



Smart4Europe2

Catalysing Digitisation throughout Europe

Deliverable 3.4

Outreach Evaluation Report

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¹ R=Report, DEC= Websites, patents filling, Ethics, ORDP: Open Research Data Pilot, etc., O=Other

² PU = Public, CO = Confidential, only for members of the consortium (including the Commission Services)

Acronyms Listed in Document	
CDO-Plan	Communication, Dissemination and Outreach Plan
CSA	Coordination and Support Action
COVID	Corona Virus Disease
DEI	Digitising European Industry Initiative
DIH	Digital Innovation Hub
DoA	Description of Action
EC	European Commission
ECSEL	Electronic Components and Systems for European Leadership Joint Undertaking
EEN	Enterprise Europe Network
ETP	European Technology Platform
FWE	Flexible, Wearable Electronics
H2020	Horizon 2020
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
NCP	National Contact Point
OLAE	Organic and large area electronics
RTO	Research and technology organisation
SME	Small and medium-sized enterprise
SAE	Smart Anything Everywhere
WP	Work Package

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1 Executive Summary

Communication, dissemination and outreach activities represent key activities of the Smart4Europe2 Coordination and Support Action (CSA) of the Smart Anything Everywhere (SAE) Initiative. While a joint '**Communication, Dissemination and Outreach Plan**' (D5.1) has been presented in M04, the assessment of the different activities is performed in two separate Deliverables, '**Dissemination and Exploitation Plan Year2**' (D5.3) and the document at hand. Outreach activities specifically aimed at:

- **Growing the SAE ecosystem by attracting** a significant number of new stakeholders with broad coverage in technological, application, innovation, and geographic terms by targeted **outreach activities** via own networks and **multipliers**.
- Facilitate matching supply and demand by **brokerage** activities.
- **Multiplying impacts** by linking up and **collaborating** with other Digital Innovation Hubs, ECSEL, and other CSAs funded under the Digitising European Industry (DEI) focus area.

Target groups comprised start-ups, SMEs, mid-caps, users and suppliers of digital technologies, funding bodies and investors, experts in innovation (academia and industry), related projects and initiatives as well as multipliers supporting the digital transformation of the European industry. Smart4Europe2 **linked up with other DIHs and related projects and initiatives**, including ECSEL and other CSAs funded under the **DEI focus area**, to connect and **consolidate the overall ecosystem** (D3.3³ and D4.2⁴). Outreach activities included workshops, webinars, SAE information and **brokerage** events (D3.5⁵). Three dedicated '**Ecosystem Building Events**' (D3.2) helped showcase good practices, discuss challenges and to bring relevant stakeholders together to build and bond the community.

The **evaluation** of activities performed showed a good attachment to the **Key Performance Indicators** (KPIs) and a **flexible adaption** to the new environment brought by the evolving pandemic situation. While face-to-face interactions were merely possible throughout the project lifetime, new channels and tools were tested and implemented, revealing **impactful outreach approaches**, which will still be valid and useful in a post-pandemic situation or a '**new normal**'. In summary, most of the activities planned remained very relevant, even if conducted in digital formats. It was even possible to attract a much **bigger number of participants**, especially SMEs to **events** than planned (as travel was not required) with a good EU coverage. Moreover, recordings could be made available after the respective events, enhancing the spread. The general push towards understanding the need for digitisation might also have played a role to make the **Open Call campaigns** very successful, with significantly more applications turned in than expected. **Webinars** and **training** worked well, but due to an overload of webinars, they had to be well planned and effectively promoted. New tools for **online co-creation** of results and voting made the meetings interesting and eased data collection and analysis.

Nevertheless, face-to-face interaction was greatly missed. Other activities like 'booths' at fairs or conferences had reduced impacts, as interactions were limited, but views of videos presented revealed high. Videos were perceived very well, and many more (mainly self-made) videos were produced for outreach campaigns, event promotion as well as explaining the initiative and open call procedure.

³ https://smart4europe.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/S4E2_D3.3_CooperationDIH-ECSEL-FA_final.pdf

⁴ https://smart4europe.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/S4E2_D4.2_RecordNatRegActivities_final.pdf

⁵ https://smart4europe.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/S4E2_D3.5-Report-on-brokerage-events.pdf

2 Introduction and Background

Smart4Europe2 has the following overarching objectives:

- Establishing and promoting **enabling services** to support and consolidate the SAE network
- **Growing the SAE ecosystem** and multiplying its impacts through collaboration
- **Sustaining** the DIH network and creating SAE strategic recommendations for Horizon Europe

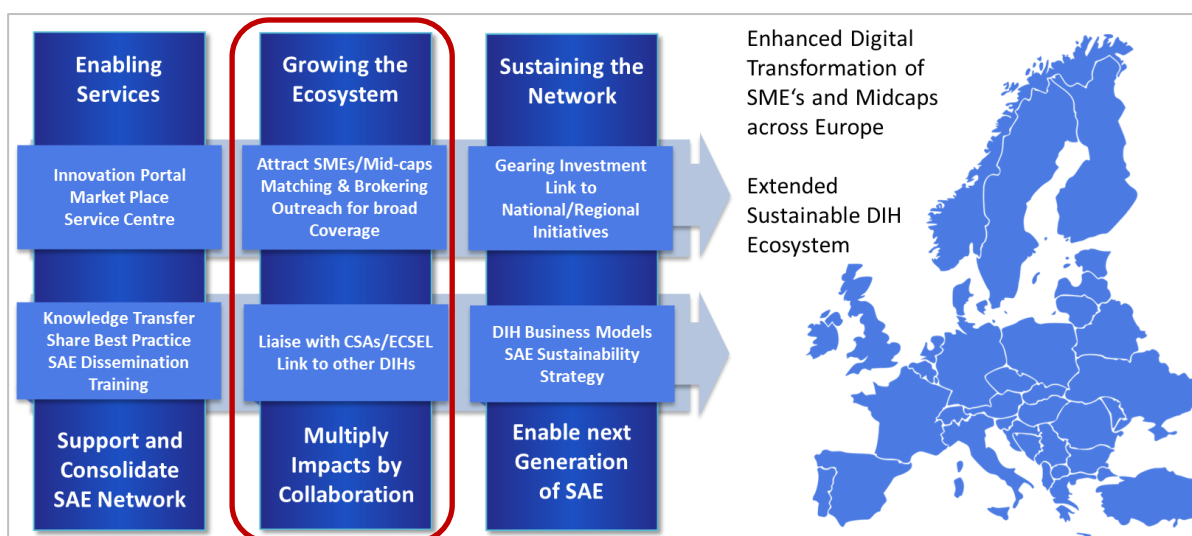


Figure 1: Overall objectives of Smart4Europe2

The communication, dissemination and outreach activities incrementally support these objectives by raising awareness of the SAE Initiative, promoting the SAE offer and open calls, providing enabling tools and services, attracting new stakeholders, linking to related EU/national/regional initiatives as well as stimulating further investment towards a sustainable SAE ecosystem. In this context, the **outreach activities** focussed specifically on **growing the SAE ecosystem and multiplying its impacts by collaboration with related initiatives**. Furthermore, outreach activities concentrate on attracting new stakeholders within the broader community and the growth of the SAE ecosystem. A specific aim was to achieve a wider coverage of stakeholders in terms of technological, application, innovation, and geographic exposure. Moreover, links to other DIHs, ECSEL and CSAs under the DEI focus area were fostered, or existing ones intensified. Furthermore, brokering between users and suppliers of technology products/solutions and suitable funding resources was provided.

In more detail, the outreach activities had the following objectives:

- Increasing the awareness and outreach of the SAE Initiative
- Attracting start-ups, SMEs and mid-caps (also from non-high-tech sectors)
- Extending the SAE-ecosystem in a strategic manner and triggering organic growth
- Enhancing the SAE coverage in technological, application, innovation, and geographic terms
- Creating linkages with EU/regional/national DIHs/initiatives and stimulating collaboration
- Cooperating with ECSEL and CSAs funded under the DEI focus area
- Brokering between users and suppliers

The graph below shows the stakeholders of the 'inner SAE ecosystem', including the Innovation Actions and the CSA (yellow) and the outer circle, representing the different target groups to be involved through the communication, dissemination and outreach activities.



Figure 2: Smart4Europe2 ecosystem and target groups to get involved

To achieve the objectives and reach the stakeholders above, the following activities were conducted:

- Creating and extending a structured **SAE stakeholder's database**
- Adapting and implementing **outreach** channels and tools for **digital formats**
- Promoting **Open Calls** of the Innovation Actions aligned with SAE
- Performing **outreach campaigns** attracting start-ups, SMEs and mid-caps to the ecosystem
- **Cross-promoting** SAE offers and opportunities via sister projects and CSAs
- Organising **collaboration events and workshops** with other initiatives and strategic networks
- Organising **Technology Radar** sessions
- Organising three **Ecosystem Building Events**
- Organising four **Brokerage Events**

3 Target Groups

Reaching the right target groups is key for communication, dissemination, outreach as well as exploitation activities. A detailed analysis of target groups was performed to allow to communicate in a targeted and customised manner addressing strategic stakeholders, as well as reaching a broad audience including industry and the scientific community, potential end-users, local authorities, policymakers and the general public.

Key Smart4Europe2 target groups for outreach activities include:

- Start-ups, SMEs and mid-caps, to be attracted to the SAE opportunities, including cascade funds (in Digital Europe, this target group is extended to public organisations)
- Digital Innovation Hubs, to build a pan-European network of DIHs
- Scientific community, to contribute to the development of technologies needed in future
- Related Initiatives / sister projects to enhance the reach and multiply impacts
- Policymakers, to align EU, national and regional initiatives
- Investors, to close the funding gap after SAE cascade funding

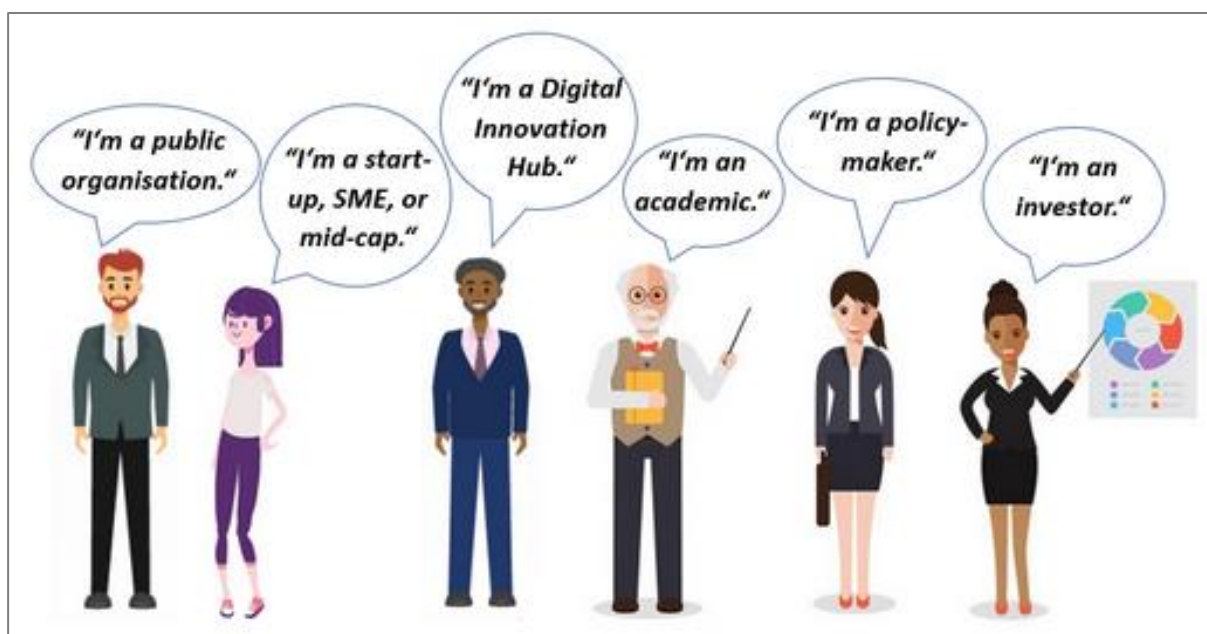


Figure 3: Smart4Europe2 target groups

After identifying and describing the respective target groups (WHO), key messages tackling their main interest and needs were elaborated (WHAT) and suitable outreach tools and channels defined (HOW).

Table 1 below presents an overview of the target groups, key messages and related channels to reach them. After describing the various tools and outreach activities in more detail, Table 3 presents the target group-specific outreach contact points within the consortium and activities performed.

Table 1: Target group-specific outreach messages and channels

Target Groups	Description and role of the target group (WHO)	Key Message (WHAT)	Channel / Tool (HOW)
Start-ups, SMEs, mid-caps	Companies who need support in digitisation incl newcomers, suppliers and users of digital technologies, tech and non-tech companies from all over Europe and specifically regions that are not yet well covered. Companies interested in enhancing their digital maturity, innovative projects funded via cascade funds, up-skilling/training Beneficiaries of Open Calls with an interest in private funds.	Companies can benefit from SAE expertise, up-skilling as well as cascade funding to test their idea (digital technology, application, enhanced product) with minimised risk before they invest. Moreover, companies can benefit from investors readiness training	Innovation Portal (IP), esp. info on open calls and related success stories, social media, campaigns, videos, service center, FAQs
Digital Innovation Hubs	DIHs across Europe, DIHs in Innovation Actions, national / regional DIH with interest in collaboration, cross-fertilisation, exchange of best practices, provision of joint services, exchange of expertise EDIH candidates with an interest to build collaboration corridors	DIH can vastly benefit from a pan-European network, providing possibilities to exchange, collaborate and find the complementary expertise needed in Europe.	IP esp. community page, events, workshops and webinars, collaboration meetings
SAE Ecosystem	SAE ecosystem (coordinators and partners of SAE actions of all phases, SMEs involved in application experiments, EC) and related communities (CPS/IoT, OLAE/FWE, advanced computing, SSI) clusters and networks	Act as one initiative, join forces, speak with one voice to achieve larger impacts	SAE Collaboration events, cluster meetings
Scientific Community	Scientists, academics with interest in developing and implementing SAE technologies, supporting the twin transition / industry5.0	Scientists can get involved in discussing technologies for tomorrow and contributing to technology assessment and foresight via the SAE Technology Radar	IP, Technology Radar, events and workshops, publications
Related Projects / Sister Projects / Initiatives (EU)	Projects/initiatives fostering collaboration, with interest in: benefiting from synergies and complementarities, widening the reach of each initiative, providing seamless services to SMEs	Better together, join forces to support the digital transformation of industry in Europe, multiply impacts through collaboration, exploit synergies and complementarities	Collaboration meetings, cross-promotion of open calls, activities and opportunities, D3.3.
National/regional Initiatives	Initiatives focussed on digitisation transformation (of SMEs) with interest to collaborate on EU level and benefit from sharing experiences, exchange on tools and opportunities	Build on a region's strengths, find complementarities, exchange expertise and knowledge, learn from each other	IP, Ecosystem Building Events, D3.3 and D4.2
Policy makers	Policymakers involved in digital transformation / EDIH development with interest to join forces, align strategies, learn from SAE experiences	Better together, align strategies to act as efficient as possible across Europe	IP, Ecosystem Building Events, D3.3 and D4.2
Investors/funding bodies	Investors with an interest in SAE Application Experiments outcomes, new, innovative technologies, application and products in a pre-competitive stage related to digital technologies (AI, CPS, SSI, OLAE, low energy computing); investors to help SAE sustainability	The SAE portfolio of Application Experiment outcomes provides an excellent source to invest in innovative technologies and applications at a pre-competitive stage	IP, Contest Awards, brokerage events, D4.3, D4.4, D3.5

4 Evaluation of Outreach Tools and Channels

Communication, dissemination and outreach tools and channels are described in more detail in D5.1 and D5.3. Hereafter, a short assessment of tools and channels used specifically for outreach activities is performed. This assessment is done in the light of activities having been performed mainly under pandemic restrictions and have shifted towards more digital tools.

4.1 SAE Innovation Portal

The SAE Innovation Portal (<https://smartanythingeverywhere.eu/>) contains up-to-date information for stakeholders and newcomers on SAE supported cluster projects (community), funding opportunities (Open Calls), success stories (of Application Experiments performed with cascade funding), services (including the [SAE Marketplace](#), Technology Radar and training opportunities), media (gathering project-related videos, event recordings, newsletters,...) as well up-to-date news. The Innovation Portals represents the single-entry point and one-stop-shop for the SAE community.

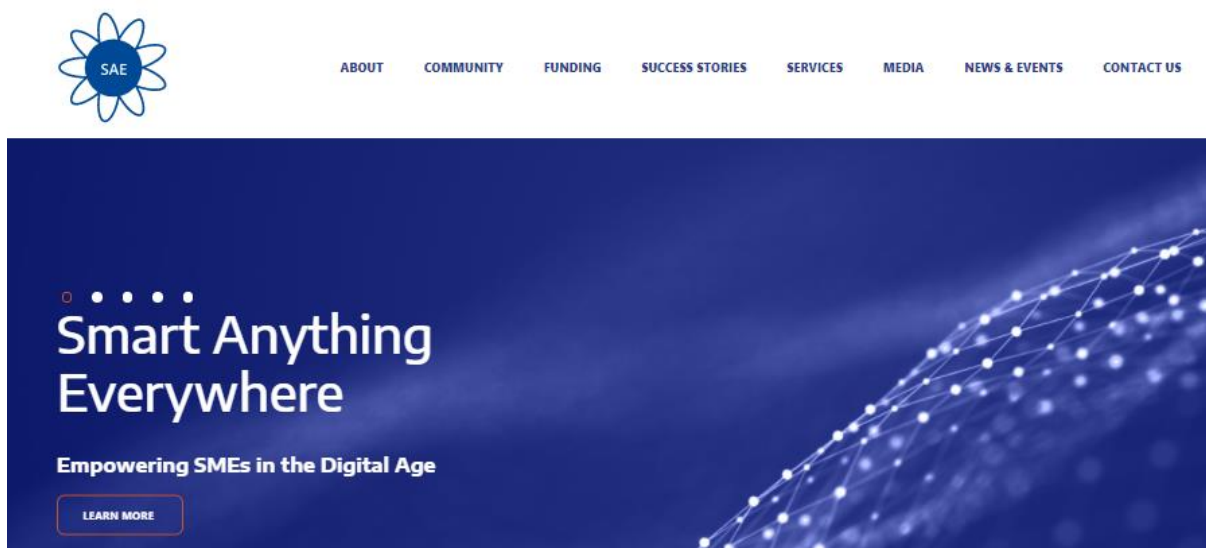


Figure 4: Structure of the SAE Innovation Portal

At the beginning of Smart4Europe2, the Innovation Portal was restructured and redesigned. Feedback on appearance, structure and usability is collected directly by the Innovation Portal:

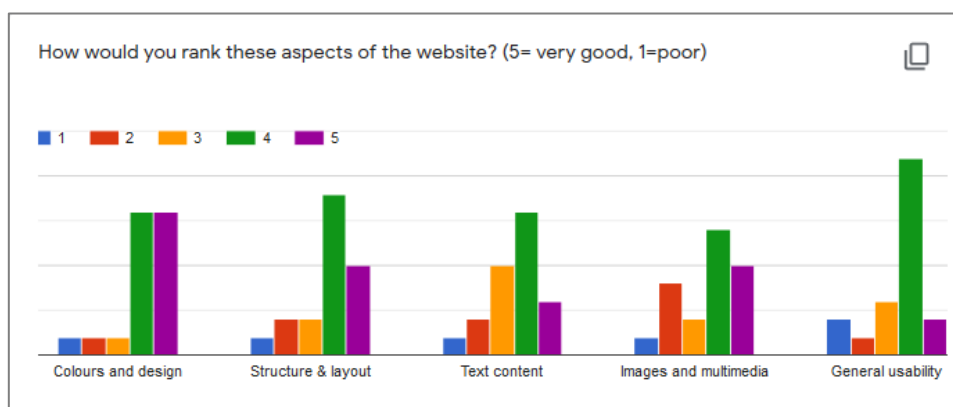


Figure 5: User Experience / Feedback to Innovation Portal

Assessment of Innovation Portal visitors

The unique (first time) visitors have been counted since the start of the SAE Initiative, as a S4E2 project partner created this Portal right at the beginning of the initiative. Smart4Europe2 started in January 2020 and could increase the number of first visitors by 1500. A steep increase can be seen in January 2021, directly related to the EDIH event (overall 2500 participants and 700 in the SAE session), with about 2000 new visitors and over 7000 page views in January.



Figure 6: Visitors of SAE Innovation Portal (red line – start of S4E2)

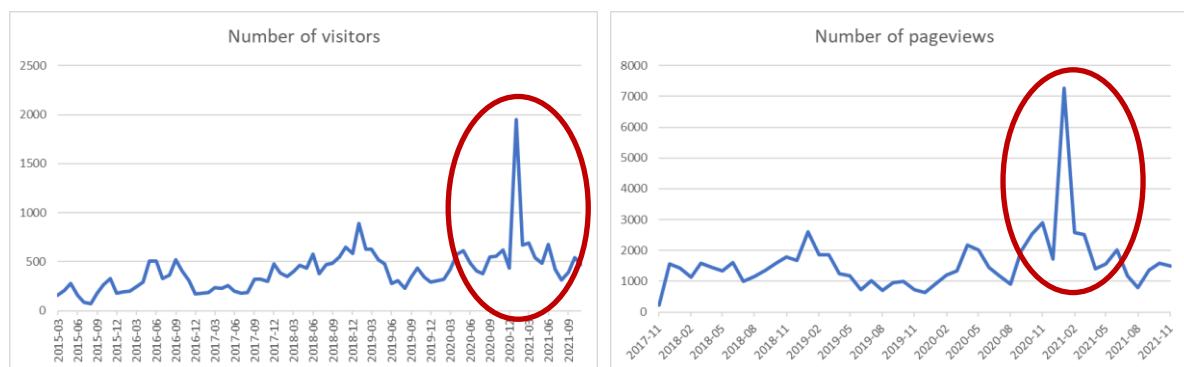


Figure 7: Number of new visitors 2015-2021 (left) and number of pageviews 2017-2021 (right)

The SAE Innovation Portal turned out to be a very useful and well-visited tool to build and bound the SAE community. It was specifically well visited at times of open call campaigns and in preparation and after key events.

The pages related to outreach activities rank very high, with the front page being highest ranked, followed by 'About', 'Success Stories' and 'Funding'. The same order can be found by assessing the time spent on the page, with over 100 seconds on 'Success Stories' and over 90 seconds for 'Funding'.

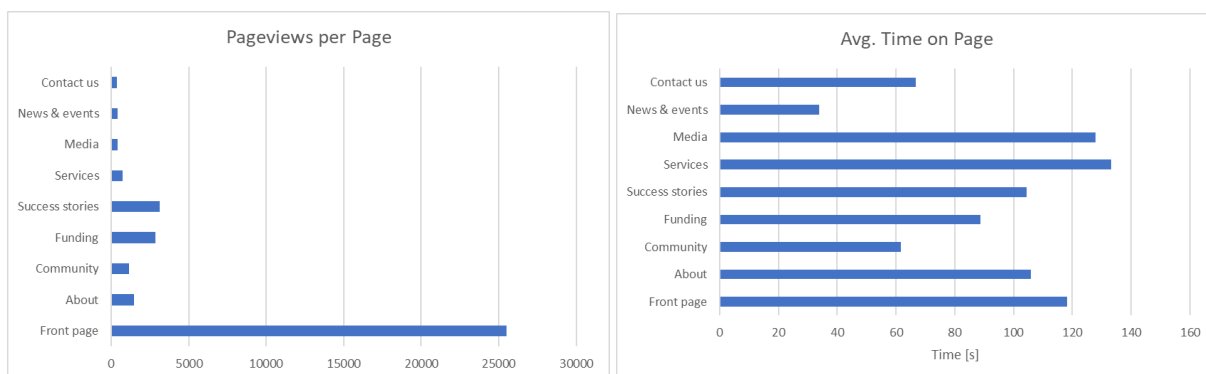


Figure 8: Pageviews and time on pages

The Innovation Portal visitor's origin from 26 countries, 20 thereof being in Europe. The European spread and EU coverage is shown below.

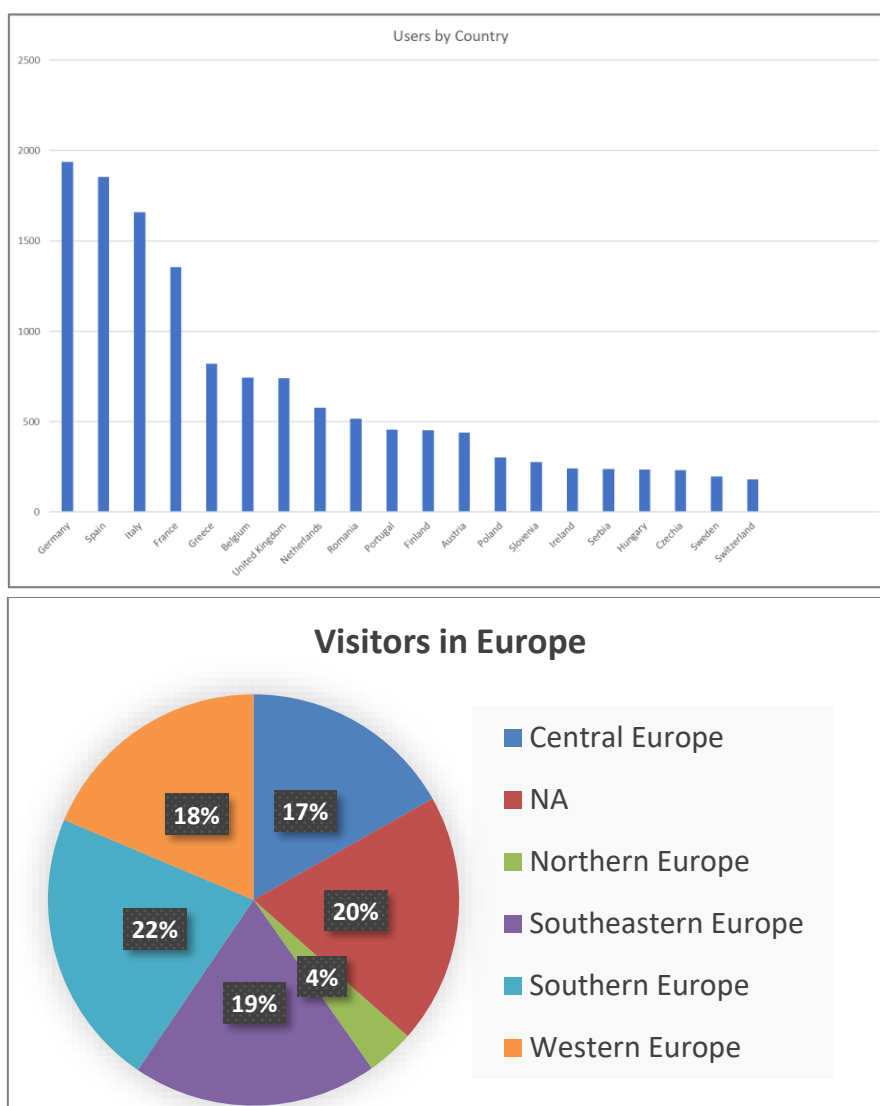


Figure 9: Users by country (top), EU coverage (bottom)

4.2 SAE Social Media

Social media channels (Twitter, LinkedIn, Facebook) targeting both professional and public networks were used to raise awareness on SAE opportunities and announce the release of Open Calls, cluster news, trainings and SAE webinars and events. All social media channels are clickable from the landing page of the Innovation Portal. The SAE Twitter channel https://twitter.com/SAE_Initiative follows all the SAE Innovation Actions and re-tweets important information from the sister projects as well as relevant information from and to the overall community. The participants of the Innovation Actions are actively following the SAE channels, expanding the follower base, and with this extend the overall network. The SAE Twitter channel already over 1000 followers, and there has been a steep increase after Smart4Europe2 has come into action. LinkedIn members count 750 and facebook 58.

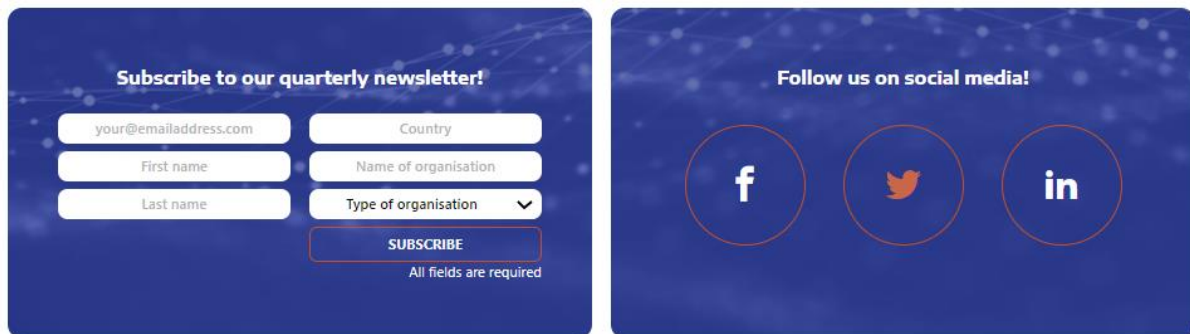


Figure 10: Newsletter subscription and social media channels on Innovation Portal

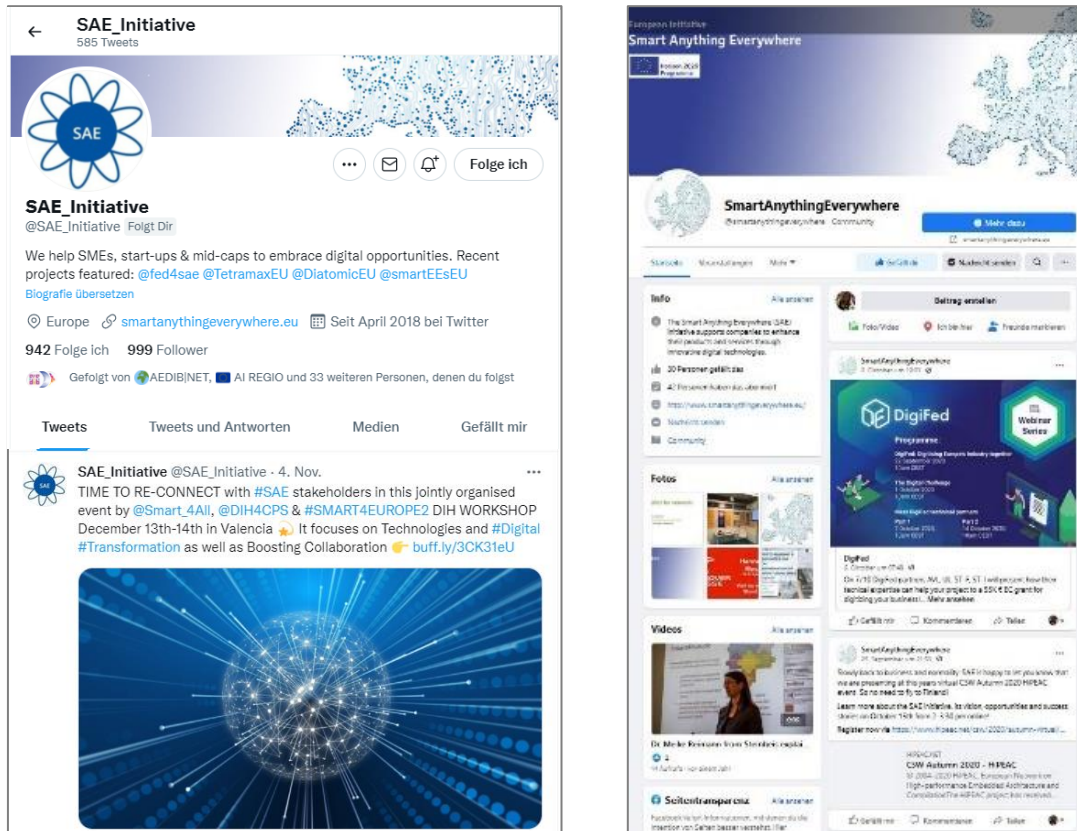
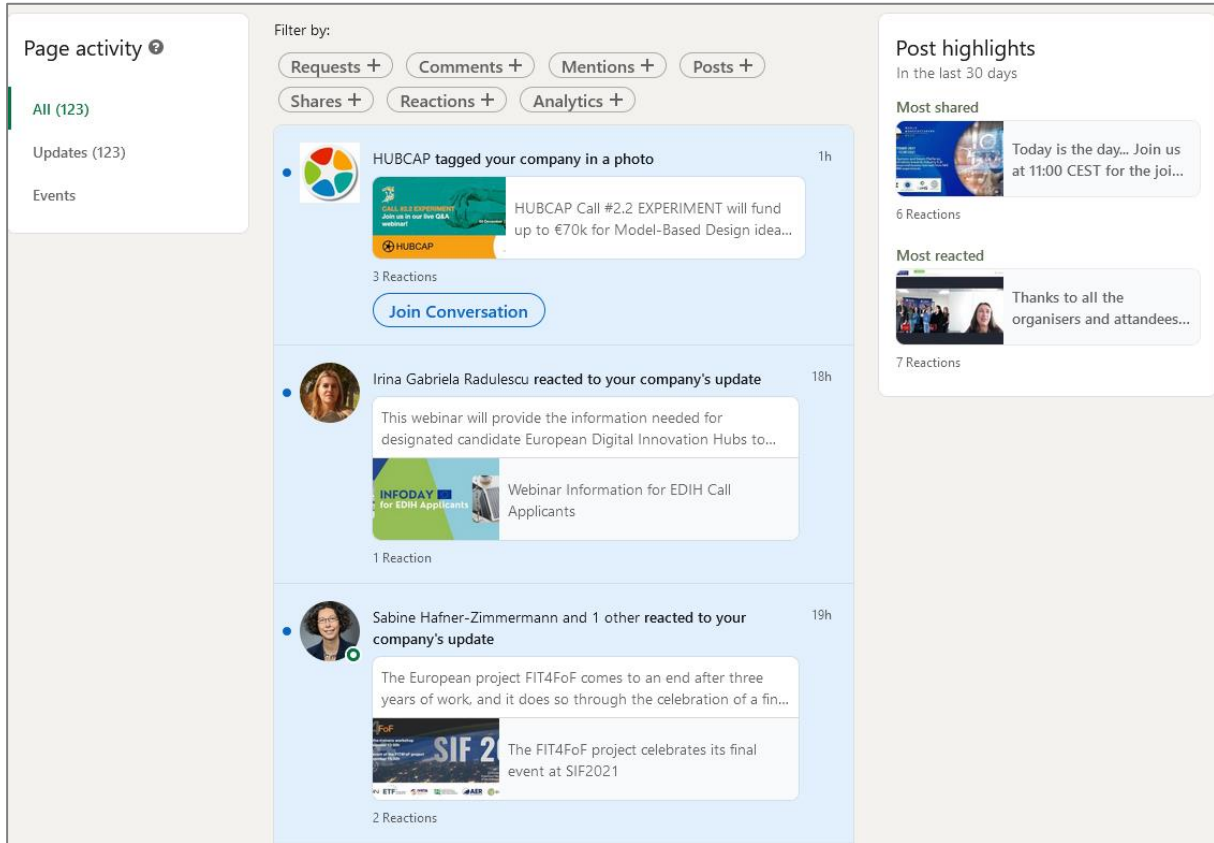


Figure 11: SAE Twitter and LinkedIn Channels

While Twitter was by far the most successful of these channels regarding numbers of followers, impressions and re-tweets/engagements, LinkedIn also performed very well to discuss information in more detail. On the other hand, facebook was not successful as a social media channel, and not much effort had been invested anymore during the 2nd year of the CSA.



The screenshot displays the LinkedIn 'Page activity' section. On the left, a sidebar shows 'Page activity' with filters for 'All (123)', 'Updates (123)', and 'Events'. The main content area is titled 'Filter by:' and includes buttons for 'Requests +', 'Comments +', 'Mentions +', 'Posts +', 'Shares +', 'Reactions +', and 'Analytics +'. Three activity items are listed:

- HUBCAP tagged your company in a photo** (1h): A post from HUBCAP announcing a call for Model-Based Design ideas, funded up to €70k. It has 3 reactions and a 'Join Conversation' button.
- Irina Gabriela Radulescu reacted to your company's update** (18h): A reaction to a webinar titled 'Webinar Information for EDIH Call Applicants'. It has 1 reaction.
- Sabine Hafner-Zimmermann and 1 other reacted to your company's update** (19h): A reaction to a post about the FIT4FoF project celebrating its final event at SIF2021. It has 2 reactions.

On the right, the 'Post highlights' section shows 'Most shared' (6 reactions) and 'Most reacted' (7 reactions) posts.

Figure 12: Activities on LinkedIn

4.3 YouTube and Videos

As face-2-face interaction was limited due to the pandemic situation, digital media became more and more important. Videos for different purposes were produced and received much attention and very good feedback. The project issued promotional videos explaining the SAE initiative, videos accompanying Open Call campaigns and explaining the application and funding process, videos promoting SAE events, as well as videos featuring the SAE success stories. To achieve better outreach and geographical coverage, the 'image video' was made available in the five languages of the project partners: English, French, Italian, German and Hungarian ([smartanythingeverywhere » Media](https://smartanythingeverywhere.eu/media)).

[Smart Anything Everywhere: Let's shape Europe's digital future together - YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=...)



Figure 13: SAE Image Video

Overall, 15 videos were created in the frame of Smart4Europe2 and 2 in Smart4Europe1 (which were further promoted), gaining about **1400 views** and over **6350 engagements**, including Twitter and LinkedIn impressions (see annex for statistics and video links).

The videos followed different purposes:

- 1 image video (in collaboration with professional film agency) – to promote the SAE initiative
- 1 success stories video – to showcase open call outcomes / to engage SMEs in Open Calls
- 3 introductions to the SAE Initiative – to promote and explain the SAE Initiative
- 1 explainer video – to explain the open call process and attract start-ups, SMEs and midcaps
- 7 open call-related videos – to specifically promote the Open Calls / Open Call campaigns
- 2 event-related videos – to promote specific events

The videos were massively promoted via newsletters, social media and on the Innovation Portal. Moreover, the image video was shown before SAE events started, during coffee breaks but also at virtual booths at conferences and fairs.

For the development of the videos, S4E2 followed different approaches. The image video was created in collaboration with a film agency and a professional speaker. As it was of higher cost, this video was conceptualised so that it would be relevant throughout the overall project lifetime and even beyond. Other videos, which had neither been planned nor budgeted before the project start were created by freshly discovered talents within the consortium. S2i and HS employees developed the storylines, used various tools, including animaker and prezzi to create characters, animations or integrate film footage into the videos. They partly used their own voice, AI voice-over or professional speakers. Some videos were only relevant for a shorter timeframe (Open Call campaigns, promotion of an event), while the image video, the general explainer video and the success stories video remain relevant even after the CSA ends. Overall, the consortium experienced the activity and feedbacks very positive and will plan videos accordingly in future projects with strong communication, dissemination and outreach focus. Next to own videos, the SAE Innovation Portal features the sister projects videos (40 items).

4.4 Outreach Event Formats

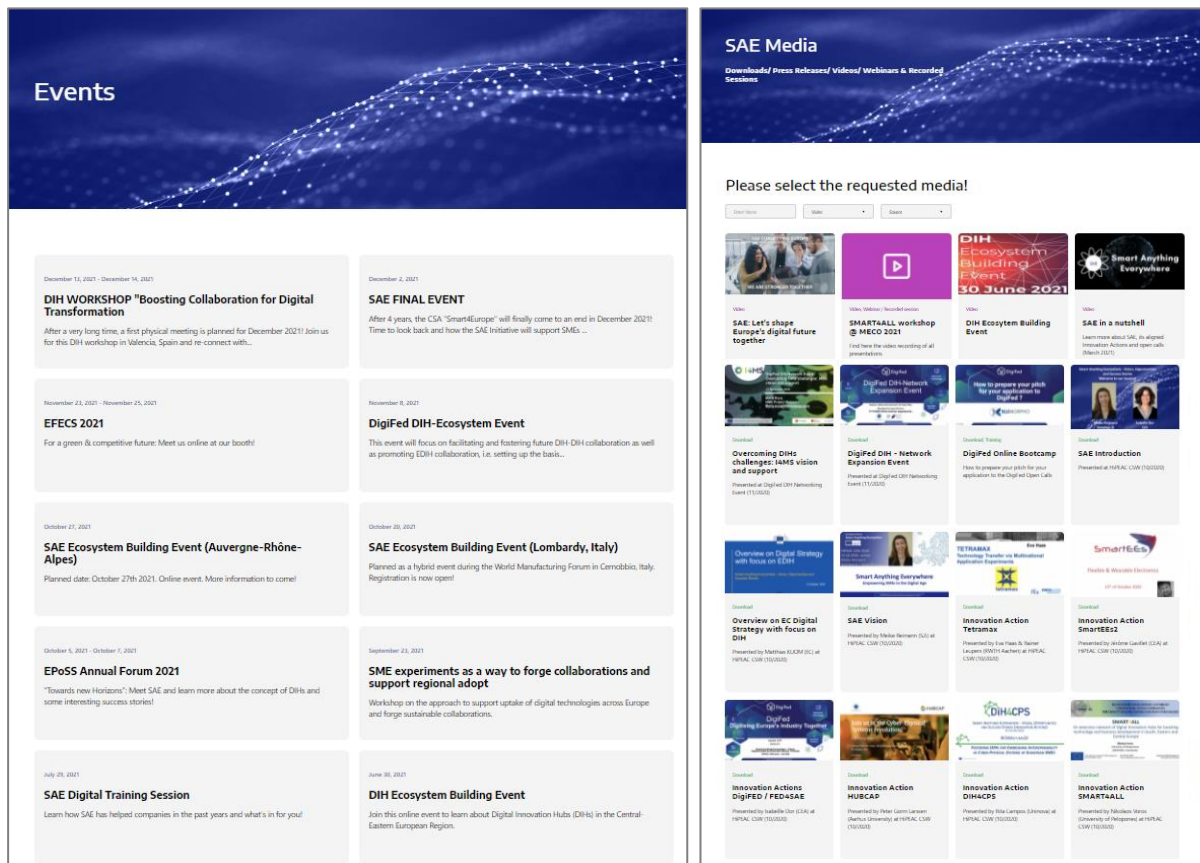
SAE partners were very active in organising and participating in European, national and regional virtual events, congresses and workshops to disseminate the SAE initiative and its aligned Innovation Actions. Due to the pandemic situation, from mid-March and over summer, nearly all activities were held online, with a few exceptions being hybrid or even face-2-face. Dissemination activities as well as related events are presented in **D5.3' Dissemination and Exploitation Plan Year 2'**.

In this document, only outreach related events are described, which included:

- **3 Ecosystem Building Events** with **over 450 participants**
- **4 Brokerage/Investors events** with **over 400 participants** directly engaged in SAE activities
- **1 Session at EDIH Event** - Collaboration with EEN/Start-up Europe **over 700 participants**
- **Collaboration / joint Dissemination Meetings** with related Initiatives over **500 participants**

The SAE events as well as events of the related Innovation Actions and sister project are being promoted via the Innovation Portal and social media channels.

[smartanythingeverywhere » News & events](#); [smartanythingeverywhere » Media](#)



The figure consists of two side-by-side screenshots from the SAE Innovation Portal. The left screenshot shows the 'Events' section, which lists various upcoming and past events with their dates and brief descriptions. The right screenshot shows the 'SAE Media' section, which provides a grid of downloadable materials, including videos, presentations, and reports, each with a thumbnail and a brief description.

Figure 14: Promotion of Events on SAE Innovation Portal (left) and provision of related material (right)

For almost all events, the presentations held as downloads and / or recordings of the session are made available in the 'Media' section of the Innovation Portal. The 'Media' section of the Innovation Portal contains over 170 items, many of them being recordings of events and workshops (50), as well as related downloads (75).

Due to the pandemic situation, most of the events mentioned above, had to be held in a virtual or hybrid format. Although the consortium very much prefers face-to-face meetings, some opportunities were also connected with the digitisation of events. The outstanding advantage is that many more people can visit an event without having to travel. Because of this, event participants by far exceeded what had been originally planned. Also, SMEs who are very hesitant to travel (because of lack of time) can be attracted to digital formats more easily. Another advantage is the ease of collecting data when working on boards like MURAL, which was used regularly, as all inputs are compiled in a digital format already, and very effective sessions can be held when boards are prepared comprehensively.

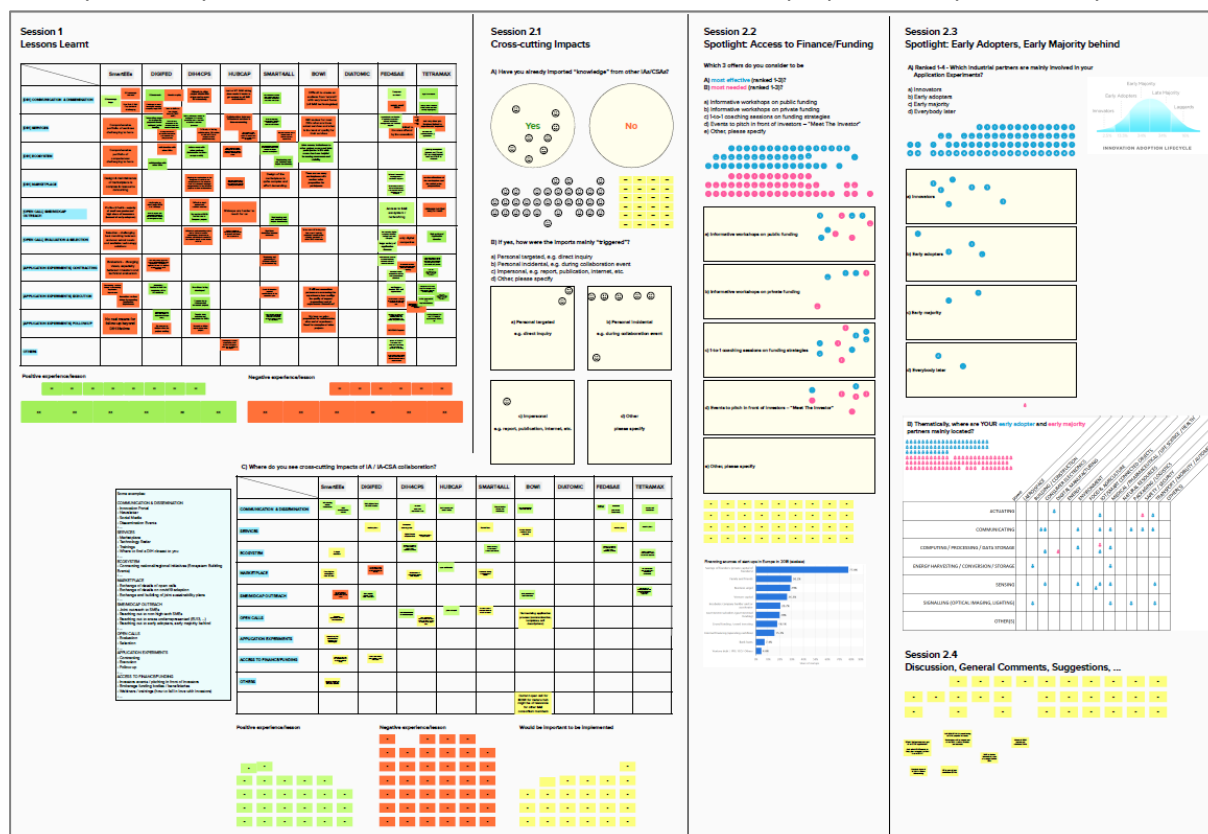


Figure 15: Snapshot of the virtual board used S4E2

Voting and feedback can be gathered quickly, and comments and questions collected (and answered) in the chat. Depending on the number of participants, discussions can also take place. Participants can easily be grouped (e.g. Teams or Zoom were), allowing discussions in smaller rounds and groups can be rotated. There has been a steep learning curve of the organisers as well as guests of such events. With attendees struggling more with the tools and more hesitant to participate in the beginning of 2020, this has become a common way of interacting.

As of autumn 2020, participants of SAE sessions and workshops are contacted after the event by a follow-up email thanking them for their participation, informing them about the available downloads and asking for feedback on the session. Here valuable qualitative feedback can be collected. As the response rate to follow-up emails is relatively low (below 5%), S4E2 directly collects feedbacks within the session if the format allows. The smaller the event, the higher the feedback rate. An easy way of collecting feedback is to ask the participants to raise their hand, if they found the event useful. Here, a response rate of 100% with over 95% being positive can be achieved when the events is up to 30

participants. In contrast, the largest event (workshop at EDIH event) had over 700 participants, with 111 voters and over 90% confirming the session was useful for them.

In many events, tools like Mentimeter were used regularly to gather feedback.



Figure 16: Participant feedback using 'Mentimeter'

The big drawback of online events can also be seen from the feedbacks above, the participants greatly miss networking. Different event formats and sizes of events allow different levels of networking (from none, not even questions can be asked in a chat, up to lively discussions and elaboration of joint results), but none can provide or even replace real face-to-face interaction.

Personal interactions are commented to be vastly contributing to trust-building, co-creation of joint ideas and plans and overall inspiration and satisfaction of an event participant.

One way to compensate for this partially while waiting for in-person events to resume was the rise of hybrid events. These gather a specified amount of people (e.g. speakers and panellists) at the venue and provide access to other speakers/panellists as well as the audience with online access. Such meetings are not easy to plan from a technical point of view, and for now, bigger events have been conducted with professional (TV) teams. Nevertheless, it is more entertaining for the participants to see people together in a room, holding an interview or being in a panel. In Smart4Europe2, two bigger Ecosystem Building Events have been conducted in this format and have received very positive comments. Moreover, the pictures and recordings gained during such events could also be more successful in terms of clicks in social media (many reactions to post on LinkedIn, figure 12 and Twitter)



Figure 17: Tweet on hybrid Ecosystem Building Event

5 Overview and Evaluation of Outreach Activities

The Smart4Europe2 outreach activities build on the stakeholder database (D3.1), the broad networks of all partners and a diversity of tools and activities to reach a large number of newcomers (including Innovation Portal, (social) media, workshops, conferences and events) to grow the SAE community. The tools and channels are described in detail in D5.1/3. This plan has been regularly and flexibly updated, especially as the evolution of the pandemic situation was not foreseeable at any time point in the project. Nearly all face-2-face activities and events had to be transferred into virtual formats but were always replaced rather than delayed or cancelled. Towards the end of the project and with the learning curve of handling more complex interactive tools, some events were held in a hybrid setting (participants at the venue and connected virtually). Some of the activities described below have their own, much more detailed Deliverable that is referred to in order not to repeat the content.

5.1 Growth of stakeholder base and SAE community

The S4E2 Stakeholder Database (D3.1) gathers contacts relevant for the SAE initiative in a structured way and is used to promote project activities as well as opportunities for engagement and collaboration. It is a living document that is continuously updated and involves a total of 2540 stakeholders to date. Next to the structured database, the project partners perform outreach via their individual networks. These contacts are not shared with the partners (GDPR restrictions) but are massively used to inform on the SAE Initiative and its opportunities. The contact databases as well as the overall stakeholder pool accessible are very relevant for the success of the project. The SAE partners ecosystem with its IAs is at the core and already consist of over 300 related partner contacts. The IAs themselves have the direct links to the SMEs/beneficiaries of their Application Experiments (over 400 performed). The (E)DIH catalogue, with over 1000 contacts, is another relevant source. Newsletter subscriber gave their consent to receive SAE related information and reached a number of 284. In Smart4Europe2, numerous (online) events were conducted with over 2000 participants. Nevertheless, a main source are the contacts of the individual partners, with whom they already have a long-term relationship or good connections. The consortium has assumed these to be over 9.000 relevant contacts (see 3.1), addressed via the individual organisation newsletters, mailings, magazines, social media, websites, event invitations, bilateral meetings. Importantly, the consortium is very complementary here, having different types of contacts and with this being able to address the diverse stakeholder groups needed.

	S2i	HS	THK	BME	BLU	CEA	FPM	Total
SMEs and mid-caps	934	200	15	150	2500	500	250	4549
Large industry	217	10	25	25	1000	110	50	1437
RTOs, academia	853	20	15	50	1000	30	50	2018
Clusters, associations, chambers	54	10	10	8	210	6	10	308
EU-initiatives	46	5	15	2	3	4	10	85
National/regional initiatives	23	5	15	4	14	4	5	70
Multipliers	17	5	5	6	2	2		37
Policy-makers	27	5	15	2	6	1	5	61
Funding bodies	3		5	1	3			12
Investors	35		10		380			425
Total	2209	260	130	248	5118	657	380	9002

Figure 18: Estimated Stakeholder Pool accessible by Smart4Europe2 partners

The partners have broadly informed the community around them, focussing on start-ups, SMEs and mid-caps for the Open Call opportunities, funding bodies and investors to enhance sustainability of SMEs after Application Experiments, policymakers and national/regional initiatives to align strategies for digital transformation, learn from each other and join forces. The scientific community was mainly engaged in showcasing what a DIH can provide to SMEs and for the development of the technology radar. When needed, multipliers and clusters were addressed for specific actions/events (e.g. EEN and start-up Europe Initiative to address SMEs and start-ups).

It is hard to assess how many of the people addressed really got engaged in SAE activities, but a first evaluation of direct engagement can be done via the (unique) Innovation Portal visitors, social media followers, event participants, newsletter subscribers and social media followers.

5.2 Promotion of Open Calls and Cluster Projects

During the lifetime of Smart4Europe2 (years 2020 and 2021), 7 Innovation Actions launched over 30 Open Calls in the areas of 'Customised Low Energy Computing', 'Cyber-Physical Systems' and Flexible and Wearable Electronics'. One Innovation Action (BOWI) included all the areas but had a focus on widening the SAE ecosystem towards regions so far underrepresented. All Innovation Actions as well as their Open Calls were promoted via the SAE Innovation Portal, representing the one-stop-shop for the SAE community. Newcomers could learn about the community and individual IAs ([smartanythingeverywhere » Community](#)) as well as the current funding opportunities ([smartanythingeverywhere » Funding](#)) including guidelines and FAQs and successfully conducted Application Experiments ([smartanythingeverywhere » Success Stories](#)). A service center was at their disposal for concrete questions. The graph below shows an overview of the opening and closing dates of the various open calls in 2020 and 2021 by all Innovation Actions active during that period.

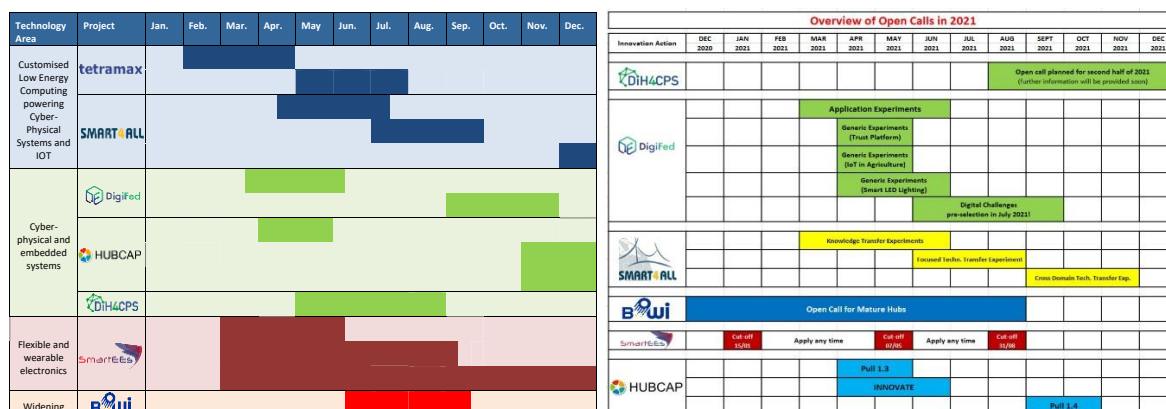


Figure 19: Overview of SAE open calls timeline in 2020 and 2021

Details on each Open Call, links to the respective Innovation Actions and Open Call documents as well as overall guidelines and useful links were provided.

All SAE Innovation Actions are presented on the Innovation Portal and can be filtered by technology or application areas. A clickable overview on all actions and technology areas is displayed with their spread across Europe [leaflet \(smartanythingeverywhere.eu\)](#).

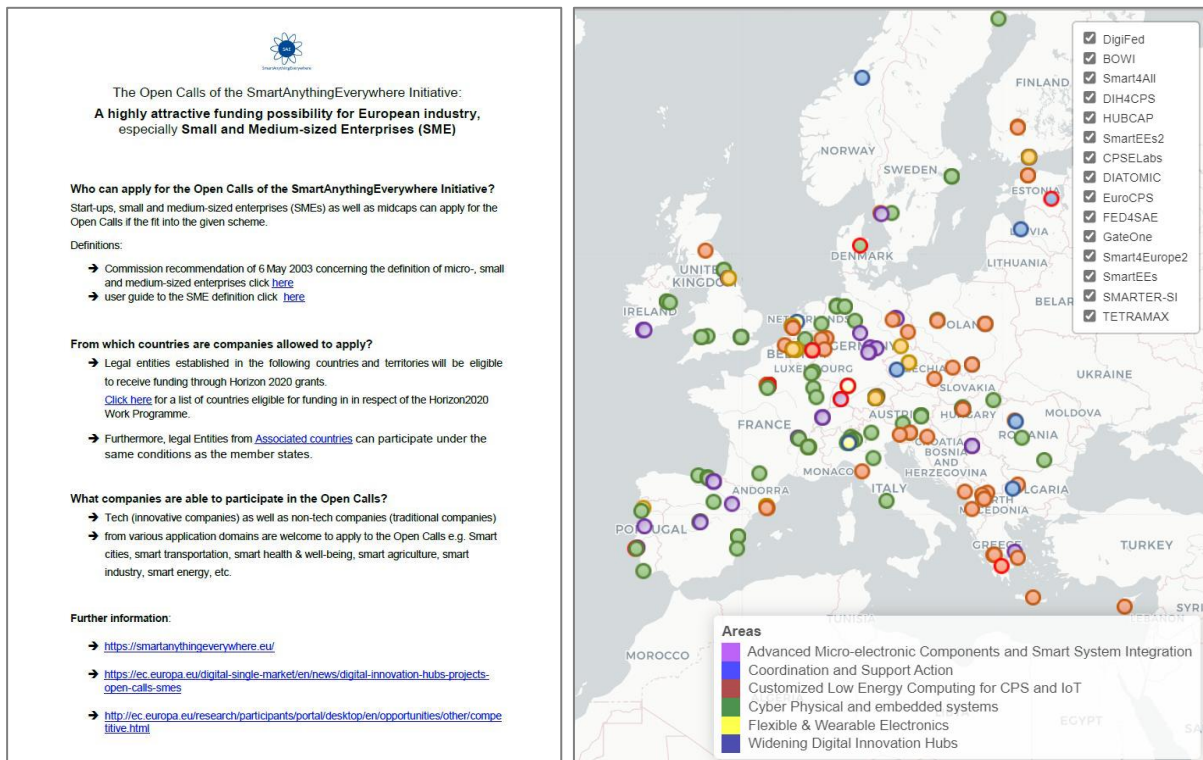


Figure 20: Funding guidelines (left); SAE Partner localisation across Europe (right)

Next to promoting the Open Calls via the Innovation Portal, Smart4Europe2 used additional channels, including social media and the SAE newsletter. Moreover, Open Calls were promoted at events and workshops and by video campaigns throughout the project lifetime.

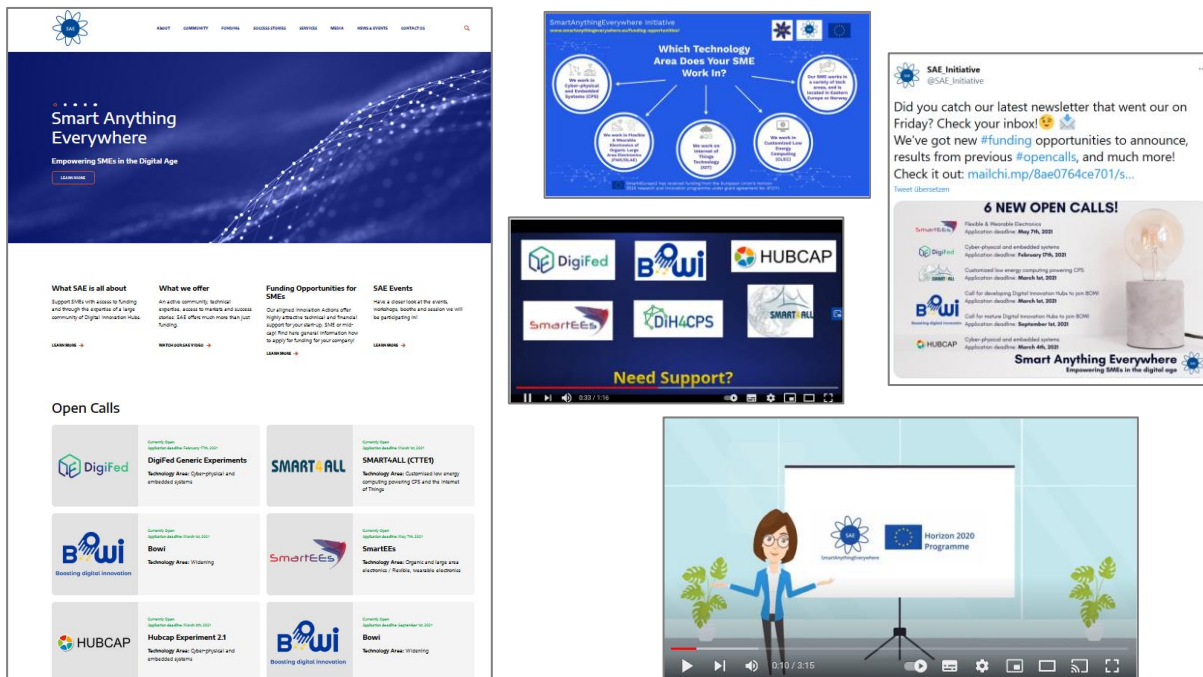
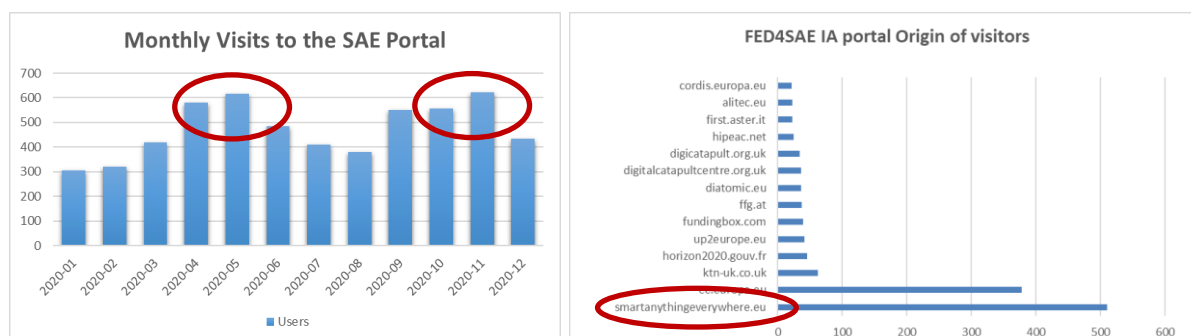


Figure 21: Promotion of open calls using a multi-media approach

Eight videos were created specifically to promote open calls, which received very positive feedback with 395 views on YouTube, more than 566 impressions on Twitter, more than 497 impressions on LinkedIn, and 1458 overall engagement:

- SAE Open Calls
<https://youtu.be/IfKScCFIlkk>
- SAE Open Call Promotion to SMEs (Explainer Video)
<https://youtu.be/CUpqChu1BCQ>
- SAE Entering Phase 3:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sj0v0g59dBo>
- Cyber Physical Systems Technology Area (HUBCAP, DIH4CPS and DigiFed Open Calls):
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-E_y31ZZDRo
- Widening Technology Area (BOWI Open Calls):
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0s5_75CmSB0
- Internet of Things Technology Area (Smart4All Open Calls):
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A-ZQeYS_Egg
- Flexible and Wearable Electronics Technology Area (SmartEEs Open Calls):
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Enh4WsaWPFI>
- Customized Low-Energy Computing Technology Area (Tetramax Final Open Call):
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2Gn9POdkMx8>

The Innovation Portal showed dedicated peaks in visitors for specific outreach campaigns accompanying the Open Calls. Moreover, the visitors of the Innovation Actions websites were attracted to a relevant proportion via the Innovation Portal (Example Fed4SAE IA by 40%). Being the first entry point to the initiative and guiding the visitors towards the right Innovation Actions had a great added value and very positive impact on these.



**Figure 22: Innovation Portal visitors increase with Open Call campaigns (left);
A significant part of visitors to IA websites come via the SAE Innovation Portal (right)**

The ultimate impact of advertising Open Calls is of course the number of applications to these. It turned out that all Innovation Actions received far more applications than they had expected. As the response rates were very high, the IAs on the one side had to extend their evaluation process and on the other side the success rate for SME applicants dropped. There was no mechanism to balance this by more EC investments, so in that case strong outreach activities have led to an oversubscription.

A dedicated goal of Smart4Europe2 was to enhance the technological, application and geographical coverage across Europe. A mapping of SAE Application Experiments per Innovation Action was performed in WP2. The graph below shows the Innovation Actions and the respective technologies/functionalities and application areas connected with the conducted Application Experiments.

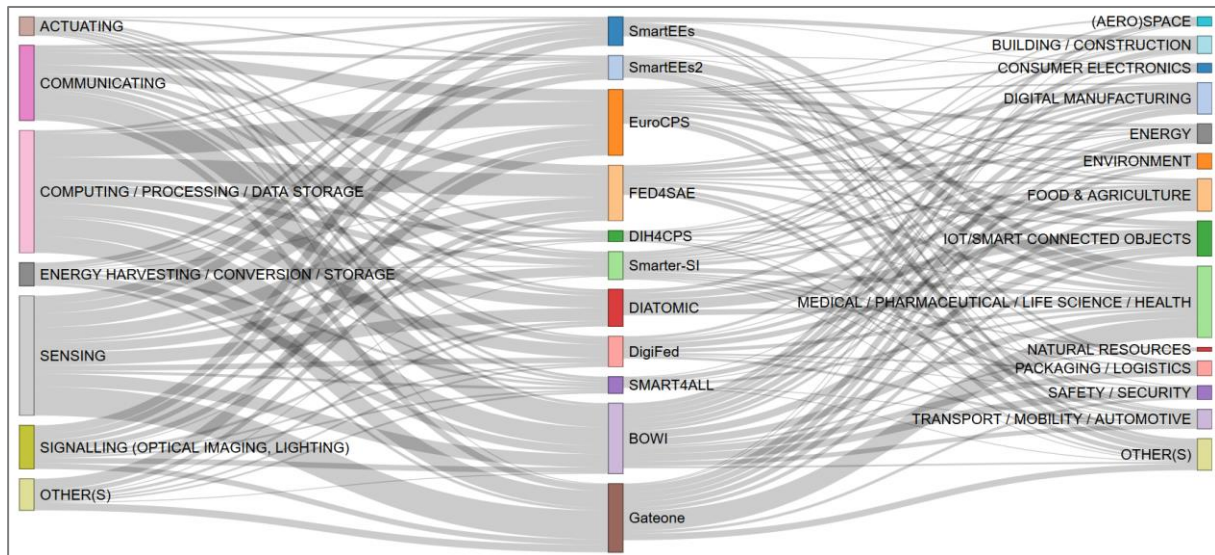
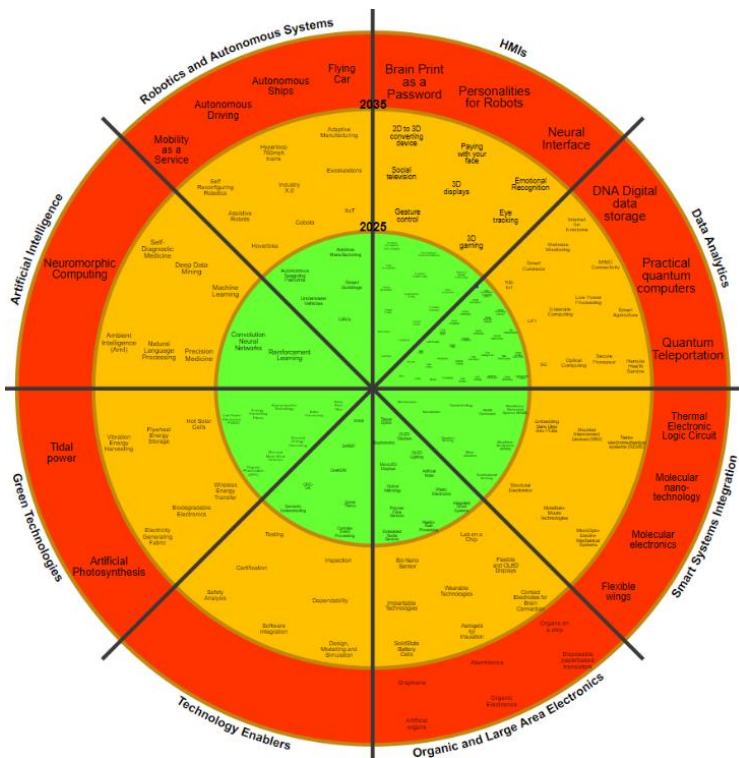


Figure 23: Technologies and application areas of SAE IAs Application Experiments

The SAE Innovation Actions achieved very good coverage of technologies as well as application areas over the past seven years. A complementary activity in WP4 was to evaluate the maturity of existing and future technologies and assess when they will become available and usable for SMEs.

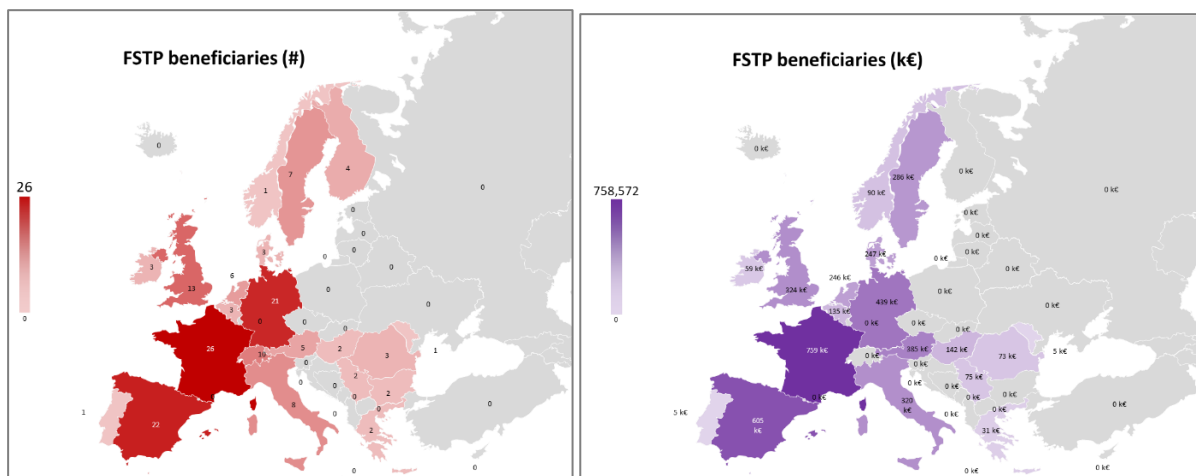


This Technology Radar was co-created with the SAE community giving feedback in various workshops (including Collaboration Workshops and EFFCS 2020) as well as via the Innovation Portal and LinkedIn group. Outreach activities focus on inviting participants to such workshops and guiding them to the clickable Radar on the Innovation Portal, where feedback can be given. As a result, over 1000 clicks have already been received, valuable feedback given and inspiring comments discussed within the LinkedIn groups.

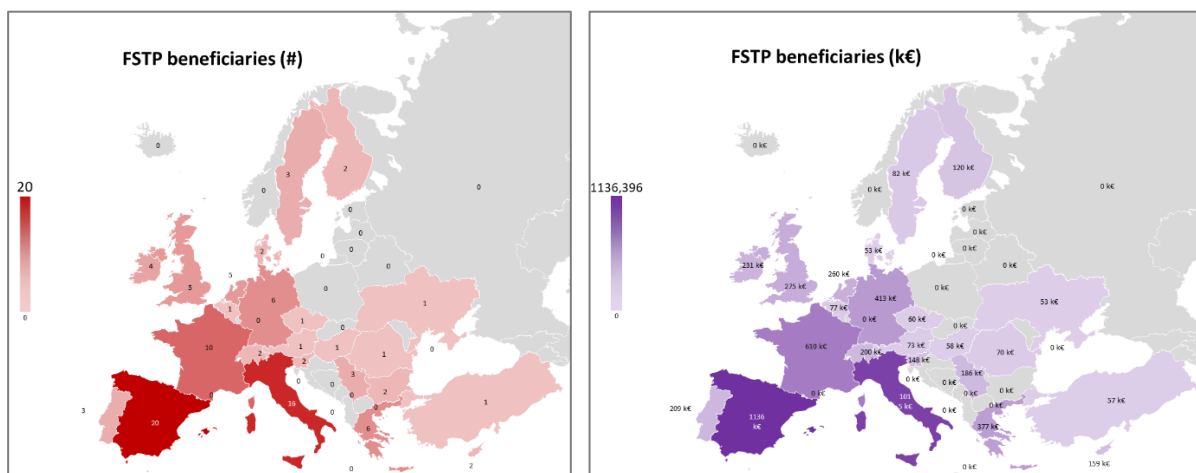
Figure 24: SAE Technology Radar - click here to enlarge: [Radar \(thhinkbv.com\)](https://thhinkbv.com)

Regarding the geographical coverage of Open Call beneficiaries, progress can be seen comparing the 3 Phases of the SAE Initiative (Phase1: 2016-2018; Phase2: 2018-2020, Phase3: 2020-2022)

Phase1



Phase2



Phase3

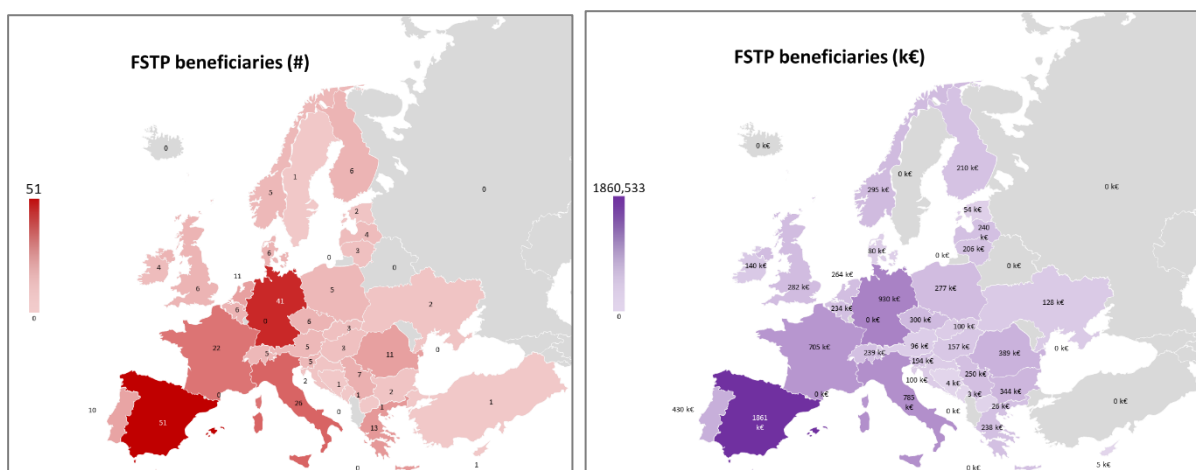


Figure 25: Geographical coverage of SAE Open Call beneficiaries according to number and funding (3 Phases)

While in Phase1 beneficiaries of open calls covered 17 EU countries, full coverage was achieved in Phase3.

5.3 Cooperation with other initiatives and networks

In order to enhance the visibility and reach of the SAE initiative, the partners used links to their own networks and contact pool, however cooperation with other European initiatives such as I4MS, DIHNET, ECSEL, other DEI focus area projects as well as national and regional initiatives enhanced the SAE outreach in a substantial manner. The cooperation with other initiatives and networks is described in detail in **D3.3 'Report on cooperation with DIHs, ECSEL and Focus Area'** and **D4.2 'Record of activities targeting national/regional initiatives'**. This cooperation has been a key activity and a main success factor for the Smart4Europe2 project. Close collaboration with DIHs within the SAE ecosystem as well as intense interaction with the sister CSAs were crucial for the Smart4Europe2's reach and impact. The partner's deep roots within the national and regional ecosystems helped to build the local-European links supporting the creation of a sustainable pan-European network. In this context, it can be highlighted that the interaction with the sister CSAs I4MS and DIHNET was very close and fruitful, building a trustful relationship with regular meetings to share and learn as well as joint dissemination activities. The collaboration increased the impacts of the three CSAs. Joint highlight events of the CSAs included the EDIH yearly event 2021 and other EDIH seminars, a joint sustainability workshop, and a joint session at the **World Manufacturing Forum in October 2021**. As this event is not yet described in the above deliverables, it is presented below.

3.5.1 Example of collaboration in joint outreach activity with I4MS

The session '**Smart Systems and Smart Platforms transformation towards Industry 5.0: experience and lessons learned from SAE and I4MS experiments**' was conceptualised by S4E2 partner FPM together with the I4MS4Ts CSA and the AI REGIO project. In the frame of the World Manufacturing Week and aligning to its theme of circularity, the session focused on the transition to Industry 5.0 and building human-centric, resilient and sustainable industrial ecosystems. The event aimed at raising awareness about the European vision and strategy on Industry 5.0, discussing the key role of companies and DIHs, presenting new socio-technical approaches for future-proof manufacturing and showcasing best practice examples. Participants were also informed about available opportunities and got practical information on how to benefit from SAE and I4MS pan-European networks of Digital Innovation Hubs. This event was held in a hybrid format in Cernobbio in Lombardy, Italy and can be found here:

[SAE & I4MS - World Manufacturing Foundation](#)

[smartanythingeverywhere » SAE Ecosystem Building Event \(Lombardy, Italy\)](#)



Figure 26: Joint SAE - I4MS session at World Manufacturing Week



11:00 - 11:05 - **Welcome**- Meike Reimann- SteinbeisEuropaZentrum(Smart4Europe2)

11:05 - 11:15 - **Towards the next Horizon Europe programme on the Future of Manufacturing**- Anne-Marie Sassen- DG CONNECT

11:15 - 11:25 - **Smart Systems and Platforms Opportunities for SMEs in Industry 5.0**- Haydn Thompson- THHINK (Smart4Europe2)

11:25 - 11:50 - **Roundtable on trends, solutions, good practices for SME-driven Smart Systems 5.0**

Moderator: Meike Reimann- SteinbeisEuropaZentrum(Smart4Europe2)

Panelists: Andrea Bettoni- SUPSI (KIT4SME); Xenia Beltran- Jaunsarás- Universidad Politécnica de Madrid (VOJEXT); Stefano Villa- Evogy (DIH4CPS); Marcello Coppola- STMicroelectronics (DIGIFED)

11:50 - 12:00 - **I4MS boosting the pan-European collaboration of DIHs**- Maria Roca- FundingBox(I4MS)

12:00 - 12:25 - **Roundtable on Digital Innovation Hubs and SMEs' take-up of Digital Manufacturing Platforms**

Moderator: Silvia Razzetti / Sergio Gusmeroli- Politecnico di Milano (AI REGIO)

Panelists: Germana Gianquinto - Gualini Lamiere (AI REGIO); Hugo Daniel Macedo Aarhus University (HUBCAP); Aiga Irmeja - Latvian IT Cluster/DIH (BOWI); David Vidal- CARSA (DIH-World)

12:25 - 12:30 - **Closing**- Maria Roca- FundingBox(I4MS)



SAE and I4MS provided the welcome and closing remarks. Both had a keynote and a panel (with mixed participants coming from SAE and I4MS projects or Application Experiments). The speaker from the EC tackled the EU strategy and upcoming work program. The hybrid format made the event more attractive, although there is always a challenge from a technical viewpoint. However, the speakers from studio and participating remotely could be seamlessly connected and presented or enter fruitful discussions in this hybrid setting. Over 100 participants attended this meeting (in person or remotely) and gave very positive feedback in terms of content and format.



Figure 28: SAE-I4MS panels - hybrid setting

3.5.2 Example of SAE outreach at ECSEL Event

The collaboration with ECSEL was also deepened through the participation at the **EF ECS 2020**. SAE organised a joint booth also inviting its sister project I4MS, giving the respective Innovation Actions timeslots to present themselves.

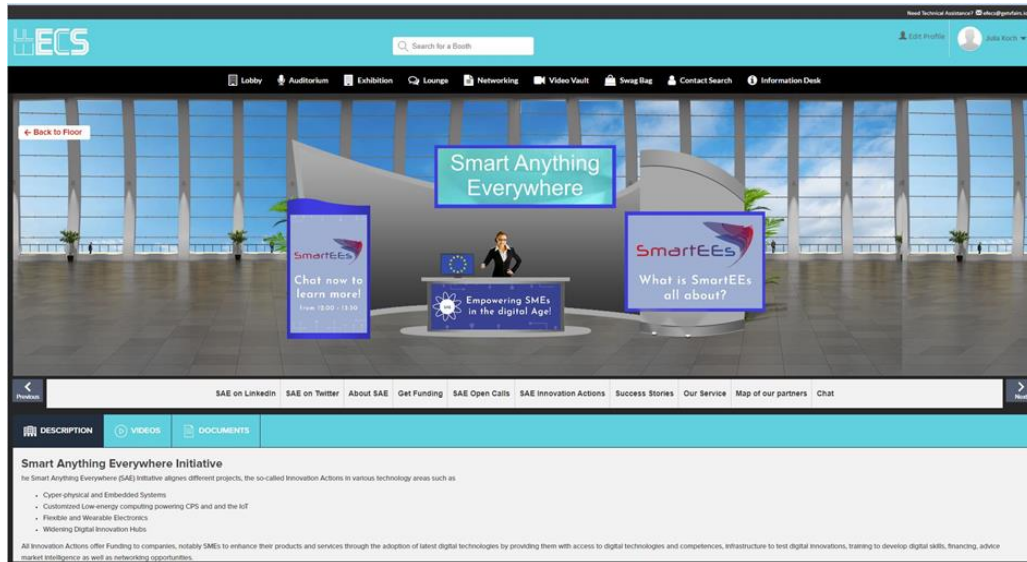


Figure 29: Screenshot of virtual SAE booth at EF ECS (SmartEES slot)

Moreover, a co-located SAE workshop was held on November 26th. To make the workshop as engaging as possible, and create possibilities for 2-way communication, an interactive slot on the Technology Radar was included, where participants actively gave their inputs to the radar and provided input on new technologies and applications.

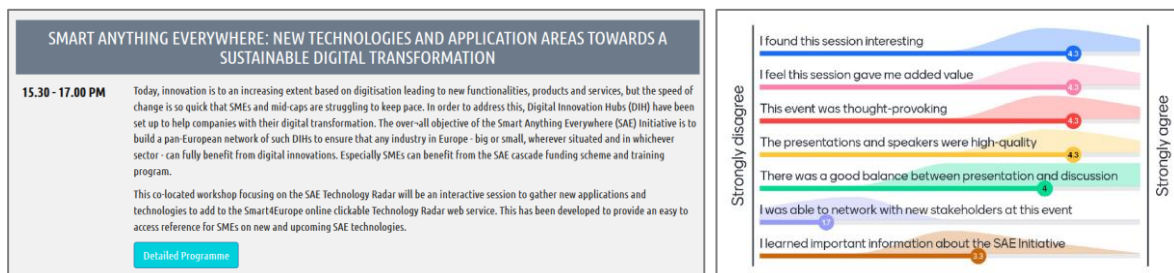


Figure 30: Agenda and feedback at SAE Workshop at EF ECS 2020

Very positive feedbacks were collected by the audience. Only networking with new stakeholders was naturally rated very low, as this was not provided during the event. There is also a hint that discussions should become even more focused (the EF ECS tool did not allow direct interaction). This lack of ability to have discussions was also reflected in the overall feedback gathered for the EF ECS event. To share the results more widely, the results of the session were published in the ARTEMIS Magazine. In November 2021, SAE will again join EF ECS with a booth. Preparing for a booth is not very much effort, but it must be said that the respective interactions are quite limited in a virtual format (chat only).

5.4 Organising Ecosystem Building Events

Three SAE Ecosystem Building Events were planned and successfully held to present and discuss the aims, objectives and achievements of the SAE Initiative, to inform and attract new stakeholders, and to extend and consolidate the SAE community. These events were organised together with regional players such as national/regional initiatives, ministries and funding bodies. Due to the covid-19 situation, these events were performed online or hybrid instead of face-2-face.

The three **Ecosystem Building Events** were held i) in November 2020 in Cernobbio, Italy, back-to-back to the World Manufacturing Forum 2020, ii) in July 2021 in Budapest, Hungary and iii) in October 2021 in Lyon, France and are reported on in detail in **D3.2 'Report on Ecosystem Building Events'**.

Each event targeted 70-100 participants from SMEs & mid-caps, DIHs/SAE community, policymaking and national & regional representatives. All events exceeded the expected number of participants, also because the digital or hybrid format allowed to host more people, and for the participants, no travel was required. As a result the events hosted **450 participants** in total who gave very positive feedback.

The agendas included keynote speeches from EC and regional representatives, presentations on the SAE initiative and its results and opportunities, exchanges on best practices and lessons learnt (at EC and regional level). Two of the three events were held in a hybrid format.

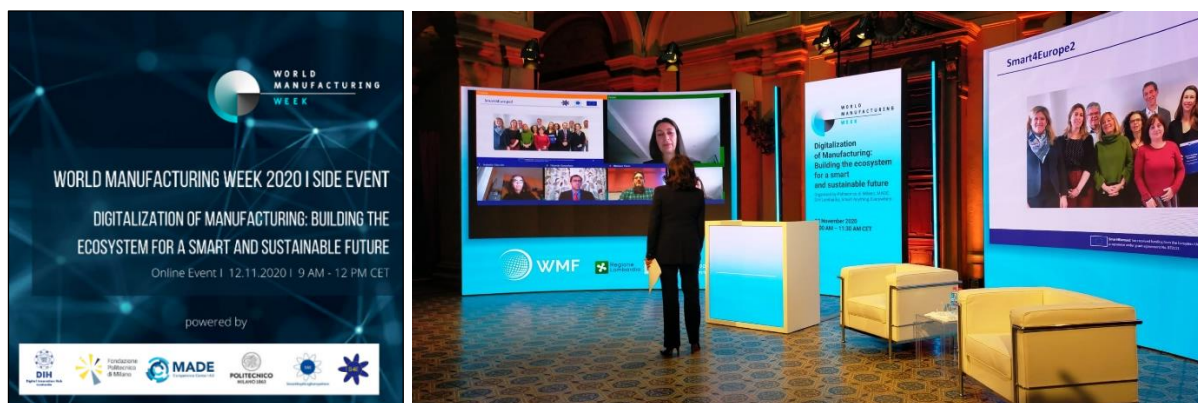


Figure 31: Ecosystem Building Event in Cernobbio, Italy – in the frame of WMF 2020



Figure 32: Ecosystem Building Event in Budapest

Network of 200 European Digital Innovation Hubs

EDIHs will:

- Offer support for digital transformation which is adapted to local needs, based on a specialisation
- Build regional ecosystems of users and suppliers, strengthening local innovation environment
- Connect to the whole of Europe through the network:
 - Share best practices with other hubs
 - Connect local SMEs to SMEs outside the region, building new value chains in Europe
 - Disseminate digital capacities of Digital Europe Programme to local community

Disclaimer: Information provided is still subject to official approval of the Digital Europe Programme workprogramme.

Figure 33: Ecosystem Building Event in Lyon

All three events have been very inspiring and added great value to build a bond the community for catalysing digital transformation across Europe. Moreover, they deepened the links to national and regional initiatives and provided an opportunity to learn from best practices. Overall, such events are a very good means to showcase 'frontrunner' ecosystems and share experiences on successful support mechanisms, tools and services as well as challenges. The events were very important to expand the SAE ecosystem and connect more intensively to the regional/local level. Complementarities and synergies could be detected and discussed in terms of future collaborations (between (E)DIHs).

Overall, the feedbacks to various events (Outreach events and Ecosystem Building Events) revealed the following assessment by the participants:

- Events were assessed very positively (overall always above 4/5).
- **Strongest points were:** information transfer, interesting and high-quality presentations and speakers, and stimulating content
- **Weakest points:** networking opportunities (especially in some events where they could not be provided)

After the first round of feedback, the consortium tried to make the events even more interactive, using more breakout rooms for discussion and networking coffee breaks.

5.5 SAE Brokerage Activities

SAE brokerage and match-making activities were performed to leverage further investment for SAE beneficiaries (of Application Experiments), guide Open Call applicants to the most suitable call topics, as well as to inform users and suppliers, future customers and developers of new digital technologies on the SAE initiative. Such events took place as 'own events' and satellite events to major conferences or in collaboration with EEN and related projects. As reported in **D3.5 'Report on brokerage activities'**⁶, and **D4.3 'Contest Award'**⁷ as well as **4.3 'DEI Showcase event'**⁸ key brokerage activities have been implemented in the frame of the following events:

1) Brokerage meetings in the frame of investors events:

- INPHO Venture Summit & the SAE Contest Awards 2020 in October 2020
- Monaco Sustainable and Smart Marinas and SAE Contest Awards 2021 in September 21.

2) Brokerage meetings during ecosystem events:

- the FED4SAE Innovation Club in January 2021
- the Impact Week 2021 in May 2021
- the French-German Partnering Event for AI in Industry 4.0 in May 2021

A variety of outreach activities were performed at the different events, including brokerage sessions:

Table 2: Outreach Activities including Brokerages Sessions at different Events

	IMPACT WEEK 06/2020	INPHO® Venture 10/2020	FED4SAE Innovation Club 01/21	Monaco Event 21/2021	French- German AI 05/2021
Organising Brokerage sessions					
SAE Contest finalist pitch for investors					
Raising awareness of investors and policy					
Promoting Funding opportunities					
Showcasing SAE Success stories					

All in all, by participating in those events gathering more than **1600 participants** to the related activities, the SAE initiative and nearly **50 SAE innovative companies** have been given visibility and opportunity to interact with more than 1300 start-ups, SMEs or midcaps (roughly 65%, 25% and 5% of the audience). In addition, these events have provided the opportunity for more than 25 SAE beneficiaries to be coached for pitching in front of private investors, VCs or Corporate VCs. Nearly **100 private investors or corporate leaders** specialised in Deep Tech or in impact investment committed either in the jury and pitching session or in reverse pitching session or both.

⁶ https://smart4europe.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/S4E2_D3.5-Report-on-brokerage-events.pdf

⁷ https://smart4europe.eu/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/D4.3-SAE-contest-award-report_final.pdf

⁸ https://smart4europe.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/S4E2_D4.4_DEI-ShowcaseEvent.pdf

The brokerage activities implemented by the Smart4Europe2 targeting investors provided support and experience to companies that are mainly early stage, including improving their investor's readiness level. Those actions are a good complement and prolongation to the action developed by each IAs as they offer the SAE beneficiaries access to new and targeted ecosystems. The CSA offered them an opportunity to benefit from the SAE ecosystem beyond the time of their application experiment and to continue to gain maturity. The SAE beneficiaries who engaged in the process vastly benefited from a learning process and gained a better knowledge of how to access private investors.

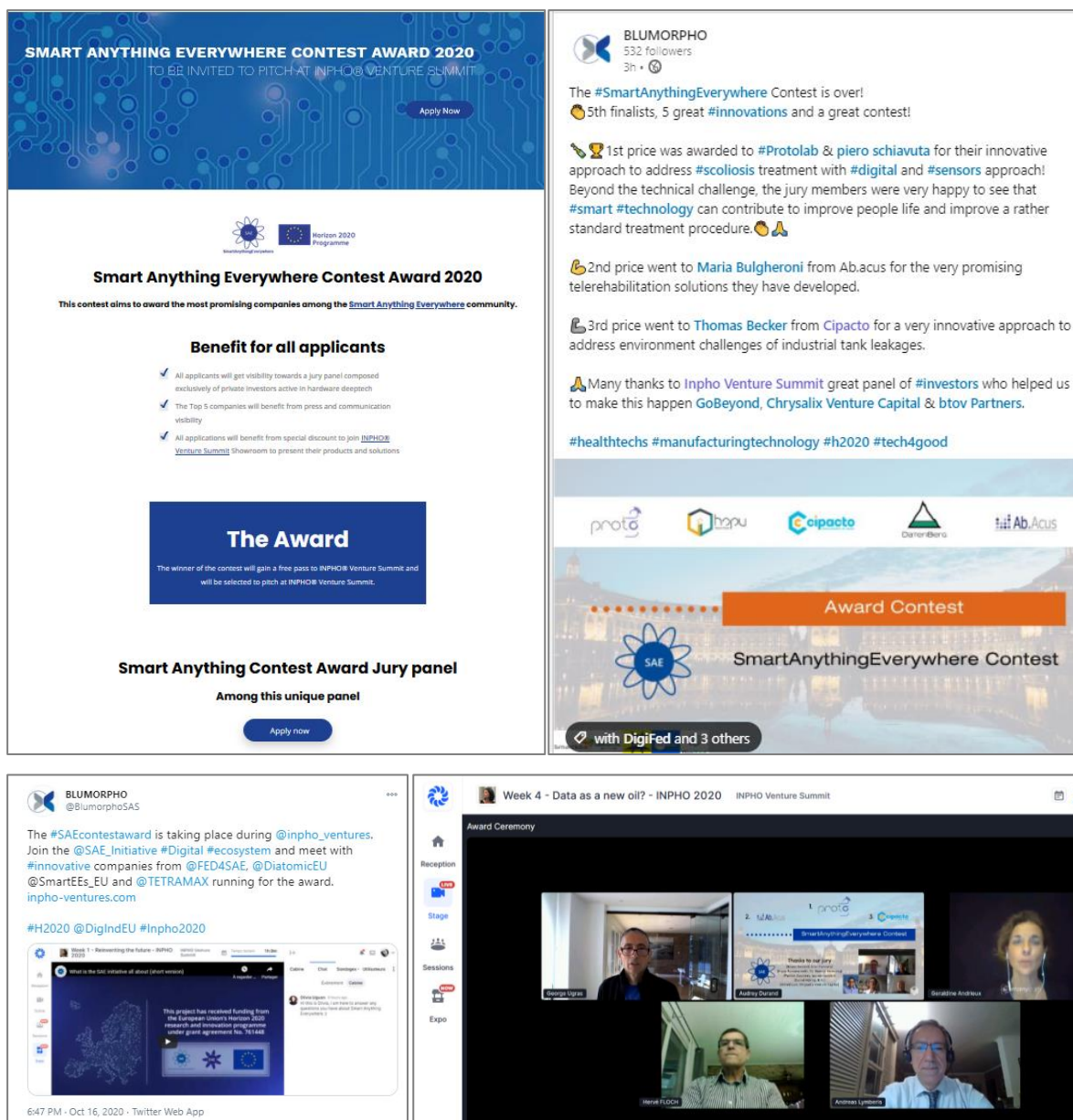


Figure 34: SAE Contest Award at INPHO Venture Summit 2020

<https://smartanythingeverywhere.eu/saecontest/>

5.6 Summary of target-specific outreach activities and specific contact points



Target Group	Specific points of contact via project consortium	Summary of specific Outreach Activities conducted
Start-ups, SMEs and midcaps	Extensive contacts and networks of partners, networks of associated partners/members, multipliers EEN, NCPs, Chambers of Commerce, related clusters and associations	Specific sections on Innovation Portal D1.1 (open calls, success stories, service center D1.3, market place D1.2), EU/local/regional events and workshops and booth camps, dedicated activities at European events, mailings to SME-clients, bilateral meetings, brokerage events, contest award (D4.3)
SMEs from non-tech sectors with an interest in digitisation	Specific contacts and networks of partners and associated partners, multipliers (SME associations, NCP, EEN, ...), Chambers of Commerce, AFIL	S2i Consultancy Days, local events, regional seminars and workshops (events organised by national chambers of commerce or innovation agencies), events in collaboration with local EENs, video outreach campaigns, videos in local language, newsletters (also from partners in local languages) (D5.2/3)
SMEs/mid-caps in Eastern European Countries	BME is project partner in Hungary with close contacts to SMEs, Pannon Business Network Hungary, S2i/SEZs technology transfer activities in Eastern Europe, Arise Europe program of EIT Digital, EEN, NCPs, Chambers of Commerce, Widening IAs (BOWI, Smart4All, OpenDEI)	Dedicated Ecosystem Building Event targeting central-eastern Europe (held by BME in Budapest D3.2), connecting to NCP and holding joint information days (on EC and SAE calls), connecting with Danube focussed projects (building up Technology Transfer Centers), brokerage / match-making, collaborating with widening IAs of SAE (BOWI), Smart4All and I4MS (OpenDEI) (D5.2/3)
Digital Innovation Hubs, SAE Initiative, Sister CSAs, partners	Coordinators and project partners of SAE actions of first, second and third phase; I4MS CSA, DIHNET CSA, Robotics CSA SMEs involved in cascading funding/application experiments; EC	Innovation Portal (one-stop-shop) gathering and providing one platform for information, SAE video, brochure, social media, newsletter, SAE collaboration events (D2.2), ecosystem building events (D3.2) and brokerage events (D3.5), joint promotion of cluster projects and open calls for application experiments
Research Community / Academia	Smart4Europe2 communities on CPS, IoT, SSI, OLAE, low energy computing, robotics, 5G, and other enabling technologies that are identified by the Technology Radar	Smart4Europe2 partners are deeply rooted within the scientific communities. Relevant conferences were visited, related experts invited to contribute to the Technology Radar and related workshops, e.g. at EFRECS (D4.1, D5.2/3)
Multipliers	Steinbeis-Network, Hahn-Schickard Association, BLU network, MADE Competence Center, Minalogic, Innomine, NCP, Enterprise Europe Network (EEN), Start-up Europe Initiative	Close collaboration with EEN (brokerages, EDIH Event) and NCPs, as well as other DIHs and EDIH candidates, using the partners networks to engage stakeholders
Clusters, associations, platforms, networks	Members of ECSEL, Artemis-IA, ITEA, EPoSs, VDMA, OE-A, EEN, EFFRA, NESSI, INCOSE, EIT DIGITAL, EIT Manufacturing, Embedded France, ICES competence network, Industry 4.0, Alliance 4.0 BW, microTEC Südwest, Silicon Europe Alliance,	Smart4Europe2 partners are members of many related associations, be it thematically (CPS, SSI, Computing, OLAE, manufacturing / I4.0) as well as focussing on SMEs in the area (S2i is regional contact point for SMEs of the ministry). Smart4Europe2 partners have informed and stimulated the

	Technology Mountains, Medical Mountains, Zentrum Digitalisierung Bayern (ZD.B), AFIL, Vanguard Initiative	representatives of such associations and clusters to promote the SAE initiative to their members and networks.
Related European and national CPS, IoT, SSI and OLAE projects	ECSEL/ARTEMIS-IA/EPoSS/ITEA, running/starting DEI focus area and other ICT/FoF projects, I4MS, EIT DIGITAL, AIOTI, IoT-EPI, ConnectedFactories, iHub, DIHNET.EU, Digital Mountains, BW-CPS, Kompetenzzentrum Textil Vernetzt	Direct contact to coordinators was fostered, many Smart4Europe2 partners were also partners or members of the projects/ associations, many representatives of sister initiatives were participants in Smart4Europe2 meetings (Ecosystem Building Events), very close contacts were made to the sister CSA I4MS, DIHNET.EU and CSA Industry4.E as focal points to the communities as well as EFFRA, ECSEL/EPoSS/ARTEMIS (D3.3 and 4.1)
EC, policy-makers at European, national and regional levels	DG CONNECT, Digitising European Industry Initiative and Focus Area, Factories of the Future PPP, (ICT-CPS/IoT, FoF and related); policy stakeholders; European Parliament	Excellent connection to national regional initiatives / ministries and joint events (Ecosystem Building Events D3.2) in Lyon, Cernobbio and Budapest. Close links (and participation) in regional and national Digital Innovation Hubs. Active participation in EDIH strategy and related meetings (charing sessions).
National, regional initiatives and funding bodies	German DE:HUBS, Digihubs of Baden-Württemberg, Alliance Industry4.0, Ministries of BW, Innovate UK, Digital Catapult UK, Minalogic, MinaSmart, Italian network of DIHs by Confidustria, Made, Open innovative Centre, La French Tech Initiative, Hungarian Innovation Agency, Innomine	Close links to national / regional funding bodies were established. Joint events were held, Smart4Europe2 representatives were invited to meetings of regional DIHs in Baden-Württemberg by ministry to inform on EU and EDIH activities. Smart4Europe2 partners assisted with the registrations in the DIH catalogue. Synchronised EDIH strategy in Hungary (see D3.2 and 4.2)
Private investors, venture capitalists, business angels	BLU Investors Network, UK Business Angels Association, PPMOost (NL), The Carlyle Group, KKR, Blackstone Group, TPG Capital, CVC Capital Partners, 3i, Arch Venture, Aster Capital, b-to-v, Robert Bosch Venture Capital, BPI France, Panakes	Private investors were informed about the SAE portfolio and individual SMEs/Application Experiments that have benefitted from the SAE scheme had been invited to pitch and trained for it was at a dedicated investors event (D4.3 and D4.4). Two SME contest awards were performed (D3.5).
General public	All, Smart4Europe2 Dissemination Lead	Promotion of the SAE Initiative via the Innovation Portal, (social) media, (online) magazines and through communication & dissemination activities (see D5.4)

Table 3. Smart4Europe2 contact points and activities for specific target groups

6 Overall Evaluation and Lessons Learnt

6.1 KPIs

Smart4Europe2 has developed a list of challenging but realistic KPIs. The original metrics were updated to reflect changes due to the pandemic situation in project month nine.

The outreach activities are linked to all sub-objectives, with a focus on the ones presented in blue:

Objective 1: Enabling services to support and consolidate the SAE network (WP1, WP2, WP5)

- Maintain an **Innovation Portal** to be promoted widely
- Publicise **12+ SAE-IA profiles/videos** and **36+ success stories** from Application Experiments
- Select and highlight **10 showcases from Application Experiments** (comprehensive examples)
- Elaborate a **best practice guide** and publish it on the Innovation Portal
- Provide direct support to **300+ SMEs** through Service Centre, consultancies, webinars, training

Objective 2: Growing the SAE ecosystem and multiply its impacts through collaboration (WP3, 5)

- Promote the SAE to over **10,000 SMEs** and mid-caps through dissemination activities
- **Organise 13 key events** with participation about **500 SAE stakeholders** and newcomers
- Develop **8 newsletters** and update the **SAE brochure** to broadly disseminate the SAE initiative
- Enhance newsletter subscribers to **400+**
- Collect targeted feedbacks on key dissemination activities (newsletter, events, Innovation Portal)
- Produce **10+ SAE videos** (promoting the initiative and open calls), **3** in additional in other languages
- Participate in **10+ conferences**, **4 major industry fairs or virtual booths** representing the SAE Initiative (with IAs)
- **Extend SAE stakeholders database to 500+**
- **Provide full EU coverage**

Objective 3: Sustaining the network of Digital Innovation Hubs (WP4)

- **Contact 100+ stakeholders** from national/regional initiatives, funding bodies, private investment
- Develop updated I4MS/SAE label
- Collecting Radar Inputs (focus on green technologies) / increase number of views to **500+**
- **Attract 50+ SMEs and investors to pitching events**
- Elaborate and publish **business models** for collaboration and DIH sustainability on the portal
- Engage **50+ stakeholders** in the development of the strategy roadmap and recommendations

An assessment of all KPIs is presented in the Periodic Report. The outreach related KPIs are summarised below and assessed for achievement in table 4:

- **Organise 13 key events** with participation of about **500 SAE stakeholders** and newcomers
- **10+ SAE videos** (promoting the initiative and open calls), **3** in additional in other languages
- **Extend SAE stakeholders database to 500+**
- **Provide full EU coverage**
- **Contact 100+ stakeholders** from national/regional initiatives, funding bodies, private investment
- **Attract 50+ SMEs and investors to pitching events**

The table below presents how these KPIs have been reached. For some of them only assumptions can be made, but all exceed the planned numbers.

Table 4: Assessment of Key Performance Indicators in M23

KPI	Achieved/not achieved	Means of verification
13 key events / 500+ stakeholders	Heavily overachieved (online formats enhanced participation), specific outreach events alone had way over 500 participants already.	Number of participants in 13 outreach events - over 2000 : - 3 Ecosystem Building Events: 450 (D3.2) - 4 Brokerage events: over 400 (D3.5) - EDIH 01/2021 – EEN/Start-up EU session: over 700 - 2 EDIH infodays and 1 CSAs tools: over 200 - 3 Dissemination Meetings with sister projects: over 300
10+ Videos	Overachieved (through communication, dissemination and outreach activities)	Number of videos - 15 : - 1 image video (in collaboration with professional agency) - 1 success stories video – to showcase open call outcomes - 3 introductions to the SAE Initiative - 1 explainer video – to explain the open call process - 7 open call-related videos – Open Call campaigns - 2 event-related videos – to promote specific events (all video links and analysis of engagement in annex)
Videos in 3 additional languages	Achieved	Image video was translated into 4 additional languages: French, Italian, German and Hungarian.
Stakeholder database 500+	Achieved	2540 stakeholder in current database (D3.1)
Full EU coverage	Achieved	Visitors of Innovation Portal (20 European countries), Newsletter subscribers (all EU), event visitors (all EU), Application Experiments (all EU)
Contact 100+ stakeholders from national/regional initiatives, funding bodies, private investment	Achieved	150+ stakeholders from nat/regional initiatives, funding bodies and private investment. Nat/reg initiatives over 50 (D4.2) Funding bodies over 10 (D4.4, D4.3, D3.5) Private investment over 100 (D4.4, D4.3, D3.5)
Attract 50+ SMEs and investors to pitching events	Achieved	50+ SAE SMEs (beneficiaries of cascade funds) trained for pitching (D4.3 and D3.5) and over 100 investors involved directly in SAE activities. An additional contest award was held, not foreseen in the DoA.

6.2 Lessons Learnt

Leverage from push towards digital technologies:

SMEs, especially non-tech ones, often tended to be change-resistant, especially in terms of digitisation. With the rise of the pandemic situation, this has partly changed, as the advantages of digital tools and technologies became more obvious and relevant to them. Every company as well as individuals had to go through its own digitisation process, be it on a business or private level, to not be left behind during the pandemic situation and to adjust to the 'new normal'.

Additionally, digitisation became a key priority in many regions, countries and continents and the EU's Twin Transition (digital and green transformation) became a key element of Europe's strategy. During the project lifetime, the DIH and later EDIH concept has evolved, and is a very good and timely fit for the current need of SMEs to find support in their digitisation efforts. This momentum should be exploited in upcoming EC activities, especially when it comes to reaching out to SMEs. More specific instruments and also more funding should be made available, as during Smart4Europe2 the demand was very high, many more proposals than expected were turned in, which in the end led to a drop in the success rates. Enhanced funding in these instruments would lead to many more high quality, innovative 'Application Experiments'. On the other hand, roll-out in the regions with future EDIHs will be more efficient to reach SMEs in their trusted environments.

Project implementation during a pandemic situation:

Communication, dissemination and outreach activities, especially face-to-face interactions, are heavily impacted by the covid-19 pandemic situation. The Smart4Europe2 consortium elaborated and continuously updated a specific risk and contingency plan for the project and stayed very adaptable in the planning of activities. The consortium always turned planned face-to-face activities into other formats rather than delaying them, which turned out to be a very good choice. Looking at this retrospectively, it was not foreseeable that the pandemic situation would last the whole project lifetime, and it was of great value, not having waited in performing planned activities.

In contrast, Smart4Europe2 quickly adapted channels, tools and methodologies to online formats, which will be of great value also after the project lifetime. There was a steep learning curve amongst organisers as well as participant of events. A number of tools turned out to be very useful in terms of co-creating results, voting on opinions and collecting and analysing the data. The digital formats turned out to be quite effective, and more participants could be reached within the events (as no travel was required) as well as through the recordings that were provided. A broader European coverage could also be reached. Nevertheless, as the number of online meetings also grew significantly, an excellent program, seamless performance and effective outreach campaign are needed to attract the audience. Networking opportunities were very limited, and there was a broad consensus that this is very much needed to exchange more deeply and build trust. The consortium strongly recommends a return to face-to-face interactions whenever possible, even if the number of meetings might be reduced and some replaced with online formats. The 'hybrid format' also turned out to have very positive aspects and was well received for specific events. Participating with a virtual booth at a fair or conference was not very fruitful, as interaction mainly was limited to chats, but organisation was also not much of an effort. Videos were clicked quite often. It is recommended not to expect too much and invest a lot in such activities, as they might not bring the expected impacts when performed online.

Outreach activities:

SMEs are usually busy and do not like to travel. Providing online meetings will make it easier to reach them. Webinars have been quite successful tools to, for instance, explain open call proposal procedures. They should also be kept in future. Such workshops can be recorded and put on the website to be easily watched/spread across Europe. It is important to be very specific for your target groups (in communication & dissemination, these can be start-ups, SMEs and Mid-caps as well as other DIHs or policymaking) and provide targeted materials through suitable channels. Try to speak their language and provide them with examples and success stories (success stories are one of the most effective/convincing ways to raise the SMEs interest). Build a trusted environment by showcasing successes and challenges. Under the pandemic situation, communication, dissemination & outreach became much more digital itself. Here social media and videos were even more important. Make use of new tools and channels, make meetings as interactive as possible, even when online (whiteboards, MURAL, voting). There was a steep learning curve in terms of using such tools.

Another very important group for outreach activities were the DIHs across Europe. Outreach activities should specifically target the consolidation of a pan-European network and intensively foster collaboration between the DIHs. In future, the network of EDIHs will strongly support the aim to connect regions to Europe. DIHs were most effectively reached in interactive collaboration events. EDIHs could be attracted by providing them with information on the EC strategy as well as on tools and services that might be useful and relevant for them. Creating collaboration corridors was specifically targeted in a joint DigiFed SAE ecosystem extension event, with 1:1 matchmaking of (E)DIHs.

Collaboration with multipliers, EEN and sister projects are key for the success of SAE and related initiatives and to communicate the EU strategy as well as implementation of related initiatives. They effectively expand the network and reach by collaboration and cross-promotion.

Open Call Campaigns

Open Calls are structured quite differently in the various Innovation Actions (concept, size, amount of funding, lengths, partnering...) which might confuse SMEs. In connection with national/regional innovation agencies, the CSA tries to reduce complexity and simplify the information for interested companies. Nevertheless, having learned from 3 rounds of SAE projects and over 30 open calls only in phase 3, a more common approach should be considered building on the learnings of the IAS and CSA (see D2.3' Best Practice Guidelines⁹). Outreach has to take place at two levels: the overall offer of the SAE initiative is presented at the CSA level using the Innovation Portal as well as SAE social media channels and outreach events, while a more specific outreach is performed by the IAs, promoting their technology/offer in more detail. Many visitors of IA websites have come via the SAE Innovation Portal, which proved to be very effective. Open call campaigns are most effective if directly linked with Open Call deadlines, accompanied with social media as well as video communication and webinars explaining the process and procedure.

⁹ https://smart4europe.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/S4E2_D2.3_Best-practices-guidelines.pdf

The table below presents an overview of lessons learnt and resulting recommendations regarding outreach activities.

Table 5: Lessons Learnt regarding Outreach Activities

Outreach tools and activities	Recommendations, Do's and Don't's
Contact Database	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Having a good contact database is key ▪ Collaborate with sister projects and EC to enhance it ▪ Build on existing network and multipliers but try to reach newcomers ▪ Attract people via events, registrations and feedback forms
Challenging target groups and newcomers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Target groups difficult to reach included non-high-tech SMEs in S4E2 ▪ Speak the target groups language, tailor messages, reduce complexity ▪ Provide examples and success stories ▪ Keep in mind some don't like travelling and are short on time ▪ Think about doing some events in local language ▪ Visit clusters and sector-specific events ▪ Use EEN and other regional multipliers to get in touch
Website	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Being an Innovation Portal of an Initiative, provide a single entry point and one-stop-shop for all related stakeholders ▪ Analyse your target group and tailor messages ▪ Make clear statements, use right key-words, don't overload ▪ Provide target group-specific entry points ▪ Provide professional, attractive graphics and overall appearance ▪ Make engaging and interactive ▪ Provide outcomes and recordings of project events ▪ Collect feedback on user experience and themes
Social Media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Social media networks are key for communication, dissemination and outreach ▪ Choose the right ones (in S4E2 Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube; not FB) ▪ Choose open LinkedIn page ▪ Promote to relevant stakeholders and respective networks ▪ Post relevant content, don't overload, use buffer to time posts ▪ Add many 'real faces' in times of restricted f2f interaction
Outreach Tools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Create videos, professional image video and self-made videos using shorter-term purposes, translate into different languages ▪ Create digestible newsletters in frequent intervals ▪ Don't invest too much in virtual booths at fairs, as they might not bring the expected impacts when performed online. Provide videos.
Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Have an excellent program, speakers/panellists, slides ▪ Collaborate with EC and sister projects ▪ Promote well and start early, use right contact lists and multipliers ▪ Tailor event invitation text to target groups and channels ▪ Use attractive event branding, event backgrounds, registration page

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Choose the right format (hybrid, interviews, pitches...) ▪ Use the right tools / ensure seamless performance ▪ Make entertaining and interactive ▪ Do introduction rounds and camera on in smaller outbreak session ▪ Give room for Q&A, discussions if possible ▪ Don't make individual talks, sessions and overall event too long ▪ Collect feedback during the event already (will be less effective later) ▪ Put results on webpage afterwards
Collaboration with other initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Build on trusted collaborations ▪ Engage with stakeholders of the community in formats available ▪ Cross-promote initiatives ▪ Seek to speak with one voice to target audiences ▪ Provide one (EC) vision/mission to e.g. SMEs interested in Open Calls (of SAE/I4MS/Robotics...)

7 Concluding Remarks

The ultimate success of the Smart4Europe2 project is, by its nature, vitally dependent on intensive exchange with various stakeholders external to the consortium (start-ups, SMEs and mid-caps, policymakers, investors, large industry, researchers, similar and complementary projects, above others). For this, a concerted communication, dissemination and outreach strategy is an essential factor and Smart4Europe2 has followed its dedicated communication, dissemination and outreach plan (D5.1) adapting it to new boundary conditions (e.g. pandemic situation). Activities have been assessed for their effectiveness and impacts in the real world scenarios.

Outreach activities focused on the **growth of the SAE ecosystem** to achieve **broad coverage in technological, application, innovation and geographic terms** by means of strategic outreach activities **recruiting relevant new stakeholders**.

During the project lifetime, the following achievements were reached related to outreach activities:




- Creation and extension of the **SAE stakeholder's database** to over 2500 entities
- Adapting, implementing and assessing **outreach** channels and tools for **digital formats**
- **Promoting open calls** of the IAs aligned with SAE through various campaigns, videos, social media and on the Innovation Portal
- **Attracting start-ups, SMEs and mid-caps** to the SAE open calls and ecosystem, with open call application rates being very high
- Collaboration and **cooperation with other initiatives** and strategic networks, cross-promoting the offers and multiplying impacts
- Organising **collaboration events and workshops** with other initiatives and strategic networks
- Organising **Technology Radar** sessions
- Organisation of three **Ecosystem Building Events** attracting more than 400 participants
- Organisation of four **brokerage** events, two of them targeting investors to support sustainability of AEs





An assessment and evaluation of different tools, channels and activities used and their suitability for different stakeholder groups was performed. Moreover, Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) regarding outreach activities were reached or significantly overachieved. Lessons learnt were presented and recommendations were drawn. With this, this Deliverable can be used by related initiatives and future DIH/EDIH to help with the successful planning and conducting of outreach activities.





8 Annex

Smart Anything Everywhere



Video Statistics 2020-2021 (15 videos during S4E2)

Video (with link below)	#YouTube Views (Nov 2021)	#Twitter Impressions (Nov 2021)	#LinkedIn Impressions (Nov 2021)	Total Engagement
 <p>Video Smart Anything Everywhere: Let's sh...</p> <p>https://youtu.be/4kvj-68HOGY</p> <p>Posted: 24.06.2021</p>	107	194	107	408
 <p>Video DIH Ecosystem Building Event June ...</p> <p>https://youtu.be/8tDugkFIQRA</p> <p>Posted: 21.06.2021</p>	69	994	90	1153
 <p>Video SAE: Explained</p> <p>https://youtu.be/CUpqChu1BCQ</p> <p>Posted: 20.05.2021</p>	32	119	61	212




 <p>Video SAE Introduction english</p> <p>https://youtu.be/6LYsCriExWE</p> <p>Posted: 08.03.2021</p>	12	Not featured individually on social media	Not featured individually on social media	12
 <p>Video Vorstellung Smart Anything Everywh...</p> <p>https://youtu.be/vr1IJDJIGiM</p> <p>Posted: 09.02.2021</p>	55	Not featured individually on social media	Not featured individually on social media	55
 <p>Video SAE Introduction 2021 ENGLISH</p> <p>https://youtu.be/lfkScCFIlkk</p> <p>Posted: 28.01.2021</p>	61	Not featured individually on social media	49	110
 <p>Video New Year - New Idea SAE</p> <p>https://youtu.be/50W1pUm4tK8</p>	8	525	57	590

Posted: 21.01.2021				
 <p>Video EFCS Trailer Smart Anything Every...</p> <p>https://youtu.be/NmXLzEVqLq8</p>	79	653 (June 2021)	154 (June 2021)	886
Posted: 23.11.2020				
 <p>Video Smart Anything Everywhere Initiativ...</p> <p>https://youtu.be/sj0v0g59dBo</p>	68	23 (June 2021)	49 (June 2021)	140
Posted: 21.08.2020				
 <p>Video SAE 2020 Funding Opportunities for ...</p> <p>https://youtu.be/0s5_75CmSB0</p>	28	84 (June 2021)	42 (June 2021)	154
Posted: 24.07.2020				
 <p>Video SAE 2020 Funding Opportunities for ...</p> <p>https://youtu.be/A-ZQeYS_Egg</p>	123	55 (June 2021)	59 (June 2021)	237

Posted: 24.07.2020				
 <p>Video SAE 2020 Funding Opportunities for ...</p> <p>https://youtu.be/Enh4WsaWPFi</p>	24	134 (June 2021)	60 (June 2021)	218
Posted: 24.07.2020				
 <p>Video SAE 2020 Funding Opportunities for ...</p> <p>https://youtu.be/-E_y31ZZDRo</p>	50	63 (June 2021)	61 (June 2021)	174
Posted: 24.07.2020				
 <p>Video SAE 2020 Funding Opportunities for ...</p> <p>https://youtu.be/2Gn9POdkMx8</p>	9	88 (June 2021)	116 (June 2021)	213
Posted: 24.07.2020				
 <p>Video What is the SAE initiative all about (...)</p> <p>https://youtu.be/GOlph-tpbd8</p>	179	367 (June 2021)	18 (June 2021)	564

Posted: 03.09.2019				
 <p>Video What is the SAE initiative all about: i...</p> <p>https://youtu.be/xG4SY_akXLI</p>	57	24 (June 2021)	70 (June 2021)	151
Posted: 03.09.2019				
 <p>Video DIH Day 2019: Interview Max Lemke</p> <p>https://youtu.be/c4Kfv164WZo</p>	22	84 (June 2021)	42 (June 2021)	148
Posted: 02.09.2019				
 <p>Video DIH Day 2019: Interview Rainer Gue...</p> <p>https://youtu.be/K3vv_JWuGm8</p>	66	Not featured individually on social media	56 (June 2021)	122
Posted: 03.09.2019				
 <p>Video DIH Day 2019: Interview Nicole Mue...</p> <p>https://youtu.be/58rg0u05Sz0</p>	31	84 (June 2021)	42 (June 2021)	157

Posted: 03.09.2019				
 <p>Video DIH Day 2019: Interview Meike Reim...</p> <p>https://youtu.be/MGlex6BSmy0</p>	58	Not featured individually on social media	50 (June 2021)	108
Posted: 03.09.2019				
 <p>Video DIH Day 2019: Interview Stephan Ka...</p> <p>https://youtu.be/rSIMFYKWjlo</p>	38	84 (June 2021)	4 (June 2021)	126
Posted: 03.09.2019				
 <p>Video DIH Day 2019: Interview Mayte Carr...</p> <p>https://youtu.be/buktUHcu_kU</p>	14	84 (June 2021)	42 (June 2021)	140
Posted: 03.09.2019				
 <p>Video DIH Day 2019: Interview Genadi Sch...</p>	18	84 (June 2021)	4 (June 2021)	106

https://youtu.be/D_SvtT8LnE Posted: 03.09.2019				
 <p>Video DIH Day 2019: Interview Julia Mohrb...</p>	96	Not featured individually on social media	Not featured individually on social media	96
https://youtu.be/_Ozyx9cWG9I Posted: 03.09.2019				
 <p>Video DIH Day 2019: Interview Simon Herri...</p>	35	Not featured individually on social media	Not featured individually on social media	35
https://youtu.be/didyU974eTs Posted: 03.09.2019				
 <p>Video DIH Day 2019: Interview Pierre Dami...</p>	35	Not featured individually on social media	Not featured individually on social media	35
https://youtu.be/N4jOF1Tuf-w Posted: 03.09.2019				