

H2020 Work Programme

D5.9 – Report on liaison with other projects and initiatives

Lead Contractor: FVA – New Media Research
Author(s): Selenia Marinelli

This document is the BIOBEC project (contract no. 101023381) report on liaison with other projects and initiatives, corresponding to D5.9 (M30) led by FVA. This document contains reports on the last months of activities performed by BIObec to establish new relations and strengthen the already consolidated ones, with the aim to foster debate and knowledge exchange among similar projects and initiatives in bioeconomy education.

This project has received funding from the Bio-based Industries Joint Undertaking (JU) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 101023381. The JU receives support from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme and the Bio-based Industries Consortium.

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Contact persons	Selenia Marinelli (FVA), Susanna Albertini (FVA)		
Website	www.biobec.eu		

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Deliverable Contributors				
	Name	Organisation	Role / Title	E-mail
Deliverable leader	Selenia Marinelli	FVA		marinelli@fvaweb.it
Contributing Author(s)	Louis Ferrini	FVA		ferrini@fvaweb.it
Reviewer(s)	Susanna Albertini	FVA		albertini@fvaweb.it
	Fiona Scott Hayward	MTU		Fiona.ScottHayward@mtu.ie
	Elisabeth Gerhardt	BOKU		elisabeth.gerhardt@boku.ac.at
	Pablo Ariño	SIE		pabloarino@sustainableinnovations.eu
Final review and quality approval	Davide Viaggi	UNIBO		davide.viaggi@unibo.it

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS	4
1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	5
2. INTRODUCTION.....	6
3. LIAISON WITH OTHER PROJECTS AND INITIATIVES	7
3.1. Collaboration with relevant concluded and ongoing projects and initiatives	7
3.2. Collaboration with the European Bioeconomy Network	9
4. THE ‘PROJECTS2PROJECTS’ WORKSHOP AT THE EC BIOECONOMY CONFERENCE	10
5. THE WORKSHOP IN BIOECONOMY EDUCATION AT THE CBE JU STAKEHOLDER FORUM	13
6. CONCLUSIONS.....	16

INDEX OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Overview of the projects clustered per each macroarea.....	10
Figure 2: One of the working groups working on the joint action plan during the workshop.....	11
Figure 3: The EuBioNet corner during the EC Bioeconomy Conference	12
Figure 4: Banner of the workshop at the CBE JU Stakeholder Forum.....	13
Figure 5: Some pictures from the workshop.....	14
Figure 6: The main takeaways from the workshop presented at the CBE JU Stakeholder Forum plenary session	15

INDEX OF TABLES

Table 1: List of collaboration with relevant concluded and ongoing projects and initiatives.	8
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Acronyms and abbreviations

CBE JU	Circular Bio-Based Europe Joint Undertaking
EC	European Commission
WP	Work Package
BBEC	Bio-Based Education Center
MML	Mobilisation and Mutual Learning
EUBIONET	European Bioeconomy Network



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1.Executive summary

Collaboration with existing initiatives plays a key role in maximizing the impact of the project: a strong interlink with the EuBioNet and the parallel projects and initiatives was established to ensure BIObec's relevance in the community, contributing to the co-organisation of events and debates around bioeconomy education towards the creation of an innovation ecosystem.

This document describes BIObec approach to promote synergies and collaborations with other projects and initiatives during the second half of the project, complementing the first report of these activities which is included in D5.7 delivered on M15.



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2.Introduction

This deliverable reports on the actions performed under WP5 to promote “Liaison with other projects and initiatives” (Task 5.4), specifically the collaboration with relevant concluded and ongoing projects and initiatives, the collaboration with the European Bioeconomy Network (EuBioNet) and the collaborations established in terms of co-organisation of events and debates.

After a brief introduction (**section 2**), the document provides an update with regards to the collaborations established with relevant concluded and ongoing projects and initiatives, also under the frame of the European Bioeconomy Network’s working group in bioeconomy education (**section 3**).

Section 4 describes in detail the “Projects2Projects” workshop organised by BIObec together with other relevant projects of the EuBioNet working group, in the context of the high-level Bioeconomy Conference organised by the EC in October 2022. This was particularly relevant to gather information and feedback that were useful to feed the project’s work.

Section 5 provides insights from the second workshop in bioeconomy education organised by BIObec. The event took place on December 2023 in the context of the first CBE JU Stakeholder Forum. It represented a key moment to bring together the most relevant projects in bioeconomy education to outline the required skills, skills gaps and future job profiles, as well as discuss the skills-related regional dimension and priorities and share strategies to attract students and professionals towards careers related to the bioeconomy. In this context, BIObec presented to the audience its main results in particular the frameworks built for the 6 BBECs in 6 European Areas, tailoring the format to respond to the different specificities (local, regional, national) with dedicated workshops involving key stakeholders at regional and international levels.

Finally, **Section 6** provides conclusions and reflections on how these activities ensured BIObec’s relevance among the EU funded projects stimulating the debate in bioeconomy, paving the way towards the effective dissemination and exploitation of the project’s final results.



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3. Liaison with other projects and initiatives

BIObec promotes the collaboration and cross-fertilisation with other ongoing projects and initiatives to maximise the impact of project's activities and efforts towards the creation of an innovation ecosystem for the bioeconomy education, through effective educational Centres.

Since bioeconomy and education are typically crosscutting issues, a number of synergies and collaborations were established also during the last 15 months of the project in order to continue:

- promoting the collaboration and cross-fertilisation with other ongoing projects and initiatives to maximise the impact of project's activities and efforts toward the creation of an innovation ecosystem for the bioeconomy education, through effective educational Centres
- facilitating the co-organisation of joint activities among projects and promote the exchange of knowledge and good practices
- animating the debate around challenges and gaps still to be addressed in bioeconomy education
- ensuring the connection and collaboration with expert groups (like the BIC experts' group in education), to timely transfer the lessons learnt and scale-up the impacts
- exploring synergies in terms of communication and participation to other projects' activities.

The following paragraphs describe in detail the collaborations established.

3.1. Collaboration with relevant concluded and ongoing projects and initiatives

BIObec builds on the outcomes of several concluded and ongoing projects and initiatives that were key to inform the activities that took place during the entire lifespan of the project, as also reported in D5.7. This type of collaboration ensured that EU funded projects' exploitable assets were capitalised, preventing overlapping among the projects' activities and results. The following table resumes the main liaison established and the partners directly involved or responsible for the collaboration.

Projects and initiatives	Partner(s) involved or responsible for the collaboration
URBIOFUTURE	UAB, CNR, CTA, FBCD, SIE, IHE
ABBEE	WU, UHOH, UEF
ICT BIOCHAIN	CTA, SIE, IBF, ITT
LIFT	FVA
Transition2BIO	FVA, UNIBO
GRACE	UHOH, WU
IBISBA	WU, UAB, CNR
MpowerBIO	FBCD, CTA, SIE, IBF
BIOVOICES	WU, CNR, FVA
BLOOM	WU
BIOBRIDGES	FVA
RM@Schools	CNR
SmartPlaCE@Schools	CNR
FOEBE	APT, UNIBO, UHOH, UEF, BOKU, WU
EBU Label	UHOH UNIBO, APT, UEF, BOKU, WU
BIOCEB	APT
BIOEASTsUP	ART

NEXTFOOD	UNIBO
Allthings.bioPRO	FVA
ICA CoP Bio-Edu	ART, FVA
GoDanuBio	FVA, UNIBO
BeuBio	FVA
Engage4Bio	FVA
ShapingBio	ART, FBCD, FVA
Circular Bricks	FVA
BioGov.net	ART, UNIBO, FVA
Talent4BBI	FVA, UNIBO
CEE2ACT	FVA, UNIBO, PRO CIVIS
GenB	FVA
BioBeo	FVA
Robin	CTA, MTU
RuralBioUP	IBF, FVA
Biomodel4Region	WU, FVA

Table 1: List of collaboration with relevant concluded and ongoing projects and initiatives.

Among the different activities organised during the second half of the project, BIObec gained a lot of attention with regards to the final results produced and lessons learnt to transfer to the educational community. Towards the conclusion of BIObec, representatives from the consortium were in fact invited as speakers in two main events, to present the key highlights from the activities.

On 9 February 2024, FVA – New Media Research was hosted in the **Circular Bricks project final event**, providing inputs and insights specifically in the context of the round table “Challenges and opportunities in VET bioeconomy education”, moderated by Nadia Sansone from Unitelma Sapienza (short report available at [this link](#)).

On 16 February 2024, coordinator UNIBO and partner FBCD, took part in the second day of the **Talent4BBI project Winter School**. The session, entitled “Skills and competencies for efficient teams” was moderated by Nelo Emerencia (BIC), followed by a presentation of BIObec’s key results on building a framework for knowledge hubs and interaction between industry, academia and policymakers. The session was finally complemented by an intervention on the Industry’s perspective on BIObec’s results and next steps towards a dialogue industry-academia.

3.2. Collaboration with the European Bioeconomy Network

BIObec is part of the EuBioNet, a proactive alliance of 150 projects and initiatives¹ dealing with Bioeconomy promotion, communication and support. During the 30 months of the project, BIObec contributed to consolidating the EuBioNet robust position in stimulating the debate and delivering recommendations, position papers and policy briefs to increase its effectiveness in contributing to the transition towards the circular bioeconomy in Europe. In particular, the project entered the EuBioNet working group in bioeconomy education together with the key players in the sector also involved in the group. The aim of this working group was to map the future skills needed in bioeconomy and provide recommendations on how address the challenges, taking into consideration the updated European Bioeconomy Strategy which identifies education at all levels as the main driver for the deployment of sustainable and circular bioeconomy by 2050.

Within the EuBioNet working group in bioeconomy education several activities and meetings took place during the first 15 months of BIObec project and are reported in D5.7. During the second period of the project, the role of BIObec was particularly central in the organisation of 2 pivotal European workshops, involving key representatives from EU funded projects and initiatives in the domain, ensuring a proper knowledge exchange and exploitation of lessons learnt.

Specifically, BIObec:

- a) co-organised the “Projects2Projects” workshop which took place as side event of the high-level Bioeconomy Conference organised by the EC on October 2022 (also mentioned in D5.7 and now extensively described in this deliverable);
- b) was main organiser of the workshop “Developing skills in the bio-based industries: future bioeconomy education pathways”, on December 2023 and in the context of the CBE JU Stakeholder Forum.

Both events and their main results are reported in the following sections.

¹ Number of EuBioNet members updated at 29/01/2024.

4. The ‘Projects2Projects’ workshop at the EC Bioeconomy Conference

“Projects2Projects” is an innovative format developed by the European Bioeconomy Network (EubioNet)² to facilitate the thematic discussion, mutual learning and knowledge exchange among EU-funded projects having similar interests and the idea and concept of the workshop were co-created by BIObec partner FVA, which is also the main contact of the EuBioNet. The latter was the main organiser of the MML, together with the European Commission and Transition2BIO, while BIObec actively supported the event, designing the agenda with the main organisers and moderating some of the 4 different thematic macroareas in which the workshop was structured, namely:

- Enabling the bioeconomy ecosystem at the European, National and Regional level (governance perspective)
Enabling the bioeconomy ecosystem at European, National and Regional level (from circular bioeconomy and bioeconomy sectors perspective)
- Standardisation, certification, labelling and monitoring
- Bioeconomy communication and education/future skills for the bioeconomy.

The workshop was designed to maximise the exploitation of lessons learnt and the heritage of H2020 bioeconomy projects in communication, education, and stakeholder engagement, to effectively kick off the newly funded Horizon Europe ones.

The event allowed the H2020 projects to present their main exploitable assets to a large number of projects and initiatives, while the Horizon Europe projects (about to kick off or recently started) took the advantage to build their activities on the extensive knowledge generated by H2020 projects in the last years.

Macroarea 1 - enabling the bioeconomy ecosystem at European, National and Regional level (governance perspective)		Macroarea 2 - enabling the bioeconomy ecosystem at European, National and Regional level (boost circular economy and bioeconomy sectors perspective)	
H2020	Horizon Europe	H2020	Horizon Europe
BIOEASTsUP BE-Rural BioCircularCities LIFT	ShapingBio CEE2ACT BIOMODEL4REGIONS ROBIN BIOLOC BBC BlueRev RefreSCAR	BIOSWITCH BioBridges Tech4Biowaste MPowerBio BioeconomyVentures Enabling	BioRural MainstreamBIO RuralBioUp SCALE-UP BIOTRANSFORM
Macroarea 3 - standardisation, certification, labelling and monitoring		Macroarea 4 - bioeconomy communication and education/future skills for the bioeconomy	
H2020	Horizon Europe	H2020	Horizon Europe
STAR-ProBio STAR4BBI	HARMONITOR STAR4BBS SUSTCERT4BIOBASED 3-CO SUSTRACK	Transition2Bio BIObec Allthings.bioPRO BIOVOICES BIOSKILLS EBU Label	GenB BioBeo BioGov.Net Engage4BIO

Figure 1: Overview of the projects clustered per each macroarea.

Specifically, the “Projects2Projects” workshop aimed at:

- Facilitating the awareness and exchange of inspirational good practices
- Presenting the objectives of the newly funded Horizon Europe-projects in bioeconomy
- Defining common action plans

² <https://eubionet.eu/>

- Improving the quality and impact of projects' activities for the next months, facilitating collaboration among ongoing, concluded and recently funded projects.

All the participating projects were grouped according to the 4 thematic working groups and each macro area was introduced by the European Commission's policy officer who provided the audience with the EC expectations to trigger the following discussion.

The workshop was divided into two parts. The first one was specifically dedicated to brief presentations of success stories from H2020 projects, with a special focus on assets that could be exploited by the newly funded Horizon Europe projects. The second part was dedicated to thematic group discussions to define a common 2022/2023 action plan per each thematic working group, responding to the updated 2018 bioeconomy strategy.

During the discussion, the following outcomes have been achieved:

- facilitate the identification and connection with similar activities
- enable the overview of who is doing what in the next months
- avoid duplication of efforts (e.g. organisation of a workshop on the same topic in the same period)
- maximise the impact and participants to events by joining efforts (e.g. co-organizing an event addressing similar topics from different perspectives)
- facilitate the match between needs and offer (e.g. I'm organizing a conference, I'm looking for speakers, good practices)



Figure 2: One of the working groups working on the joint action plan during the workshop.

All the material stemming from the workshop, including the presentations (in ppt), projects' fiches and joint action plans per each macro area are available on this [EuBioNet dedicated page](#) and the outcomes were also showcased in the EuBioNet corner organised in the EC premises during the Bioeconomy Conference held in Brussels.



Figure 3: The EuBioNet corner during the EC Bioeconomy Conference

Impact: The “Projects2Projects” reached **76 registered participants** and was finally able to reach around **60 attendees and involve 40 projects on stage** and additional 9 projects participating. All the participants exploited the opportunity of having for the first time in the same room most of the relevant projects that will support the bioeconomy innovation ecosystem for the next years.

The outcomes of this workshop were key to inform some BIObec activities towards the creation of the BBECs. The event was the occasion to also present to an audience of experts in education, the relevance of the co-creation process carried out in BIObec to engage stakeholders in the design of bioeconomy education centres, as well as the project’s aim to establish BBECs in 6 targeted Areas, ensuring a proper answer the actual and future needs of the industry and surrounding ecosystem at local, regional and national levels.

5. The workshop in bioeconomy education at the CBE JU Stakeholder Forum

A second high-level European workshop in bioeconomy education took place on 7 December 2023, in the context of the CBE JU Stakeholder Forum organised in Brussels. The workshop entitled “**Developing skills in the bio-based industries: future bioeconomy education pathways**” involved BIObec as main organiser, together with the BioGov.net and GenB projects as supporters. See Annex for the detailed agenda.

With 2023 having been designated as the European Year of Skills, the workshop brought together the most relevant projects in bioeconomy education to outline the necessary and missing skills and future job profiles, as well as to discuss the skills-related regional dimension and priorities and share strategies to attract students and professionals towards careers related to the bioeconomy.



Figure 4: Banner of the workshop at the CBE JU Stakeholder Forum

During the workshop, success stories and formats for designing educational pathways (e.g., competence centres, business models and educational frameworks) were presented and discussed, to understand how effectively address the skills needed in the bio-based sector.

In the opening remarks, BIObec project officer Giovanna Rizzetto (CBE JU) highlighted the importance of such events to foster dialogue and identify needs and challenges in bioeconomy education, to properly address them in current or future EU initiatives. In this context, through Inspirational and interactive discussion with participants, the event

- Ensured knowledge exchange, transferability, replicability and exploitation of EU-funded projects and initiatives’ outcomes
- Improved the quality and impact of ongoing projects and initiatives in bioeconomy education, facilitating collaboration and mutual learning
- Provided actionable recommendations and guidelines for future bioeconomy education pathways.

Specifically, BIObec contributed to the discussion by providing an overview on the main results obtained, such as the mapping of regional needs and priorities and the creation of tools and methodologies to support the educational community through Bio-Based Education Centres which meet industry needs and boost the contribution of the bioeconomy to societal challenges. In particular, since this event was organised few months before the end of the project, this was an important

occasion to also disseminate the project's results towards their exploitation by stakeholders interested in making BIObec project's outcomes actionable in their context, considering present and future needs.



Figure 5: Some pictures from the workshop

The following interactive discussion engaged participants from relevant EU funded projects and networks (e.g. Allthings.bioPRO, BioBeo, Engage4Bio, Circular Bricks, EBU and EBU Label, ICA CoP Bio-Edu, BIOEAST initiative - including BioEast UniNet), which shared their contributions to respond to the following questions:

- How can bioeconomy education respond to regional and industry needs and priorities?
- What are the future bioeconomy and bio-based economy job profiles and skills needed?
- How to inspire, inform and attract students and professionals towards careers related to the bioeconomy?
- How future projects and initiatives can bridge the gaps between skills needed and educational pathways?

Their inputs were gathered through Mentimeter and the audience agreed on the need to

- facilitate a more structured cooperation among educational providers, industries and local authorities, to ensure that the educational curricula are co-created and able to address specific (present and future) needs and requirements
- organise events to support networking and encourage knowledge sharing and best practices
- increase on-the-job trainings and opportunities for younger generations to have direct and practical educational experiences in industries
- enhance transversal skills, foster multidisciplinary and systemic thinking in addition to more technical skills
- stimulate dialogue with policy makers to effectively create a governance system in the bioeconomy which is able to ensure the implementation of such educational pathways at different geographical levels (lack of legislations and unified frameworks, need for funding and public support)
- provide motivation and foster inclusiveness through innovative arts-based approaches, using different tools, gamified approaches and more engaging methodologies, while promoting the bioeconomy.

Nelo Emerencia (BIC) closed the workshop by providing remarks on how the BIC working group in education will make sure to embed the main suggestions emerged during the discussion, highlighting again the relevance of such debate for the entire educational community.

These insightful inputs will contribute to the definition of policy recommendations that will be considered for future activities in the domain, targeting different levels and considering the regional

specificities and needs. They also contributed to inform the [recommendations delivered by CBE JU](#) as outcomes of the Forum.

Impact: The workshop reached around **30 participants** and the main takeaways from the discussion were presented by BIObec's coordinator Davide Viaggi in plenary session, reaching around **400 stakeholders** participating in the CBE JU Stakeholder Forum.



Figure 6: The main takeaways from the workshop presented at the CBE JU Stakeholder Forum plenary session

6. Conclusions

This document provides an update to D5.7 (delivered on M15) with a special focus on the activities performed to proactively promote the collaboration with similar projects/initiatives and maximise impact and visibility of the project. To this end, BIObec connected with projects, initiatives and experts in bioeconomy education to foster the debate and provide insightful recommendations on the key priorities and needs to be addressed.

These activities promoted complementarity with completed and ongoing projects, facilitated knowledge sharing, avoided effort duplications, maximised promotion of outcomes and created synergies to address shared challenges. BIObec benefited from the extensive experience and networks of partner FVA, promoter and main contact of the European Bioeconomy Network, and consolidated its relevance among the EU funded projects in bioeconomy education, contributing to inform future actions and policies in the domain and paving the way towards the effective dissemination and exploitation of its final results.



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