

SustainX supports SMEs to improve digital and sustainable innovation readiness through training, advisory support and interregional collaboration. Our aim is to connect regional ecosystems and help SMEs move towards investment-ready projects.



SustainX Best Practice One-Pager | June 2026

Best practice overview - Bulgaria

Bulgaria offers a strong environment for organisations seeking collaboration in digital transformation, sustainable innovation and interregional partnerships. Through SustainX, the focus is on creating practical collaboration opportunities that can lead to pilots, research partnerships, business cooperation or joint investment initiatives, fully aligned with Bulgaria's Smart Specialisation priorities.

The approach in practice

The Bulgaria collaboration model combines:

- Alignment with Smart Specialisation priorities, focusing on digital transformation, sustainable innovation and SME competitiveness.
- Collaboration between SMEs, research organisations, Digital Innovation Hubs, clusters and public support organisations.
- Targeted partner matching, helping organisations identify the right technology, research or business partner for a specific collaboration objective.
- Support for pilot projects, technology validation and consortium building, creating practical pathways towards European innovation projects.
- Follow-up activities, ensuring that promising collaborations progress from initial discussions to concrete next steps.

This approach demonstrates that successful collaboration:

- starts from a clearly defined collaboration objective, rather than a funding opportunity.
- connects organisations with the most appropriate ecosystem actors based on their needs.
- combines digital and sustainable innovation within real market-driven collaboration.
- creates structured pathways towards pilots, European projects and long-term partnerships.

Why this may be useful for EDIHs & EEN nodes

- A practical overview of Bulgaria's priority collaboration areas aligned with Smart Specialisation.
- Examples of how SMEs, research organisations and innovation intermediaries can work together on digital and sustainable innovation.
- Collaboration pathways that can support pilot projects, technology validation and partner search.
- Inspiration for ecosystem matchmaking and interregional cooperation across European innovation ecosystems.



Contact Points for SustainX SMEs investment regions

ROMANIA

cristina.varvaruc@digital-innovation.zone

elena-lidia.alexu@academic.tuiasi.ro



BULGARIA

Michaela Dineva

michaela.dineva@arcfund.net



CANARIA

Laura Lorenzo Brito

llorbri@santacruzdetenerife.es



GREECE

Georgia Lalou

glalou@ied.eu



LATVIA

Agnese Kore

agnese.kore@techcenter.lv



Funded by
the European Union



www.sustainx.digital-innovation.zone



YouTube