



ATTRACTISS

Empowering Innovation
Support Services

Identifying Innovation Support Services



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What are Innovation Support Services?

According to CAP Regulation (EU) 2021/2115, Innovation Support Services (ISS) are aimed at providing “support for preparing and implementing emerging EIP operational group projects, whilst capturing and making use of grassroots innovative ideas”.

Although innovation support services (ISS) represent a novelty from a policy perspective, a large body of literature has been developed through European projects that has deepened the roles, objectives and functions of services aimed at facilitating innovation processes.

According to these studies, the diversity of services provided to support innovation processes can be summed up into **7 functions**:

ISS1. Awareness-raising and knowledge dissemination

ISS1. Includes all activities contributing to knowledge awareness, dissemination of scientific knowledge, or technical information for farmers. For instance, providing knowledge based on information dissemination forums (website, leaflets), meetings or demonstrations and exchange visits

Activities played under ISS1.



Dissemination of information (website, brochures, magazines, newsletters, bulletins, webinars, etc.), organization of exchange visits, organization of demonstrations, etc. It includes i) selection and evaluation of information ii) transformation of information into documents (targets: advisors, farmers, etc.) iii) language translation



Meetings



Communication of project results



Supply of knowledge and technical information for innovation (knowledge transfer), which includes selection and identification of know-how and transfer of knowledge /technologies



ISS2. Advisory, consultancy and backstopping

ISS2. Includes targeted, supportive activities aimed at solving complex problems (e.g., a new farming system), based on demands of actors and the co-construction of solutions

Activities played under ISS2.



Articulation of advisory needs / specific need to provide a more targeted support (e.g., data and information gathering, design of tailored advisory packages)



“Management” of the innovation process (soft skills), including support to find specialized advice

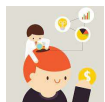


Organization of backstopping pools (research / advisory / SME / etc.) to find a solution to a complex problem

ISS3. Demand articulation

ISS3. Includes all services targeted to help actors to express clear demands to other actors (research, service providers, etc.). This is targeted support to enhance the innovator’s ability to express his/her needs to other relevant actors.

Activities played under ISS3.



Needs analysis



Strategy and vision development



Feasibility analysis



Looking for ideas and solutions



Building bridges with users and intermediary organisations to make the need concrete, defining its contents, specificities and costs

ISS4. Networking, facilitation and brokerage

ISS4. Provision of services to help organize or strengthen networks, improve the relationships between actors and to align services in order to be able to complement each other (the right service at the right time and place). It also includes all activities aimed at strengthening collaborative and collective action.



Activities played under ISS4.



Partner identification and aggregation



Internal: facilitation, mediation and conflict management (construction of the project proposal, definition of objectives, roles, knowledge exchange, collective learning, etc.)



External facilitation: facilitation, mediation, network strengthening and conflict management (with the MAs/Granters (ISS6), with stakeholders and potential users, along the production chain (ISS7))

ISS5. Capacity building

ISS5. Includes services aimed at increasing innovation actors' capacities at the individual, collective and/or organizational level.

Activities played under ISS5.



Traditional training/Face-to-Face individual training



Peer-to-peer
facilitation/Coaching



Experiential learning

ISS6. Enhancing/supporting access to resources

ISS6. Includes all services for innovators aimed at enhancing the acquisition of resources to support the process. This could be facilitating access to inputs (seeds, fertilizers etc.), facilities and equipment (technological platforms, labs etc.), and funding (credit, subsidies, grants, loans, etc.).

Activities played under ISS6.



Farm Management

Facilitating access to facilities and equipment (technological platforms, laboratories, etc.)

Facilitating access to inputs

Facilitating access to financial/
insurance





Facilitating access to funding (incl. application preparation and submission to grants)

Project management

ISS7. Institutional support for niche innovation and scaling mechanisms stimulation

ISS7. Includes institutional support for niche innovation (incubators, experimental infrastructures etc.) and for scaling out and scaling up the innovation process. This refers to support for the design and enforcement of norms, rules, funding mechanisms, taxes, subsidies, etc. that facilitate the innovation process or the diffusion of innovation.

Activities played under ISS7.



Negotiation with authorities to create 'protect' space for experiments

Brokerage along the production chain (ISS4)

Negotiation with people affected by the innovation



Provision of incubators and experimental infrastructures

Exploitation strategy and action plan design and implementation



Support for the design and enforcement of norms, rules, funding mechanisms, etc. that facilitate the diffusion of innovation

Supporting intellectual property (patents) and patent authorization processes



Who are the ISS providers?

ISS providers can be defined as “actors who brokerage/provide the services required to make innovation happen”.

**SUPPORT FOR
INNOVATION CAN BE
PROVIDED BY A
VARIETY OF ACTORS**

Proietti and Cristiano,
2022; Faure et al., 2019;
ATTRACTISS D1.2, D1.4

- advisors and consultants,
- Farmer cooperatives/ associations/ chambers/ organisations,
- Government institutions,
- Agri-research institutions,
- Academic and Training centres,
- input providers,
- upstream and downstream industries,
- rural networks and Local Action Groups,
- Banks, Insurance and financing institutions,
- NGOs, consumer organisations, etc.

ISS providers can provide services:

- due to a specific mandate
- because they are professionals
- because, even if they are not specialised in the provision of services nor have a mandate (e.g., farmers’ organizations, farmers, public administration, etc.), they are interested in pushing the innovation process forward.

One service provider can be responsible for a wide range of ISS functions or largely support innovation processes by interacting with or coordinating other service providers.

Why so many different providers?

Often, there is not a single service provider responsible for driving the whole innovation process, but different actors can coordinate with each other's contributing, by performing different functions, to achieve successful outcomes. This is because the services which are needed for driving a whole innovation process evolve along the process itself and might require different actors to be involved in a particular phase. Hardly a single service provider (especially if it is a single-person team) can hold all the capacities needed to move the process forward.



EVIDENCE AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Although based on partial data, the mapping exercise (ATTRACTISS, D1.2) shows that 50% of identified ISS providers have no role in the CAP Strategic Plan.

To plan effective services and facilitate access to ISS by as many actors as possible, MSs should map all the actors already providing some kind of innovation support service according to the 7 ISS functions, paying attention to the purpose behind the service ("provider's mission" or driven by the case), the frequency of service delivery (continuous, irregular, one-off) and the functions carried out.

References

- Faure G., A. Knierim, A. Koutsouris, T. Ndah, S. Audouin, E. Zarokosta, E. Wielinga, B. Triomphe, S. Mathé, L. Temple, K. Heanue, 2019. "How to Strengthen Innovation Support Services in Agriculture with Regard to Multi-Stakeholder Approaches", Journal of Innovation Economics & Management, 2019/1 (n° 28), p. 145-169. DOI: 10.3917/jie.028.0145. URL: <https://www.cairn.info/revue-journal-of-innovation-economics-2019-1-page-145.htm>
- Proietti P. and Cristiano S., 2022. "Innovation support services: an evidence-based exploration of their strategic roles in the Italian AKIS", The Journal of Agricultural Education and Extension, DOI: 10.1080/1389224X.2022.2069828

