

**Interreg
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Programma di cooperazione Interreg V / A Grecia-Italia (EL-IT) 2014-2020 co-finanziato dal FESR

TRansnational **A**ccelerator for a **C**ultural and **C**reative **E**co**S**ystem



Asse prioritario

1 – Innovazione e competitività

WP5 – TRACES PILOT IMPLEMENTATION

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D.5.5 – TRACES assessment report and Recommendations

Project Title	TRansnational Accelerator for a Cultural and Creative EcoSystem
Project Acronym	TRACES
Programme	Cooperation Programme Interreg V/A Greece-Italy (EL-IT) 2014-2020 - Co-financed by the ERDF
Priority Axis	1 - Innovation and Competitiveness
Investment Priority	3a-Promoting entrepreneurship, in particular by facilitating the economic exploitation of new ideas and fostering the creation of new firms, including through business incubators
Specific Objective	SO1.2-Supporting the incubation of innovative specialized MSMEs in thematic sectors of interest to the Programme Area
Partnership	LB - University of Salento – Department of Management and Economics PB2 - Tecnopolis Science and Technology Park, PB3 - Creative Apulia Cluster Association, PB4 - Hellenic Management Association PB5 - Chamber of Achaia. Associated partners: ENCATC – European Network on Cultural Management and Policy Foundation for Ethical Finance

Editor

University of Salento – Department of Management and Economics

Scientific Coordinator

Francesca Imperiale

Scientific Committee

Stefano Adamo; Stefano De Rubertis; Francesco Giaccari

Research Group

Francesca Imperiale; Roberta Fasiello

Contributors

Apulian Creative Cluster Association

Vincenzo Bellini; Cinzia Lagioia

Tecnopolis

Annamaria Annichiarico, Davide De Nicolò

Chamber of Achaia

Kostas Giotopoulos; Panagiotis Christias; Irini Kafousia

This report summarises the main recommendations draw-up at the end of the project, through the assessment of the TRACES Accelerator environment, which partners set and experimented with the implementation of WP5 activities.

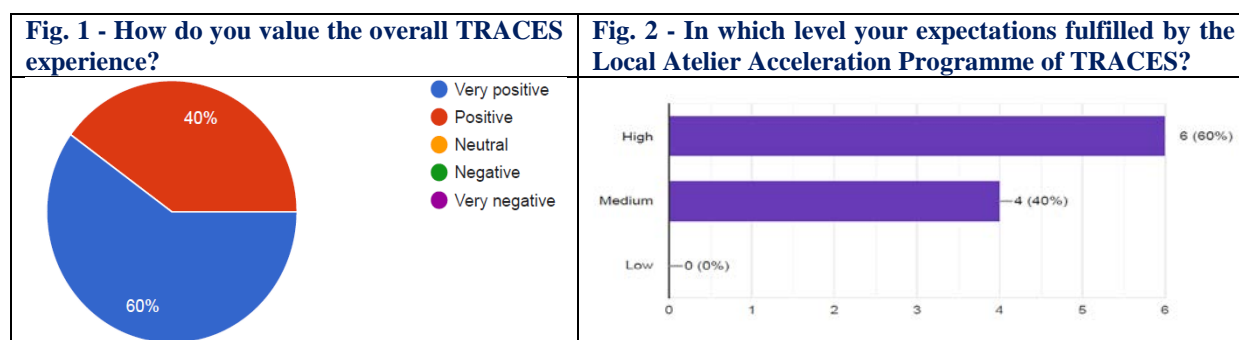
The assessment has been carried out according to a participatory approach, involving the main protagonists and beneficiaries of the project: CC MSMEs accessed to the incubation programme (D5.3); the Local Ateliers (D4.2), the local suppliers of incubation services who signed the protocols (D3.5). Their consultation has been conducted via three different online surveys in the period Sept-2020-Nov 2020. The questionnaires used are included in the Appendix 1.

It follows a brief description of the main recommendations got from those surveys.

CC MSMEs

Regarding the 58 CCMSMEs incubated through the TRACES environment, only 10 (17,24%) provided us with their assessment.

Regarding the overall experience they did, we can affirm that they assessed it as positive, as shown in the Figure 1, meanwhile their expectations was fulfilled at a high-medium level (see Figure 2).



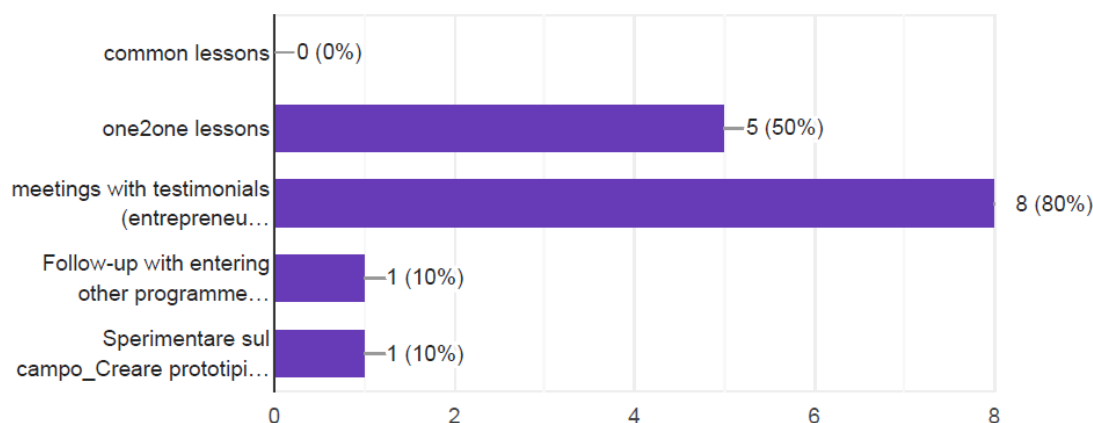
About their opinion on the incubation programme offered by the TRACES project, they highlighted some strengths and weaknesses. The table 1 summarises the main feedbacks we got.

Tab. 1 - Strengths and Weaknesses of the Incubation Programme

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fairly well organized in terms of administration; Consistency regarding the planning of the project; Interesting, innovative and creative programme; Interaction with entrepreneurs from various fields; Skilled tutors; Flexible team. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Too short programme; Lack of real networking sharing; Lack of experts with experience in the video-game industry and more general in the CCs.

As shown in the Figure 3, they suggest to focus the incubation programme mainly on meeting with testimonials and in one2one lessons.

Fig. 3 - Which of the following activities would you focus on?



Moreover, they recognized that the project was highly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, above all to benefit from proximity and physical interaction for real networking. Thus, they provided us with some further suggestions on how to overcome the weaknesses they highlighted. More in detail, they suggested:

- To design a longer programme;
- To overcome the possible conflict of interests of incubation services suppliers who have joined the project from retaining relevant information;
- To involve people with a longstanding experience at national and international level, as well as and inter-generational representatives, especially in a Country like Italy, where older

- people have the network and become often gate keepers;
- To provide advanced competences, for example in the interaction among art, design and technology;
 - To build a proper format for giving tools able to support local CCIs to compete in Europe.
- Finally, the most important lessons learned during the TRACES Acceleration Programme were:
- The importance of working in team and together with people from different fields, as well as connecting with some other entrepreneurs;
 - The awareness that if your product or idea does not solve an existing problem, probably will fail, as well as to try, even if it is possible that you fail;
 - The necessity to continue the work started in the years to come.

LOCAL ATELIERS

Six out of 10 Local Ateliers provided us with their assessment about the TRACES organisational set-up. Regarding the overall experience they did, we can affirm that they assessed it as positive, as shown in the Figure 4, meanwhile they expressed some recommendations to improve the overall environment.

Fig. 4 - How do you value the overall TRACES experience?

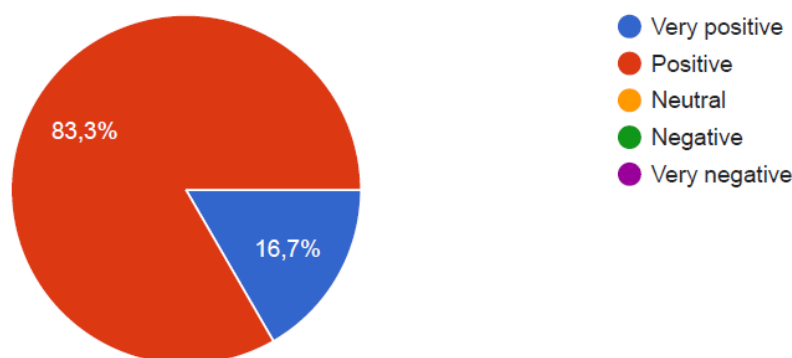
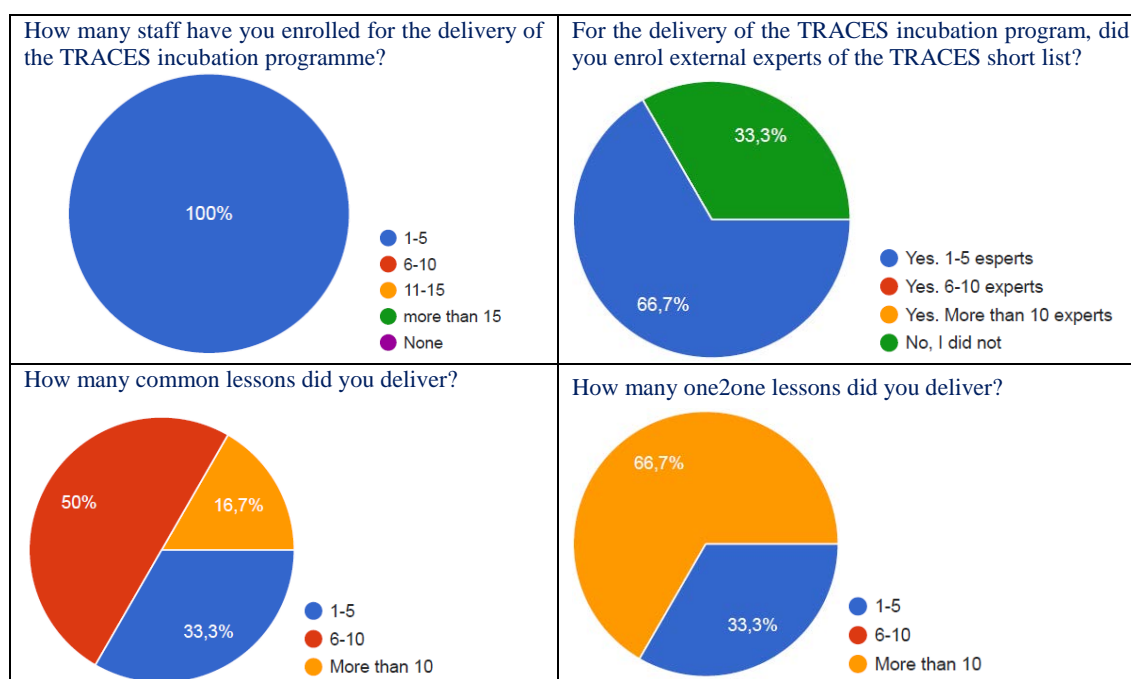


Figure 5 offers some details about the main features of the incubation programme they managed according to a tailored approach based on the specific needs of the CCMSMEs selected and incubated. For the most, the incubation programme was articulated mainly focusing on one2one

lessons, rather than common lessons, to take account of the specificities of each company. Moreover for delivering the incubation programme they enrolled up to 5 staff, and the 66,7% of them enrolled up to 5 external experts from the TRACES network of local incubation service providers.

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Fig. 5 - Main features of the incubation programme delivered



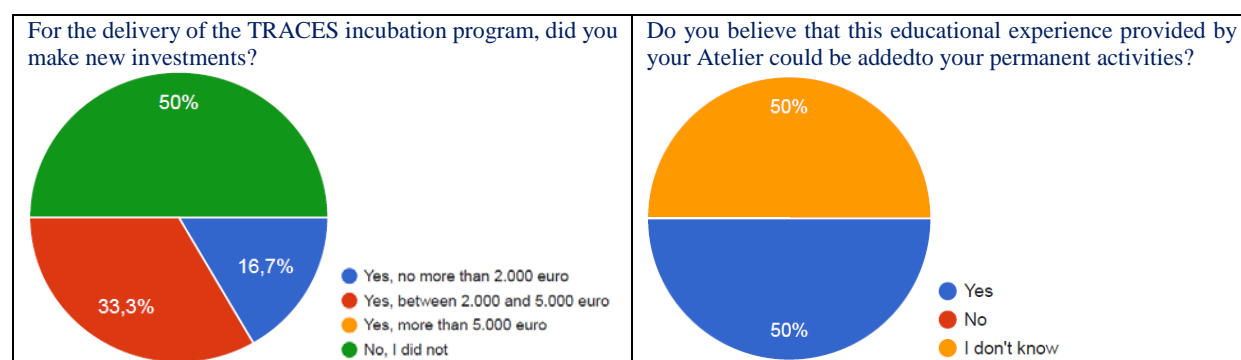
Moreover, Local Ateliers were asked whether the TRACES project affected their organisational structure in order to deliver the programme and in consideration of the future development of such type of activity.

As shown in Figure 6, 50% of respondent declared they made new investments to adequate their structure to the TRACES project requirements: 33,3% stated new investments in the range 2.000-5000 euro, while 16,7% made investments for an amount of no more than 2.000 euro. Furthermore, about their will to make permanent such type of incubation programme, 50% of

them responded positively. Particularly they are planning to enhance this type of services through accompanying vouchers, focusing their commitment on digitization and on supporting business start-ups for young creative industries. By sustainable interaction with the participating companies in order to assist companies to overcome any entrepreneurial barriers and continue to develop to the desired level for their business success. This already continues by inviting all these companies to organized workshops about related topics and entrepreneurial context and spending few hours per week by discussing their progress and follow up.

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Fig. 6 – Effects of TRACES on the organisational structure of Local Ateliers



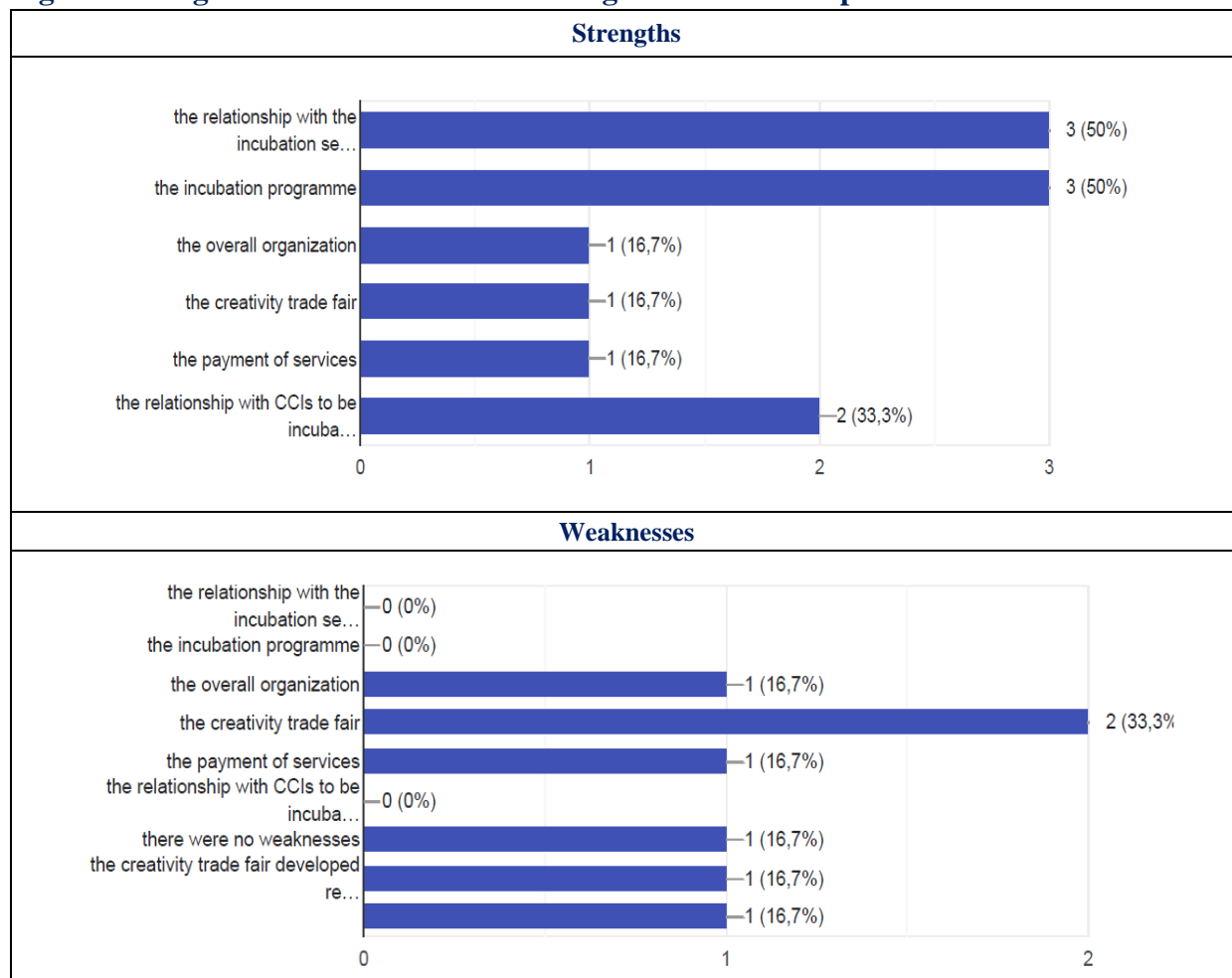
Finally, they were asked to give their point of view about the main strengths and weaknesses of the organisational set-up of TRACES. Figure 7 shows the preferences to the various aspects characterizing the overall structure of the TRACES environment.

About the main criticisms, they highlighted the non-favourable context induced by the Covid-19 outbreak, which did not allow for different developments.

For the future the recommended:

- Better and more opportunities for the participants to connect with the others from different countries;
- More freedom to the Local Ateliers to form a suitable program and to be part of the design of the educational process;
- Strengthening the budget allocated to training services and developing participation strategies in the results / profits generated by start-ups.

Fig. 7 – Strengths and Weaknesses of the organisational set-up of TRACES



LOCAL SUPPLIERS OF INCUBATION SERVICES

15 out of 69 local suppliers of incubation services who signed the protocols with the Partnership provided us with their assessment about the TRACES organisational set-up, with specific reference to their actual involvement in the delivery of the incubation programme. Regarding the overall experience 66,7% of the respondents have been involved by the Local Ateliers and they valued it as positive, as shown in Figures 8 and 9.

Fig. 8 - How do you value the overall TRACES experience?

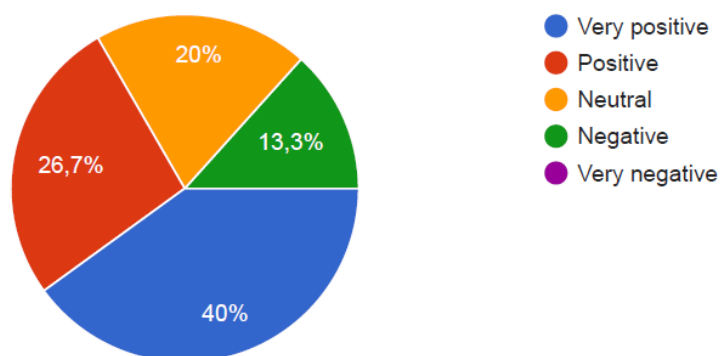
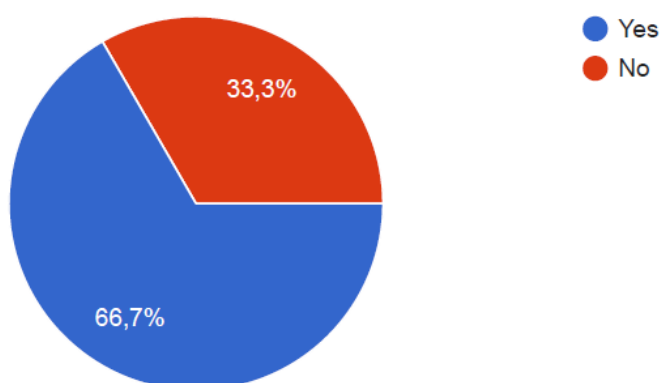


Fig. 9 - Have you been involved by Local Ateliers in delivering the incubation programme for CCMSMEs?



The local suppliers of incubation services who participated in the delivery of the incubation programme expressed their point of view on TRACES environment, highlighting some strengths and weaknesses, as shown in Table 2.

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Tab. 2 - Strengths and Weaknesses of the TRACES environment

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High innovation • Connecting young people with stakeholders and experts. • Challenging entrepreneurial ideas • One-to-one coaching pre-business preparation • Friendly setting • Ecosystem model 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short time to develop the program • Too much different types of projects: from art to music, from community based business to freelance designer and artisan. Good for sharing ideas but bad for business strategy. • Lack of a reserved platform for video meetings • Entrepreneurs' needs were too broadly formulated • Follow-up is not really monitored

Finally they also highlighted the non-favourable context induced by Covid-19 outbreak and provided us with some suggestions to improve the overall TRACES environment:

- To plan one year incubation program, with less intensive lessons, more practical than theoretical, to observe the business idea evolution and better test sustainability;
- To better define the results to be achieved after the acceleration path, maybe developing KPIs and metrics for monitoring progress;
- To insert in the Traces program a follow up after the path, for example helping start-ups to participate in a call and assigning the design service to the incubator who accompanied the startup from the very beginning;
- To invest in technology (hardware and software) that can improve collaboration and remote work.

ANNEX 1 – Questionnaires

TRACES - Your assessment

Dear start-up, we are very grateful if you would dedicate 5 minutes of your time to fill in the following survey. We would appreciate your feedback about your experience in the framework of TRACES project. Thank you very much. Traces staff

***Campo obbligatorio**

1. Please, provide us with your opinion about TRACES incubation programme delivered. Describe three strengths *

2. Please, provide us with your opinion about TRACES incubation programme delivered. Describe three weaknesses *

3. May you provide us with some suggestions on how to overcome the weaknesses you highlighted? *

4. Which of the following activities would you focus on? *

Seleziona tutte le voci applicabili.

- ☐ common lessons
- ☐ one2one lessons
- ☐ meetings with testimonials (entrepreneurs of you sector)

Altro: ☐ _____

5. In which level your expectations fulfilled by the Local Atelier Acceleration Programme of TRACES? *

Seleziona tutte le voci applicabili.

- ☐ High
- ☐ Medium
- ☐ Low

Altro: ☐ _____

6. Which was the most important lesson learned during the TRACES Acceleration Programme? *

7. How do you value the overall TRACES experience? *

Contrassegna solo un ovale.

- ☐ Very positive
- ☐ Positive
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Negative
- ☐ Very negative

8. Do you have any comment about the experience you did in the framework of TRACES? *

Google Moduli

Traces - Your feedback

Dear Local Atelier, we are very grateful if you would dedicate 5 minutes of your time to fill in the following survey. We would appreciate your feedback about your experience in the framework of TRACES project. Thank you very much. Traces staff

***Campo obbligatorio**

1. How many staff have you enrolled for the delivery of the TRACES incubation programme? *

Contrassegna solo un ovale.

- ☐ 1-5
- ☐ 6-10
- ☐ 11-15
- ☐ more than 15
- ☐ None

2. For the delivery of the TRACES incubation program, did you make new investments? *

Contrassegna solo un ovale.

- ☐ Yes, no more than 2.000 euro
- ☐ Yes, between 2.000 and 5.000 euro
- ☐ Yes, more than 5.000 euro
- ☐ No, I did not

3. For the delivery of the TRACES incubation program, did you enroll external experts of the TRACES short list? *

Contrassegna solo un ovale.

- ☐ Yes. 1-5 experts
- ☐ Yes. 6-10 experts
- ☐ Yes. More than 10 experts
- ☐ No, I did not

4. How many common lessons did you deliver? *

Contrassegna solo un ovale.

- ☐ 1-5
- ☐ 6-10
- ☐ More than 10
- ☐ Altro: _____

5. How many one2one lessons did you deliver? *

Contrassegna solo un ovale.

- ☐ 1-5
- ☐ 6-10
- ☐ More than 10
- ☐ Altro: _____

6. Do you believe that this educational experience provided by your Atelier could be added to your permanent activities? *

Contrassegna solo un ovale.

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I don't know

7. If yes, in which way are you planning to add it to your permanent activities? *

8. According to your opinion, what are the weaknesses of the organisational set up of TRACE (you can select 3 options)? *

Seleziona tutte le voci applicabili.

- ☐ the relationship with the incubation service providers
- ☐ the incubation programme
- ☐ the overall organization
- ☐ the creativity trade fair
- ☐ the payment of services
- ☐ the relationship with CCIs to be incubated/accelerated

Altro: ☐ _____

9. What are your suggestions to overcome these weaknesses? *

10. According to your opinion, what are the strengths of the organisational set up of TRACE (you can select 3 options)? *

Seleziona tutte le voci applicabili.

- ☐ the relationship with the incubation service providers
- ☐ the incubation programme
- ☐ the overall organization
- ☐ the creativity trade fair
- ☐ the payment of services
- ☐ the relationship with CCIIs to be incubated/accelerated

Altro: ☐ _____

11. What are your suggestions to improve them more? *

12. How do you value the overall TRACES experience? *

Contrassegna solo un ovale.

☐ Very positive

☐ Positive

☐ Neutral

☐ Negative

☐ Very negative

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Traces - service providers survey

Domande Risposte 15

TRACES - your feedback

Dear service provider, we are very grateful if you would dedicate 5 minutes of your time to fill in the following survey. We would appreciate your feedback about your experience in the framework of TRACES project. Thank you very much. Traces staff

Have you been involved by Local Ateliers in delivering the incubation programme for CCMSMEs? *

☐ Yes

☐ No

If Yes, please, provide us with your opinion about your involvement in TRACES. What are the most weaknesses? *

Testo risposta lunga

If Yes, please, provide us with your opinion about your involvement in TRACES. What are the most strenghts? *

Testo risposta lunga



Testo risposta lunga

How do you value the overall TRACES experience? *

1. Very positive
2. Positive
3. Neutral
4. Negative
5. Very negative

