

# LESSONS FOR CLUSTERS TO SPEED SME ADOPTION OF DIGITAL & GREEN TECH

Strong clusters build strong ecosystems — and strong ecosystems help SMEs adopt and scale with confidence.

## THE FOUR THINGS SMES NEED



Trusted tech partnerships



Funding navigation and support to scale

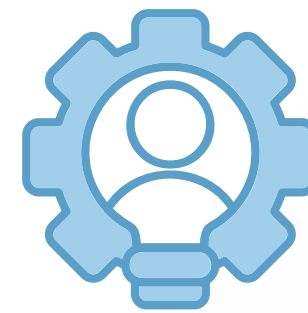


Collaboration beyond regional boundaries



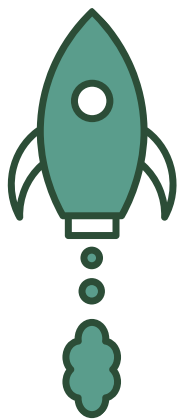
Strong, connected ecosystems

## WHAT WORKS IN PRACTICE



Start with the problem, not the product. Neutral brokers help build trust, while living labs let firms test before they invest and learn directly from peer SMEs.

## COLLABORATION THAT TRAVELS



Begin partnerships early, clarify roles and timelines, and use dedicated funds for cross-border pilots. Harmonised rules and lighter admin keep the momentum.

## ECOSYSTEM BACKBONE



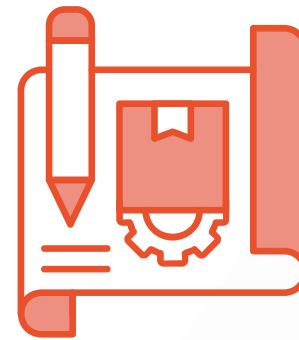
- Clusters as neutral anchors and stewards; keep services continuous.
- Support the stewards (operational capacity to retain skills).
- Fund infrastructure, not just ideas (testbeds, demo sites, shared data).

## WHAT TO DO NEXT



- Define priority challenges with SMEs.
- Assign a neutral broker and map stakeholders.
- Select use cases and add them to a living, shareable catalogue.
- Design validation in a living lab with clear KPIs, timeline and owners.
- Line up finance: funding map, readiness coaching, middle-mile support.
- Run the pilot, capture evidence, and enable peer learning on site.
- Transfer and scale via cross-border teams; align rules.
- Feed results into policy; update the catalogue and funding map; repeat.

## FUNDING & SCALING



Coach teams for investment-readiness, make the “funding map” visible, and simplify procedures. Back the middle-mile validation, first customers and certification, so pilots can cross the gap to deployment.

## CROSS-CUTTING GUIDELINES FOR CLUSTER SERVICE DESIGN



[FULL RECOMMENDATIONS](#)