

# SPREAD2INNO

SPREADING the global potential of developing innovation ecosystems to strengthen INNOVation in regional and local businesses

## Project Background

SPREAD2INNO focuses on closing the geographical innovation gap that exists due to unequal connectedness and development of different regions of the European Union. Via the SPREAD2INNO working program and activities, the less developed innovation ecosystems have a chance to adopt practices that will make them more attractive to international companies and tapping into the potential of local ecosystems.

- 120 participants in Local Startup Events
- Implementation of 72 feasibility studies
- 24 companies received tailored mentoring service during the Innovation Academies
- 6 finalists in the Intensive Training Programme

## Project Objectives

- ANALYSE** qualitatively and quantitatively the needs of start-ups and SMEs located in different innovation ecosystems with regards to sectoral needs and specific financial and business services
- ASSESS** and improve, collaborating with developed and less developed innovation ecosystems, quality, capacity, competitiveness, comprehensiveness and outreach of business acceleration services
- CREATE** an online cross-border single point of reference for all innovation stakeholders with regards to resources, tools and services tailored for scaling up innovative SMEs and start-ups
- BRING** together regional high-potential start-ups and local stakeholders to give an impulse to improve the innovation systems in the respective regions, fostering inclusion and diversity
- EVALUATE** the sustainability of the SPREAD2INNO methodology and solutions

## Startup Acceleration Programme:

### Local Startup Events

At six events in Bulgaria, Italy and Greece, local startups were invited to participate in thrilling pitching sessions and compete for the unique opportunity to attend further SPREAD2INNO training programmes and seminars. Insightful panel discussions and workshop sessions gave budding entrepreneurs the chance to engage with topics such as scaling a business, building collaborative relationships, and tailoring pitches to investors. The events also doubled as a networking opportunity for all attendees and helped to facilitate valuable relationships.

### Innovation Academies

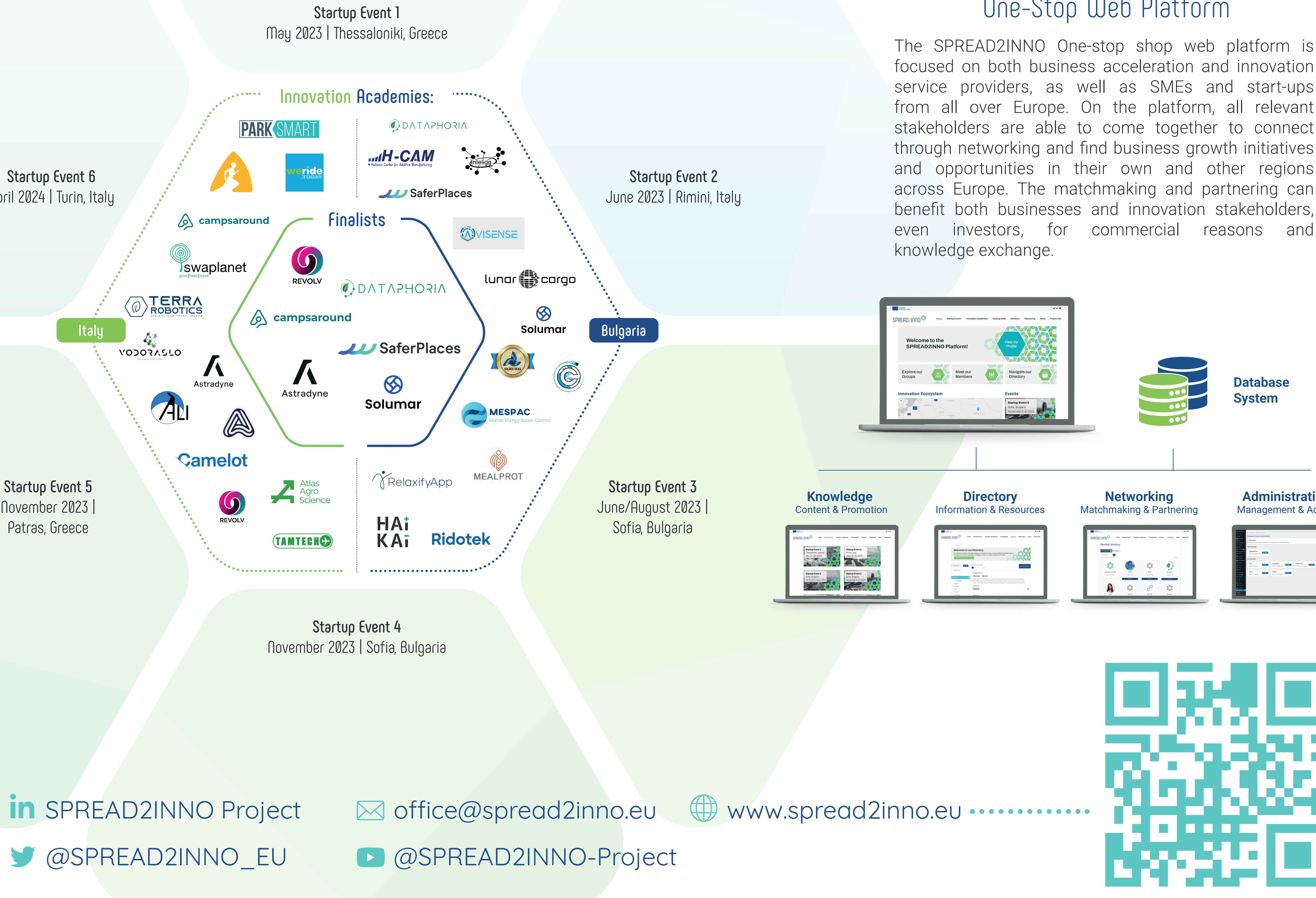
The Innovation Academies in Italy and Bulgaria were organised by SPREAD2INNO for the winners of the pitching competitions at the local startup events and included a wide variety of inspiring talks and insightful workshops, as well as outstanding networking opportunities. The highlight of the Innovation Academies were the thrilling pitching sessions, in which the participating startups were able to present their business and compete for one of six spots in the third phase of the SPREAD2INNO Acceleration Programme.

### Intensive Training Programme

The six finalists from the SPREAD2INNO Innovation Academies take part in a 7-day intensive training programme. During this training week, participants can meet experts from the partners' networks and have the opportunity to improve their business and market scalability. The selected start-ups and SMEs are able to receive a tailor-made business and coaching plan provided by the SPREAD2INNO partners, in order to enhance their competences in the market as well as their investors attractiveness.

### One-Stop Web Platform

The SPREAD2INNO One-stop shop web platform is focused on both business acceleration and innovation service providers, as well as SMEs and start-ups from all over Europe. On the platform, all relevant stakeholders are able to come together to connect through networking and find business growth initiatives and opportunities in their own and other regions across Europe. The matchmaking and partnering can benefit both businesses and innovation stakeholders, even investors, for commercial reasons and knowledge exchange.



Funded by  
the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or European Innovation Council and SMEs Executive Agency. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



MINDS & SPARKS

