcomes. The selected KPIs indicate how efficiently the project operations have been performing and ensure that any arising issue can be quickly and positively fixed, affecting likewise the project implementation. The KPIs will be used as an instrument for the internal quality assessment of various project procedures conducted by Quality Manager.

- **Project Indicators:**

WP No.	Task No.	Leader	KPI	Target
WP1	1.1	CLDI	Number of general assembly meetings	4
WP1	1.1	CLDI	Number of PEB meetings	12 (4 per year)
WP1	1.1	CLDI	Number of videoconferences between the PC and the EC	9 (3 per year)
WP1	1.1	CLDI	Number of internal reports (other than official EC reports)	2 (M9 and M27)
WP1	1.3	CLDI	Payment date from coordinator to project partners	maximum 30 days after the EC payment to the coordinator.
WP1	1.3	CLDI	Payment from CLDI to sub-granted projects coordinator	maximum 30 days after the approval of the mandatory deliverables
WP2	2.1	CBIOS	Responses to questionnaires	+80 responses to questionnaire, 40 to 50 corporates interviewed individually.
WP2	2.2	CBIOS	Number of corporate applicants to EoI	150
WP2	2.2	CBIOS	Number of selected corporates after EoI	25
WP2	2.3	CBIOS	Number of cooperation scenarios	3 by corporate
WP2	2.4	CBIOS	Number of corporates partnership agreements signed	25
WP3	3.1	CLDI	Number of webinars to explain the open call procedure	> 4 (M12)
WP3	3.1	CLDI	Number of open calls published	2 (M8 and M13)
WP3	3.1	CLDI	Number of SMEs sub-granted projects with signed contract ready to start the EPICENTRE support program	25 after each call (M9 and M14), 50 in total
WP3	3.2	CLDI	Number of SMEs sub-projects that pass to the SUSTAIN phase	12 for the 1st group in M14 and 13 for the 2nd group in M19
WP3	3.3	CBIOS	Number of SUSTAIN Kick Off Meetings	of SMEs, 25 in total (M25)
WP3	3.3	CBIOS	Number of SMEs sub-projects that pass to the DRIVE phase	projects (M31)
WP3	3.4	LITMEA	Number of SMEs sub-projects that complete the full EPICENTRE program	6 (M35)
WP4	4.2	CLDI	No. of SMEs participated in the Webinar	>500 (to be achieved by M13)
WP4	4.2	CLDI	No. of women participated in the women-entrepreneurship and leadership workshop	>100 (to be achieved by M13)
WP4	4.3	CLDI	Number of SMEs supported during LAUNCH phase for both calls	>50 (M19)
WP4	4.3	CLDI	Number of value pitches presented to corporates 12 (1st group of supported sub-projects) + 13 (2nd group of supported sub-projects)	25 (M13 for the 1st group and M19 for the 2nd group)
WP4	4.3	CLDI	Number of SMEs supported during SUSTAIN phase	>50 (M28)
WP4	4.3	CLDI	Number of mentors engaged in the EPICENTRE support program	>20
WP4	4.3	CLDI	Number of SMEs supported during DRIVE phase	> 24 (M34)
WP4	4.3	CLDI	No. of industrial and business experts available to provide support to SMEs	> 30
WP4	4.3	CLDI	Number of investment forums	2, 1 for each call (M33)
WP4	4.4	CLDI	Number of monitoring meetings	8.
WP4	4.4	CLDI	Number of customer surveys done to each SME sub-project	of the program)
WP5	5.1	LITMEA	Number of employees in cluster organisations which received trainings	external clusters
WP5	5.1	LITMEA	Number of Pact for Skills	1
WP5	5.1	LITMEA	Number of training plans supported for clusters and their managers	3
WP5	5.3	LITMEA	Number of collaboration agreements signed with entities in third countries:	>10
WP5	5.3	LITMEA	Number of business agreements (or equivalent formal cooperation documents)	>3
WP5	5.3	LITMEA	Number of SMEs that benefited from internationalisation services:	>12 (those reaching Drive phase)
WP5	5.3	LITMEA	Number of SMEs that benefited from internationalisation services	>25 (those reaching Sustain phase)
WP6	6.1	CLDI	Number of posts on project's social media channels	> 500
WP6	6.1	CLDI	Entries (articles/press releases) in local, regional, national and European press, both printed and online	> 150
WP6	6.1	CLDI	Specialised blog posts on the project website	>100
WP6	6.1	CLDI	Number of EPICENTRE Newsletters delivered	12
WP6	6.2	CLDI	Number of workshops, webinars, and roadshow info days (both online and in-person)	>12
WP6	6.2	CLDI	Number of European innovators informed about project's Open Calls	>1500
WP6	6.2	CLDI	number of identified and established communication synergies with other EU funded projects	> 20
WP6	6.3	CLDI	Number of companies responding to the monitoring surveys:	(SMEs and corporates)
WP6	6.4	CLDI	Non-commercial exploitation will be achieved through 5 publications in peer-reviewed national and scientific journals	
WP6	6.4	CLDI	Commercial exploitation will focus on preparation of the business model suitable for EPICENTRE exploitable assets with identified variations of business models, market and sustainability strategies identified for individual exploitation by clusters.	
WP6	6.5	CLDI	% of total EPICENTRE budget used to support innovation in SMEs directly	> 75%
WP6	6.5	CLDI	% of supported SMEs' projects have reached their objectives	>80%
WP6	6.5	CLDI	% of support SMEs' projects include a gender-neutral innovation	>90%

Figure 10 KPIs: Project Indicators

- Call indicators:

KPIs	Target	WPs
How many SMEs, clusters and business network organisations, and business support organisations will receive support from the action?	>100 SMEs, >10 clusters & business network, business support organisations > 5	WP3, WP4, WP5
How many business partnerships will be concluded by the supported companies at the end of the action?	No. of long-term business agreements between SMEs and SMEs corporates > 50	WP3, WP4
How many entrepreneurs will benefit from mentoring and mobility schemes, from the action (including young, new and female entrepreneurs, as well as other specific target groups)?	>100 entrepreneurs (60% under 30 years old, 60% women, 75% from less developed EU regions)	WP4
Network KPIs		
Number of resilience preparedness/business continuity plans	4 (one per EPICENTRE targeted sectors)	WP6
Number of business and non-business actors linked to existing or new value chain;	>2300 contacted (>2000 SMEs for the Open Call, >150 corporates (T2.2), >50 clusters (T5.3), >50 other OI actors (T6.2))	WP1 WP2 WP3 WP5
Volume of production/services under agreements	100% of products and services delivered by SMEs in EPICENTRE will be supported by agreements between the parties involved (SME-SME/SME-Corporate)	WP2 WP4
Number of SMEs accessing market information	No. of SMEs participating in EPICENTRE webinars and B2Bs >500	WP3 WP6
Number of policy forums among value chain actors held to identify and address constraints at micro and macro level (regulatory framework, trade policy etc.)	6	WP1
Number of policy papers addressing key value chain constraints submitted to regional, national and EU authorities	1	WP6
Innovate KPIs		
Number of new-to-firm products/services identified	No. of new products or services leading to potentially optimised value chains after the project ends (at least 5). Time plan: 5 years after the project, estimates will be done on M36. Source: Survey among participated SMEs and corporates regarding expectation on this indicator	WP2
Number of businesses/SMEs directly benefitting from new value chains interlinkages developed by the Partnership	>100 SMEs comprising consortia selected by EPICENTRE programme	WP3
Number of and type of SMEs new innovation projects and new collaboration partnerships developed by businesses/SMEs directly benefitting from the action	50 SMEs consortia (joint projects) selected to enter EPICENTRE innovation funnel	WP3
Number of and type of new or significantly improved products (goods and/or services), processes, new marketing methods, or new organisational methods, or eco-innovative and resource-efficient solutions developed by businesses/SMEs directly benefitting from the action	% of supported SMEs that achieve market phase and demonstrate 1st customers/ early adopters >60%	WP6
The contingency plan signed by consortia partners and SMEs supported.	50 contingency plans signed by EPICENTRE partners and SMEs consortia supported	WP6
Adopt processes and technologies KPIs		
Number of SMEs supported which undertook business process innovation tied to technological adoption leading to higher sustainability and digitalisation	>100 SMEs comprising consortia selected by EPICENTRE programme	WP3
Number of projects based on specific needs selected for technical assistance	50 SMEs consortia (joint projects) selected to address corporates needs	WP2 WP3
Number of SMEs that received the knowledge/training in each clusters	All the supported SMEs (>100) will receive knowledge/training	WP4
Added value/total investment generated also as a percentage compared to this Action's budget	Private funding raised: During the project > 0,5M€. 5 years after the project ends > 25 M€ Public funding raised by EPICENTRE supported SMEs. During the project > 5M€ (to be achieved during the project). 5 years after the project ends > 100M€	WP3 WP4
Number of green products and services commercialised under legally binding contracts	at least 5 (out of the 25 initially developed in the Sustain phase). Time plan: 5 years after the project, estimates will be done on M36. Source: Survey among participated SMEs and corporates regarding expectation on this indicator	WP3
Training KPIs		
Number of employees in cluster organisations which received trainings	At least 7	WP5
Number of SMEs investing in skill development of their employees in the scope of the project	% of SMEs investing in skill development of their employees: 100% of the EPICENTRE supported SMEs	WP4 WP6
Number of Pact for Skills including a clear reference and role to clusters with regards to up and re-skilling	One Pact for Skills	WP5
Number of training plans supported for clusters and their managers/staff	3 (one per EPICENTRE cluster)	WP5
Number of clusters applying for a cluster Excellence management label and/or upgrade	2	WP5
Go international KPIs		
Number of collaboration agreements signed with entities in third countries	No. of new collaborations between the EPICENTRE clusters and/or with other clusters in third countries: >10	WP5 WP6
Number of SMEs that benefited from internationalisation services	> 50 SMEs (25 SMEs consortia invited to the Sustain phase)	WP5
Number of (a) business agreements (or equivalent formal cooperation documents) (b) joint collaborative projects and (c) business contracts signed between the Partnership SME members and business and other relevant stakeholders from third countries (i.e. from non COSME countries), leading to increase exports, investment opportunities and international ventures generating employment for European businesses	>12 SMEs (6 SMEs consortia invited to the Drive phase)	WP5
Expected impact of business agreements and joint collaborative projects supported through this action in terms of increased exports, increased jobs in Europe, new talents attracted, critical imports secured and direct foreign investments	Potential No. of jobs created by EPICENTRE project at the end of the project >20 Potential No. of jobs created by EPICENTRE beneficiaries (SME & corporates) in the long run >100	WP6
Communication actions KPIs		
Number of Social Media followers (per Social Media channel used)	>3000; Twitter > 750 LinkedIn > 1500 Facebook > 750	WP6
Number of SMEs directly supported and coming from regions and countries different from those of individual Euroclusters' partners	>25 SMEs (out of 100 for the whole program)	WP3 WP4

Figure 11 KPIs: Call Indicators

2.4.3 Quality assurance procedures: Deliverable preparation and review procedures

Quality assurance procedures will be established, monitored, and evaluated by the quality manager; nevertheless, all partners commitment to these procedures and collaboration is necessary in order to achieve high standard results.

- Deliverable quality criteria

The quality of each deliverable is reviewed against specific criteria at different preparation levels and stages and before the final submission. This is done to ensure consistency of the review process among deliverables and to support the reviewer's clear understanding and compliance with the process.

Quality Criteria	Description
Clarity	The language of the text is clear. The text is in British English. The text is unambiguous. The terminology, including acronyms, is thoroughly explained. There are no spelling errors
Accuracy	All fact-based information used in the deliverable is supported by the respective references.
Format	The text is written in line with the deliverable template. The file follows the standard file format and naming convention.

Figure 12 Quality Criteria

- Deliverable review and approval

This is the process of a deliverable before it reaches the submission phase.

Phase 1: In this phase, the author writes the first version of the deliverable.

Phase 2: After the authors write the deliverable, it is internally reviewed so it can be assigned as draft.

Phase 3: The draft deliverable is forwarded to the members of the consortium.

Phase 4: The author consider the reviewer comments and make the appropriate amendments. The document is checked and evaluated as a whole by the Project Coordinator, leading to the status of "accepted".

Phase 5: Once the deliverable is accepted, it is finally submitted by the Project Coordinator.

The review process is an important component of the effort for producing high quality deliverables.

4. RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN

The risk management process for EPICENTRE project is presented below. It describes how negative situations will be dealt with both at the project level and work package (WP) level.



Risk identification

Risks identification considers both individual task risks and sources of overall project risk. Those are listed in the Risk Management Register. Regular communications between the WP leaders and the coordinator will ensure anticipating the risks throughout the project life. Besides, it is the responsibility of each participant to inform the WP leader(s) and the Management Team about new potential risks.

Risk Assessment

Once the risks have been identified, a matrix is carried out in which these risks are classified according to their degree of probability of occurrence and the impact that they would have on the project in the case of happening. The risk exposure matrix below will serve to estimate the risk level.

Scale	Nomenclature	Probability	Impact
		Rank %	Over scope
4	Very high	>80%	Very significant impact
3	High	50%-80%	Significant impact
2	Medium	20%-50%	Some impact
1	Low	<20%	Minor impact

Following the criteria, each of the risks is evaluated, identified, and prioritized according to their degree of probability and impact. The matrix is shown below:

Probability and impact matrix					
Probability	4	4	8	12	16
	3	3	6	9	12
	2	2	4	6	8
	1	1	2	3	4
		1	2	3	4
	Impact				

Response planning

The risk response process presents the strategy to tackle the threats. It is a contingency plan that assigns the roles and responsibilities and provides a response framework for risk owners. The work package leader will be responsible for each risk assigned to it. The adequate mitigation measures, for each foreseen risk, are displayed in the Risk Management Register

Response strategy

Following the evaluation of the risk exposure, the risk owner will first seek to prevent actions and events that may harm the project from happening.

Avoidance

For activities creating a threat to the project, the risk owner will, when possible, try to eliminate the factors that cause the risk.

Mitigation plan

For threats that cannot be prevented, the risk owner will establish a response strategy that minimizes the damage to the project. The risks already identified are listed in the Risk Management Register. The corresponding mitigation measures are also displayed in the Risk Register. Each partner is responsible for implementing the risk mitigation measures which relate to the WP they lead.

Monitoring and controlling

It is the responsibility of all partners to communicate to the project manager the status and effectiveness of each risk and mitigation plan in order to update the risk management register and assess the relevance of the tools.

The risk owner will confirm the correct implementation of the risk responses and will check the effectiveness of the response. The risk owner will keep track of the situation and inform the project manager. The risk exposure will be continuously reevaluated and modified accordingly.

Reporting

The Risk Register will be updated and reviewed during general assembly meetings.

RISK MANAGEMENT REGISTER

The following tables resumes the risks. Mitigation strategy is developed for all the risks, determining the best way to respond to each risk:

Risk Num.	Description	WP	Mitigation
1	Coordination and/or management of EPICENTRE fails [(i) L, (ii) H]	WP1	Effective coordination is ensured by the managerial structure and through the project work plan. The coordinator has experience in coordinating large EU and national projects and is supported by an experienced partner
2	Difficulty finding and motivating the partners in the project for collaboration and feedback gathering [(i) L, (ii) M]	WP1	All partners are strongly committed to the objectives in the proposal phase. Close monitoring will be established and, if interests change during project lifetime, additional professional workshops, networking events or other motivating initiatives will be organised.
3	Partner fails timely reports of financial/effort consumption for the management report [(i) L, (ii) M]	WP1	Project coordinator will do the necessary for effective monitoring of project progress. A system will be implemented to spot delays of critical deliverables and financial report.
4	Partner overspending resources and/or allocated budget [(i) L, (ii) M]	WP1	The project management team will monitor the partner spending through WP reports and through partners progress reporting. If necessary, a reallocation of resources of partners will be initiated.
5	General lack of quality and/or lack of quality of deliverables [(i) L, (ii) M]	WP1	A quality plan will be developed to safeguard high standards with respect to project outcomes, including the appointment of reviewers (partners) for each deliverable.
6	Lack of answers from corporates to the call for Expression of Interest [(i) M, (ii) L]	WP2	The application form for companies will be as simple as possible to encourage companies answering to the call for EoI. Furthermore, all efforts will be done in task 2.3 to promote the concept of the EPICENTRE project and the invitation to EoI to pre-identified companies, and support can also be made by EPICENTRE partners to help them complete the application form.
7	Lack of commitment of selected corporates in future activities [(i) M, (ii) H]	WP3, WP2, WP4	The risk of corporates not being committed into the EPICENTRE project activities exists since they do not receive any funding and therefore there is no such incentive against their commitment. However, Task 2.5 is about preparing a simple but efficient contract protecting corporates from undesired effects of collaboration with SMEs, but in the same time engaging them into the EPICENTRE project activities. This contractual framework should discourage corporates from not being committed into EPICENTRE. The project will also establish the mechanisms to engage high quality SMEs and projects. This will guarantee the enthusiasm of the corporations to collaborate with EPICENTRE.
8	Low participation in the open calls [(i) M, (ii) H]	WP6, WP3	If the reception of proposals is low, we will push the dissemination activities. Networking activities and visits to reference clusters and business centres/ incubators for raising awareness could be also an option for the increase of awareness for future calls. In this sense, the budget for its organisation will be deducted from the calls budget. During the opening periods of the calls, the number of received pre-proposals and the number of requests for support will be a good indicator to know if the numbers will be reached or if additional efforts on dissemination and engagement activities are needed.
9	SMEs face difficulties to reach expectations and fail in the process [(i) M, (ii) H]	WP3, WP4	The selection process in WP3 will be exhaustive minimising the chance of selecting SMEs consortia without the demanded skills. The continuous regular contact and monitoring by the EPICENTRE Project Officers and Business Support Managers will help us to early identify issues and propose mitigation actions. Within WP3, support through different channels including direct calls will be offered. In WP6 the ecosystem building activities will help us to gather the business competences to address and overcome SMEs difficulties.

10	Lack of agreements between SMEs and corporations during the program [(i) L, (ii) M]	WP3, WP4	Provision of objective (no conflict of interest) IP advisory to all parties involved and mediation during contract signatures (if requested) to increase chances of reaching agreements
11	EPICENTRE internationalisation strategy fails [(i) M, (ii) M]	WP5	A sound internationalisation strategy will be developed in WP5 (T5.2) to ensure a smooth and effective process. Several measures will be taken like: i) deep market research to analyse market insights in third countries targeted by EPICENTRE, ii) initial exploratory missions for EPICENTRE clusters third countries, iii) mapping of potential partners in third countries, iv) development of international skills for clusters and v) development of an implementation roadmap for the internationalisation strategy
12	Clusters capacity building does not work as planned [(i) L, (ii) H]	WP5	A sound process will be deployed to ensure that cluster teams improve their capacities to support SMEs in building new cross-border and cross-sectoral value chains in targeted sectors (WP5). Firstly, an in-depth analysis will be made to identify the areas of skills improvement for clusters and secondly, EPICENTRE will select top-notch coaches and mentors for the training sessions (T5.1)
13	Delays in providing input data from other WPs [(i) M, (ii) H]	WP6	This WP relies heavily on input data provided by other WPs. Delays in the work of other WPs may affect the work in WP 6. To overcome this problem CLDI (project coordinator) is appointed as a task leader of the Task 6.2 on main data gathering process, which will allow to keep a strict planning and whenever necessary quick anticipation of the problems.
14	Low response to the survey among companies [(i) L, (ii) M]	WP6	Design of a simple, clear, easy and quick to fill in survey questionnaire.
15	Disperse and low-quality data provided in the surveys [(i) L, (ii) M]	WP6	In order to carry out quantitative impact assessment, the availability of the high-quality data is required. Applying a simple and a clear survey questionnaire is the first step to gather good quality data. Next to it, whenever quantitative information will not be available an alternative qualitative analysis will be carried out to retrieve the impact.
16	Slow growth of the EPICENTRE community [(i) L, (ii) M]	WP6	Relevant KPIs are assessed under task 6.1 and whenever the targets are not reached, modification of communication and dissemination strategies will occur. The experience of the EPICENTRE partners and their awareness of the intricacies of open innovation and collaboration between large corporates and innovative start-ups/SMEs, as well as the fact that the supporting platform, SMEBOOK, has a growing number of users, as well as the use of the EEN and ECCP, will ensure continuous growth of the EPICENTRE community.
17	The entire budget reserved as direct funding for SMEs is not consumed. [(i) M, (ii) M]	WP3, WP4	If the 1M euros reserved for direct funding to sub-granted SMEs are not consumed, the remaining budget will be used to reward those SMEs that have had a high performance during the EPICENTRE support program

Figure 13 Risk Mitigation

5. COST MANAGEMENT PLAN

5.1 Project Budget

This chapter clarifies the outline of the project's allocation of costs for the required resources to complete all project activities. The cost of each partner is determined. CLDI will manage and control the budget throughout the project. The current project budget is shown in the following table:

The total eligible project cost amounts to 1.437.947,77 €

	Direct Cost	Indirect Cost	Project Budget
CLDI	1.156.236,32 €	80.936,54 €	1.237.172,86 €
LITMEA	93.870,10 €	6.570,91 €	100.441,01 €
CBIOS	93.770,00 €	6.563,90 €	100.333,90 €
Total	1.343.876,42 €	94.071,35 €	1.437.947,77 €

Figure 14 Project Budget

The maximum EU funding is 1.399.151,00 €

	Project Budget	Grant Amount
CLDI	1.237.172,86 €	1.218.455,00 €
LITMEA	100.441,01 €	90.396,00 €
CBIOS	100.333,90 €	90.300,00 €
Total	1.437.947,77 €	1.399.151,00 €

Figure 15 EU funding

5.2 Payments

CLDI, as the Project Coordinator, is responsible for reviewing EPICENTRE use of resources. In this sense, CLDI will verify that the payments and distributions are made in a consistent, transparent, and reasonable manner, in order to guarantee the fulfilment of all Grant Agreement requirements.

- Payment to the partners:

	Prefinancing (M1)	1st Period Payment M23	Final Payment (M40)	Total Amount
CLDI	609.227,50 €	487.382,00 €	121.845,50 €	1.218.455,00 €
LITMEA	45.198,00 €	36.158,40 €	9.039,60 €	90.396,00 €
CBIOS	45.150,00 €	36.120,00 €	9.030,00 €	90.300,00 €
Total Amount	699.575,50 €	559.660,40 €	139.915,10 €	1.399.151,00 €

5.3 Cost Monitoring

EPICENTRE led by CLDI, will follow the financial reporting procedure defined by the EC. Project partners should report on the progress of the work and costs claimed during the corresponding period.

The cost reporting process is divided in two financial reporting periods:

- Periodic reporting: From M1 (01/09/2022) to M18 (29/02/2024).
- Final reporting: From M19 (01/03/2023) to M36 (31/08/2025).

There are 60 days to perform and submit the reporting. Thus, partners have until M20 and M38 to submit the cost reporting to the Granting Authority.

Despite the aforementioned, and with the aim of better monitoring of the costs incurred and the potentially underspending or overspending, internally there will be two more internal reportings, one on M9 (May 2022) and one on M27 (November 2024).

The reporting process will be explained to the partners in the corresponding monthly meeting a month before the corresponding reporting period starts. This meeting will be also useful to clarify any concern that may appear.

Therefore, the financial reporting process defined for the EPICENTRE project consists of the following steps to be followed either in the Periodic and final reporting.

1) Complete the official excel file for cost reporting

Project partners will be required to complete the official reporting template.

Emails will be exchanged, and meetings will be held in case any partner needs some kind of support to perform the reporting.

The information provided will be then reviewed by the coordinator. Further information or clarifications to project partners regarding the costs reported could be requested.

Once all the individual costs reported are validated by the project coordinator, they will be consolidated in the corresponding excel tab by CLDI.

This exercise will be made in M9, M18, M27 and M36. As the official reporting periods start on M18 and M36, projects partners will be requested to update the cost already reported in M9 and M27.

2) Cost reporting in the System for Grant Management (SyGMA)

SyGMA is the official reporting platform managed by the European Commission. Partners will be requested to upload their financial statements in the System for Grant Management (SyGMA) following the Horizon Europe guidelines for reporting. This action must be made only for the periodic reporting and the final reporting, starting in M18 and M36 respectively.

Once all individual costs are uploaded in the platform, CLDI will review, update and approve the reported costs. If needed, the coordinator can send back the financial statement to a partner for further changes.

At the time that the financial statements are validated by the coordinator, all parts of the reporting (all the individual financial statements and Part B of the technical report) will be submitted. The system will automatically generate the report with explanations of the use of resources and the periodic Summary Financial Statements, which includes the request for payment.

The reporting performed will be then under evaluation by the granting authority. The granting authority will either accept the report and start preparing the payment or ask for changes to it, which means that the process described above starts again.

When the granting authority accepts the report and approves the payment, the amount due will be paid out to the coordinator (within 90 days of receiving the report). The granting authority will send a letter to inform about the payment. After receiving the letter, the coordinator has 30 days to submit observations, if needed.

5.4 Staff Management / Time sheets

All consortium partners must keep monthly records of time sheets for each project employee (contractually mandatory, according to the GA). These timesheets are necessary to demonstrate claimed working ours, in case the EC may have the project efforts checked by independent auditors.