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CO-CREATION INSIGHTS REPORT: IDEATION AND NEEDS IDENTIFICATION WORKSHOPS



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Abbreviations and Acronyms

Abbreviation / Acronym	Description
BBEPP	Bio Base Europe Pilot Plant
CBB	Circular Bio-Based
IP	Intellectual Property
PDIs	Pilot and Demonstration Infrastructures

Executive Summary

This report presents the insights and outcomes of the co-creation workshops conducted as part of Task 3.2 of the COPILOT project, which aims to develop an advanced digital platform connecting Pilot and Demonstration Infrastructures (PDIs) with bioinnovators. The workshops, held on December 4, 2024, at the Bio Base Europe Pilot Plant (BBEPP), provided an opportunity to gather stakeholder perspectives, validate platform functionalities, and prioritize features to align with industry needs.

The primary goal of the co-creation workshops was to ensure that the new platform meets the needs of its two key user groups: PDIs and bioinnovators. This dynamic was designed to:

- Identify major challenges in accessing and collaborating with PDIs.
- Define the essential features required for an effective matchmaking and collaboration platform.
- Prioritize functionalities that would enhance accessibility, efficiency, and long-term sustainability.
- Develop insights into potential business models for the platform.

Challenges Identified:

- A comprehensive and exhaustive database of relevant PDIs is missing.
- Lack of transparency in service offerings, costs, and facility availability.
- Difficult matchmaking between PDIs and bioinnovators due to scattered and unstructured information.
- Funding constraints limiting bioinnovators' ability to access pilot facilities.
- Underutilization of resources due to uneven project workload for PDIs.

Priority Features for the new Platform:

- Structured information about technologies and services available for bioinnovators.
- Transparent service pricing and availability dashboards.
- AI-powered matchmaking tool to connect bioinnovators with the right PDIs.
- Centralized marketplace for tendering, project collaboration, and resource sharing.
- Structured collaboration models (e.g., subcontracting, partnerships, IP agreements).
- Training modules and advisory services for both PDIs and bioinnovators.
- User feedback and rating system to ensure service quality and credibility.

1 Introduction

The COPILOT project is a European initiative aimed at fostering collaboration and innovation within the bioeconomy sector by creating a comprehensive digital platform. This platform is designed to support open-access Pilot and Demonstration Infrastructures (PDIs), providing bioinnovators with the necessary resources to scale their innovations effectively. The initiative seeks to address the challenges of limited facility access, inefficient matchmaking, and high costs by offering a structured and user-friendly solution.

Building on the foundations laid by previous EU-funded projects such as Pilots4U¹ and BioeconomyVentures, COPILOT aims to establish a unified, self-sustaining network that fosters seamless interaction among PDIs, bioinnovators, and supporting enablers. The initiative seeks to strengthen the interconnectivity of PDIs across Europe, facilitating access to state-of-the-art facilities and accelerating innovation in the bio-based sector.

As a cornerstone of COPILOT, the Pilots4U project was developed to identify, map, and connect existing PDIs through a comprehensive, user-friendly database and communication platform. Pilots4U acts as a centralised resource where bioinnovators can easily find and access the facilities that best match their scale-up requirements. By offering detailed insights into the capabilities, capacities, and services of PDIs, Pilots4U increases transparency, reduces fragmentation, and actively promotes collaboration across the European bioeconomy ecosystem. By integrating matchmaking tools, transparent pricing models, and training opportunities, the platform aspires to accelerate the transition of bio-based innovations from research to market deployment.

Task 3.2 of the COPILOT project, led by Cluster FOOD+i, is dedicated to co-creation dynamics, ensuring that the development of the platform aligns with stakeholder needs. The primary objectives of these workshops were:

- Identifying key challenges faced by PDIs and bioinnovators in accessing and utilizing pilot and demonstration services.
- Gathering insights and expectations regarding platform features, functionalities, and user experience.
- Facilitating ideation and discussion to define essential tools, matchmaking capabilities, and business models.
- Prioritizing platform functionalities to ensure alignment with industry needs and sustainable business models.

The co-creation dynamics followed a structured three-phase approach:

- Pre-Workshop Survey: stakeholders were surveyed to identify key pain points and expectations.
- Stakeholder-Specific Groups: separate groups for PDIs and bioinnovators to map jobs, pains and gains relevant to their roles.
- Joint Co-Creation Session: mixed groups discussed and ranked platform features based on impact and feasibility.

¹ <https://www.cbe.europa.eu/projects/pilots4u>

2 Preparatory Phase

In preparation for the co-creation workshops, a stakeholder survey was conducted one week before the sessions to gather preliminary insights from PDIs and bioinnovators.

2.1 Content of the Survey

The objective of this survey was to gain a deeper understanding of the key challenges, expectations, and functional requirements that these stakeholders have when engaging with a platform like Pilots4U.

By engaging participants before the workshop, the survey helped to:

- Identify critical pain points in accessing and collaborating with PDIs.
- Understand what functionalities would make the new platform most valuable.
- Assess the current barriers to successful innovation scaling in the bioeconomy sector.
- Gather input on platform usability, matchmaking tools, and business models

To ensure participants were well-prepared for the Co-Creation Workshop, they were asked to complete two key actions before the workshop:

- Answering the Preparatory Survey: this survey was designed to collect initial insights on participants' challenges, needs, and expectations regarding the “new Pilots4U powered by COPILOT Platform” (hereinafter referred to as “COPILOT Platform”). Their responses played a crucial role in shaping the workshop discussions.
- Exploring the Beta Version of the COPILOT Platform: participants were invited to test the early-stage version of the platform, register their organizations, and provide feedback on usability and functionality. This step was critical in ensuring that the co-creation process was based on real user experiences.

Specifically, participants were asked to reflect on the following key questions before the workshop to maximize the impact of their input:

- What are the key challenges you face in finding or collaborating with PDIs (if you are a bioinnovator) or bioinnovators (if you are a PDI)?
- What do you expect from the COPILOT Platform to support your organization?
- What features or tools would make the COPILOT Platform most useful to you?
- How can you, in your role, contribute to the COPILOT Platform’s success?
- Are you a:
 - Pilot and Demonstration Infrastructure (PDI).
 - Bioinnovator.

By gathering these insights in advance, the survey ensured that workshop discussions were well-informed, data-driven, and focused on practical solutions. The feedback from participants was used to

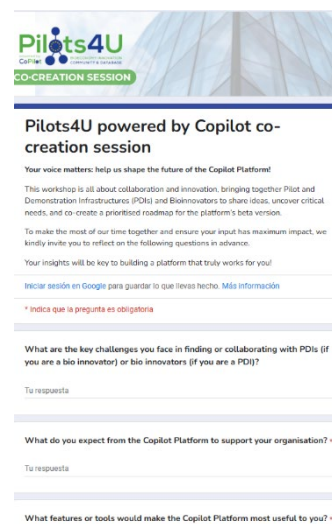


Figure 1 Preliminary Survey

shape the workshop agenda (see Annex 1), structure group activities, and guide the prioritization of platform features.

The following sections summarize the key insights gained from the survey, highlighting the challenges, expectations, and feature priorities identified by stakeholders.

2.2 Conclusions of the Survey

The preparatory survey conducted prior to the Pilots4U powered by COPILOT co-creation session provided valuable insights into the challenges, expectations, and needs of PDIs and bioinnovators. The responses highlighted key obstacles in accessing and collaborating with PDIs, identified crucial platform features that would improve engagement, and underscored the role of matchmaking and networking tools in fostering innovation. These findings played a pivotal role in shaping the workshop discussions, ensuring that the COPILOT platform development aligns with the real-world needs of its intended users. The following section presents a summary of the main conclusions drawn from the survey, which serve as a foundation for the co-creation process and the prioritization of platform features.

The survey respondents were composed of a diverse group of stakeholders from the bioeconomy sector, representing both PDIs and bioinnovators. The distribution of respondents was as follows:

- 8 respondents identified as Bioinnovators, seeking access to facilities, expertise, and collaboration opportunities to scale their innovations.
- 4 respondents were PDIs, providing pilot and demonstration services while looking to enhance their visibility and attract suitable innovation partners.
- 3 respondents indicated that they operated in both roles, meaning they functioned as PDIs while also pursuing bioinnovation activities.

This balanced mix of perspectives provided a comprehensive understanding of the challenges, expectations, and feature priorities necessary for developing an effective and inclusive COPILOT platform.

2.2.1 Key Challenges in Finding or Collaborating with PDIs (for Bioinnovators) or Bioinnovators (for PDIs)

- Difficulty accessing technical information on available equipment, capacity, conditions, and costs.
- Challenges in finding specific technology resources, expertise, and knowledge transfer opportunities.
- Lack of awareness about existing PDIs that align with specific needs, particularly for niche technologies.
- Limited funding for scaling up infrastructure and lack of financing options.
- Difficulty finding partners for both short-term and long-term collaboration.
- Bioinnovators struggle to understand the value-added services that PDIs provide beyond just technical results.
- Lack of transparency regarding the expertise and costs of PDIs.
- Urgency of scaling projects vs. the time-consuming process of identifying and validating PDIs.

- Comparability issues—differences in timeline, costs, and available technology among PDIs.
- Limited standardized information on equipment, certifications, and analytics capabilities.
- No existing central database that efficiently connects bioinnovators with relevant PDIs.
- Understanding the business phase of a bioinnovator when they contact a PDI to better match capacity with needs.

2.2.2 Expectations from the COPILOT Platform

- A comprehensive and exhaustive database of relevant pilot and demo facilities.
- Easy access to a wide range of scale-up technology resources
- A strong network that facilitates knowledge sharing, best practices, and collaboration.
- A matchmaking feature that connects users based on their project needs.
- A way to put projects out for tender, making it easier for bioinnovators to find PDIs.
- Up-to-date and standardized information on PDI services, including scale, equipment, processing capabilities, and restrictions.
- Better visibility for PDIs, ensuring bioinnovators can easily find and assess potential partners.
- Integration of funding opportunities, grants, and other financing options within the platform.
- A tool for collaboration that helps bioinnovators and PDIs align on project goals and expectations.
- A transparent and efficient contracting system to streamline agreements between stakeholders.

2.2.3 Features and Tools That Would Make the Platform Most Useful

- AI-driven search engine to find PDIs based on equipment, expertise, and services offered.
- Interactive map with detailed information on equipment types, capacity, and compliance.
- Automated project requests that notify relevant PDIs when bioinnovators post needs.
- User reviews and rating system for PDIs, providing insights from past collaborations.
- Request for Proposal (RFP) submission tool for structured facility searches.
- Webinars and training sessions to help bioinnovators understand bioprocess development.
- Dedicated networking tools, such as forums and matchmaking sessions.
- A “posting wall” feature where users can submit collaboration requests and receive responses.

2.2.4 Contributions Participants Can Make to the Platform

- Facilitating the exchange of expertise in bio-based innovation and technological scale-up.
- Actively participating in networking events and workshops.
- Providing case studies and real-world data to enrich the platform's resources.
- Promoting the platform within their professional networks and social media.

- Offering infrastructure and facilities to be used within the COPILOT network.
- Providing beta testing feedback to improve usability and effectiveness.
- Acting as a bridge between bioinnovators and PDIs, fostering stronger collaboration.

3 Co-creation Dynamics

3.1 Design

The co-creation dynamics for the COPILOT platform development were designed by Cluster FOOD+i to ensure an interactive, structured, and outcome-driven engagement between PDIs and bioinnovators. The approach was developed to maximize participation, facilitate cross-collaboration, and drive actionable insights that would shape the beta version of the platform. The agenda included:

- Platform Presentation: A detailed overview of the COPILOT platform's beta version.
- Stakeholder-Specific Groups: Separate discussions for PDIs and bioinnovators to identify unique needs.
- Joint Sessions: Mixed-group activities to identify shared priorities and brainstorm platform features.
- Prioritization Exercises: Ranking key platform functionalities.

3.2 Implementation

3.2.1 Platform Presentation

The COPILOT platform presentation served as the foundational part of the co-creation workshop, providing participants (see Participants Sheet in Annex 2) with a comprehensive overview of the platform's vision, objectives, and current development status. Delivered by the platform developers (US company), this session outlined how COPILOT aims to become a centralized digital hub connecting bioinnovators and PDIs, facilitating easier access to facilities, expertise, and collaboration opportunities.

Participants were introduced to the core functionalities of the beta version: facility search features and including matchmaking tools. The presentation emphasized the user-driven development approach, highlighting how the feedback collected during the workshop would be instrumental in refining the platform's design and functionality.

The session also included a live demonstration of the platform, showcasing its navigation, search capabilities, and user interface. As mentioned before, attendees were encouraged to explore the platform beforehand, register their organizations, and share initial impressions regarding usability and potential improvements. This interactive format ensured that stakeholders were actively engaged in shaping the final version of COPILOT, making it a truly collaborative and industry-aligned tool.



Figure 2 Platform Presentation Picture

3.2.2 Stakeholder-Specific Sessions

The stakeholder-specific groups were a crucial part of the co-creation workshop, designed to allow PDIs and bioinnovators to separately identify and discuss their unique needs, challenges, and expectations before engaging in joint discussions. By dividing participants into two distinct groups, the workshop ensured that each stakeholder type had the opportunity to express their specific perspectives without external influences, enabling a more focused and in-depth exploration of their respective concerns.

3.2.2.1 Content of the Sessions

The stakeholder-specific sessions were structured by Cluster FOOD+i around the Customer Profile framework, a strategic tool designed to help PDIs, and bioinnovators define their objectives (Jobs), challenges (Pains), and desired outcomes (Gains). By working through this framework, participants were able to align their real-world experiences with the design of the COPILOT platform, ensuring that its development was based on practical and industry-driven insights.

3.2.2.1.1 Customer Profile Framework

3.2.2.1.1.1 Jobs

Each participant received a customer profile card (see Annex 3), outlining their key responsibilities and expectations based on their stakeholder role. This ensured that discussions were structured and directly relevant to the needs of each group:

PDIs were positioned as business developers responsible for attracting clients and ensuring the financial sustainability of their facilities, and bioinnovators were positioned as innovators focused on scaling their bio-based products, identifying the right resources, and minimizing risks in their process.

Each stakeholder group outlined their core responsibilities (Jobs), categorized into three key areas:

PDIs

Functional Jobs:

- Attract new clients (bioinnovators) to utilize the facility.
- Provide high-quality testing and validation services.
- Manage facility scheduling to maximize utilization.

Social Jobs:

- Build a reputation as a leading PDI in a specialized field (e.g., bioplastic, fermentation).
- Enhance visibility in regional and global bioeconomy networks.

Emotional Jobs:

- Ensure client satisfaction to encourage repeat collaborations.
- Reduce the stress of underutilization and funding uncertainties.

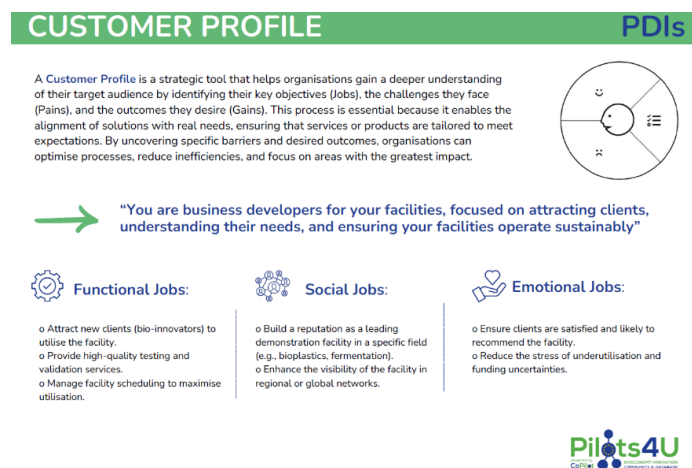


Figure 3 PDIs Card – Customer Profile

Bioinnovators

Functional Jobs:

- Identify facilities that match their technical and capacity requirements.
- Validate products or technology at pilot or industrial scale.
- Optimize production processes for efficiency and cost-effectiveness.

Social Jobs:

- Build a reputation as an innovator in a specific field (e.g., bioplastics, fermentation).
- Develop a network of trusted partners for long-term collaboration.

Emotional Jobs:

- Ensure client satisfaction and product-market fit.
- Minimize risks associated with scaling and market delays.

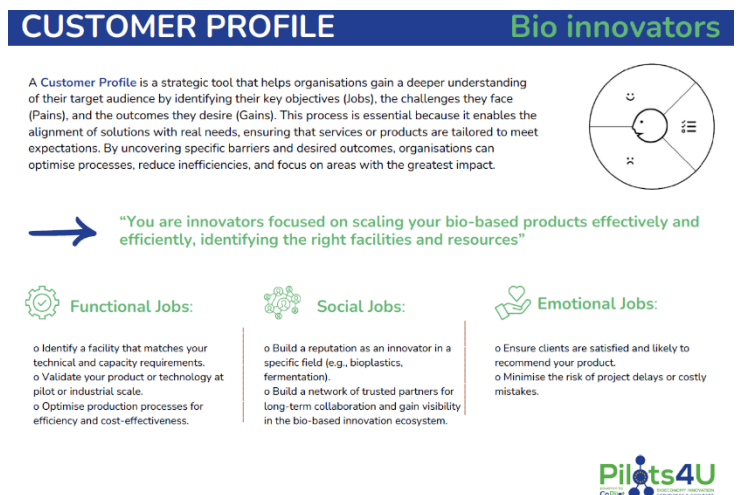


Figure 4 Bioinnovators Card – Customer Profile

3.2.2.1.1.2 Pains

PDIs

As part of the Customer Profile Framework, PDIs reflected individually and identify the key challenges (pains) that hinder their ability to collaborate effectively and achieve their goals. Pains represent the specific challenges, frustrations, or risks that prevent from achieving the organisations’ goals effectively and avoid PDIs from maximizing their potential within the bioeconomy sector.

These are the common pains identified in the cards:

- Limited funding opportunities, affecting infrastructure maintenance and service expansion.
- Low visibility and discoverability, making it difficult for bioinnovators to find suitable PDIs.
- Unpredictable workload, with periods of both overcapacity and underutilization.
- Internal coordination challenges, affecting efficiency in project execution.
- Difficulty in reaching the right clients, leading to missed collaboration opportunities.
- Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) concerns, creating hesitation in knowledge-sharing and partnerships.
- High barriers to market entry, including regulatory compliance and operational costs.
- Reluctance to expose infrastructure to competitors, limiting collaboration opportunities.
- Risk of equipment damage, particularly from inexperienced users or experimental processes.

- Mismatch between customer needs and available equipment, restricting service offerings.
- Unclear or poorly defined customer expectations, complicating project planning.
- Challenges in managing client expectations, particularly around scaling success rates.
- High marketing costs, reducing the ability to attract new clients.
- Limited understanding of customer business models, making it harder to provide tailored solutions.
- Difficulty handling workload fluctuations, alternating between overwhelming demand and inactivity.
- High service costs for customers, limiting access to small-scale innovators.
- Pressure to guarantee success, despite the uncertainties of scaling bio-based innovations.
- Non-competitive pricing constraints, making affordability and profitability difficult to balance.
- Lack of strategic positioning guidance, reducing growth and expansion opportunities.
- Frequent last-minute changes from startups, disrupting planned schedules.
- Difficulties in conveying value-added services, leading startups to underestimate PDIs' contributions.
- Underestimation of project risks by clients, resulting in unrealistic expectations.
- Confidentiality concerns, particularly in handling sensitive projects.
- Difficulty finding relevant bio-innovators, reducing collaboration efficiency.
- High market competition, requiring continuous differentiation strategies.
- Reputational risks from unsuccessful scale-ups, impacting credibility.
- Limited resources (staff, time, funding), constraining growth and project capacity.
- Complex project management and scheduling, requiring adaptability and coordination.
- Misalignment of requests and offers, particularly in technology compatibility and intellectual property concerns.

After the individual reflection exercise, where participants wrote down their key pain points on their customer profile cards, they moved into small group discussions to further analyse and refine their challenges. Each group engaged in a collaborative dialogue to:

- Compare their individual pain points and find common patterns.
- Discuss how these challenges impact their ability to work efficiently and collaborate with other stakeholders.
- Prioritize the most critical issues that need to be addressed in the development of the COPILOT platform.

Each small group was then tasked with identifying the two most significant pain points affecting their stakeholder group. These pain points were selected based on urgency, impact, and frequency across participants.

Once the groups reached a consensus, they designated a spokesperson to present their findings to the full workshop audience. The speakers approached the Mural board, where the pink post-its representing the main pains of the PDIs were displayed. They then explained: the reasoning behind their selection of these two key challenges and how these issues affect the efficiency and sustainability of PDIs.

These were the main pains selected during the group discussion and presented on the PDIs Mural board (pink post-its):

- Insecurity of funding.
- Limited funding for bioinnovators.
- Diverse need and application areas.
- Unclear understanding of the process.
- Difficulty in costumers' expectations management.
- Underestimation of costs and timeline of new research process.
- Uneven workload and over /underutilisation of resources.



Figure 5 Group Picture

Then, the next step was to prioritize these challenges through a ranking exercise. Each PDI received two voting dots:

- A green dot to mark the pain they considered the most critical (2 points).
- A red dot to indicate their second most important challenge (1 point).

PDIs moved to the Mural board, carefully reviewing the pain points listed on pink post-its and placing their dots based on their perceived impact on collaboration and scaling processes. This interactive voting process provided a clear visual representation of priority challenges, highlighting the most pressing issues that needed to be addressed in the next phases of the co-creation workshop:

- 21 points to managing costumers' expectations.
- 9 points to limit funding of the bio-innovators.
- 6 points to uneven workload and underutilization of the resources.

Bioinnovators

In parallel, bioinnovators identified their key challenges in accessing and collaborating with PDIs. As part of the Customer Profile Framework, participants began with an individual reflection, outlining the main

obstacles that hinder their ability to effectively scale their innovations and establish successful partnerships. These pains represent critical barriers, frustrations, or risks that limit their access to the right facilities, create inefficiencies in collaboration, and slow down the innovation process.

These were the main pains identified on the cards:

- Time-consuming process to understand PDI capabilities and pricing.
- Lack of access to specific technical details of facilities and equipment.
- High costs for renting facilities, consultancy, and technical support.
- Limited availability of raw materials and feedstock variability.
- Limited flexibility and adaptability of existing pilot units.
- De-centralized availability of unit operations for multi-step processes.
- Excessive optimization iterations prolonging development timelines.
- Limited availability of free slots in facilities, causing delays.
- Lack of affordable PDIs for small-scale or early-stage innovators.
- Regulatory hurdles complicating scale-up and commercialization.
- Difficulties accessing relevant-scale facilities for testing and validation.
- Lack of proper equipment to meet specific technical needs.
- Challenges in finding suitable PDIs and partners.
- Confidentiality concerns when sharing sensitive process information.
- Limited transparency from PDIs regarding costs, processes, and timelines.
- Need for continuous technical optimization to meet market requirements.
- Time and budget constraints conflicting with investor expectations.
- Unclear technical standards and specifications for feedstock.
- Need for novel characterization methods for emerging bio-based products.
- Difficulty ensuring product-market fit due to scalability uncertainties.
- Intellectual Property (IP) issues in collaborative projects.
- Delays in receiving quotes, impacting decision-making and project timelines.
- Limited access to laboratory-scale trials before scaling up.
- Poor communication between bio-innovators and PDIs.
- Lack of specialized technical consultancy for process development.
- Difficulty ensuring regulatory compliance throughout process development.

- Challenges in aligning process costs with market expectations.
- Lack of facilities capable of handling both upstream and downstream processes.
- Opaque cost structures making it difficult to compare PDIs.
- Unclear timelines for project execution, causing planning issues.
- Small-scale projects not being a priority for larger PDIs.
- Technology transfer challenges when moving from pilot to industrial scale.
- Limited funding options for scaling up innovations.
- Need for better marketing strategies to commercialize bio-based products.
- Regulatory complexities adding uncertainty to the innovation process.
- High risks associated with technological innovation and scale-up failures.
- Lengthy regulatory submission processes delaying commercialization.
- Variability in feedstock cost and availability affecting process stability.
- High disposal costs for by-products and waste management.
- Lack of dedicated teams for follow-up actions post-project completion.
- Insufficient external support for the technical characterization of Circular Bio-Based (CBB) products.
- Gaps in available characterization tools for novel CBBs.

After the individual reflection exercise, where bio-innovators wrote down their key challenges on their customer profile cards, they moved into small group discussions to further analyse and refine their pain points. These discussions allowed participants to:

- Compare individual challenges and identify recurring themes.
- Assess how these obstacles impact their ability to scale innovations and collaborate with PDIs.
- Prioritize the most pressing issues that need to be addressed for a more efficient innovation ecosystem.

Each group was then tasked with identifying the two most critical pain points. These were selected based on urgency, impact, and frequency across participants, ensuring that the most significant challenges were highlighted.

Once the groups reached a consensus, they designated a spokesperson to present their findings to the full workshop audience. The speakers approached the Mural board, where the yellow post-its representing the main pains of the bio-innovators were displayed. They then explained: the reasoning behind selecting these two key challenges and how these issues hinder innovation, slow down scalability, and affect collaboration with PDIs.

These were the main pains selected during the group discussion and presented on the bio-innovators Mural board (pink post-its):

- Lack of resources: money, people infrastructure.
- Lack of Investments.
- Lack of detailed information: capacity, limitations, requirements, timeline.
- Lack of scale-up training / mentoring.
- Cost transparency for services / getting quotes.
- Non-Eu technical standards for bio-based products / feedstock.

After each designated speaker from the bio-innovators presented their selected main pains on the Mural board, the next step was to prioritize these challenges through a ranking exercise. Each Bio-Innovator received two voting dots:

- A green dot to mark the pain they considered the most critical (2 points).
- A red dot to indicate their second most important challenge (1 point).

The most pressing issues for the bio-innovators were:

- 15 points to transparency for services and getting quotes.
- 14 for detailed information needs.

The ranking exercise during the co-creation workshop provided critical insights into the most pressing challenges faced by both PDIs and bio-innovators, highlighting key areas that the COPILOT platform must address.

For PDIs, the most significant pain point was the challenge of managing customer expectations, which received the highest ranking with 21 points. This underscores the difficulties PDIs face in ensuring that bio-innovators have realistic timelines, budgets, and technical feasibility assessments when engaging with their services. Additionally, PDIs identified the limited funding available to bio-innovators as a major constraint, ranking second with 9 points, as financial limitations often hinder the ability of bio-innovators to access pilot and demonstration facilities. Another critical issue was the uneven workload and underutilization of resources, scoring 6 points, which reflects the cyclical nature of demand, where periods of high activity are followed by times of inactivity, creating inefficiencies in facility management.

For bio-innovators, the most pressing concerns revolved around transparency and access to information. The highest-ranked pain point, with 15 points, was the lack of transparency in services and difficulty in obtaining quotes, which creates significant delays in project planning and decision-making. Closely following this, with 14 points, was the need for more detailed technical and process-related information, as bioinnovators struggle to find comprehensive and reliable data on PDI capabilities, costs, and availability.

The conclusions from this exercise clearly indicate that misaligned expectations, lack of transparency, and financial constraints are shared challenges that need urgent resolution. Addressing these pain points will require the COPILOT platform to implement structured communication tools, clearer service descriptions, transparent pricing mechanisms, and enhanced project planning functionalities. By

bridging these gaps, the platform can ensure better collaboration, reduced inefficiencies, and a more predictable and accessible innovation ecosystem for both PDIs and bio-innovators.

3.2.2.1.1.3 Gains

PDIs

As part of the Customer Profile Framework, PDIs reflected individually and identify the key outcomes they desire. Specifically, a gain represents the positive outcomes, benefits, or improvements that make PDIs' work more effective, efficient or satisfying.

These are the common gains identified in the cards:

- Enhanced visibility to showcase facility capabilities and attract more customers.
- Expanded outreach through increased engagement with relevant networks and stakeholders.
- Access to new collaboration, funding, and training opportunities.
- Improved facility filtering tools to quickly identify suitable partners.
- Valuable know-how exchange and insights from innovators.
- Ability to compare facilities for informed decision-making.
- Boosted cooperation among PDIs, fostering knowledge-sharing and partnerships.
- Stronger reputation to attract new customers and investment.
- Less effort in customer acquisition through streamlined matchmaking.
- Better visibility of services to targeted audiences.
- A one-stop-shop for finding partners and building strategic collaborations.
- Exploration of new markets and business expansion opportunities.
- Access to positive references and user feedback for credibility building.
- Standardization of pilot plant operations, improving efficiency and reliability.
- Resource exchange between pilot plants, optimizing capacity utilization.
- Identification of production capabilities and fields of application.
- Co-creation of new project opportunities with relevant stakeholders.
- Better planning of experiments, ensuring more efficient R&D execution.
- Improved communication channels between PDIs and innovators.
- Creation of an ecosystem where partners can refer and recommend each other.
- Automated lead generation, facilitating new business connections.
- Insights into competitors' capabilities to refine strategies.

- Dedicated platform for innovators to post challenges and receive PDI quotations.
- Statistical insights on user searches, helping PDIs understand market demand.
- More precise facility descriptions for better matchmaking.
- Development of complementary partnerships to strengthen service offerings.
- Increased client base and long-term service contracts.
- Opportunities for subcontracting and collaboration across the ecosystem.
- Effective showcasing of services and capabilities, improving market positioning.
- Easier resource planning and optimization of facility use.
- Deeper understanding of customer needs, improving service delivery.
- Highlighting success stories, showcasing best practices and case studies.
- Full utilization of available infrastructure, maximizing operational efficiency.
- Potential revenue generation through royalties on successful innovations.
- Higher utilization rates leading to improved financial sustainability.

After the individual reflection exercise, where participants wrote down their key gain points on their customer profile cards, they moved into small group discussions to further analyse and refine their outcomes. Each group engaged in a collaborative dialogue to:

- Compare their individual gain points and find common patterns.
- Discuss how these outcomes impact their ability to work efficiently and collaborate with other stakeholders.
- Prioritize the most critical issues that need to be addressed in the development of the COPILOT platform.

Each small group was then tasked with identifying the two most significant gain points affecting their stakeholder group. Once the groups reached a consensus, they designated a spokesperson to present their findings to the full workshop audience. The speakers approached the Mural board, where the yellow post-its representing the main gains of the PDIs were displayed. They then explained: the reasoning behind their selection of these two key challenges and how these issues affect the efficiency and sustainability of PDIs.

These were the main gains selected during the group discussion and presented on the PDIs Mural board (yellow post-its):

- Training/events.
- Marketplace to post challenges.
- Share resources.
- Receive data from clients' needs.



Figure 6 Group Picture

- Create an ecosystem where they can suggest each other.
- New partnerships opportunities / partnerships with complementary PDIs.
- More clients and increase visibility.
- Co-creation for projects / calls.

After each designated speaker from the Bio-Innovator groups presented their selected main gains on the Mural board, the next step was to prioritize these challenges through a ranking exercise. Each PDI received two voting dots: a green dot to mark the gain they considered the most critical (2 points) and a red dot to indicate their second most important outcome (1 point).

PDIs moved to the Mural board, carefully reviewing the gain points listed on yellow post-its and placing their dots. This interactive voting process provided a clear visual representation of priority benefits, highlighting the most pressing issues that needed to be addressed in the next phases of the co-creation workshop:

- 14 points to new partnerships.
- 12 points to create an ecosystem where they can suggest each other.
- 10 points to more clients and increase visibility.

Bioinnovators

As part of the Customer Profile Framework, bio-innovators reflected individually on the key outcomes and benefits they seek to achieve. A gain represents a positive outcome, improvement, or advantage that makes their work more efficient, effective, or rewarding.

- Comprehensive PDI database with detailed service offerings, capacities, and technical specifications.
- Transparent pricing models with clear cost estimates for services and facility usage.
- Comparison tools to evaluate PDIs based on services, pricing, certifications, and expertise.
- Reviews and ratings system for PDIs based on previous user experiences.
- Success stories and case studies from past projects to highlight best practices.

- Public access to PDIs' certifications (e.g., food-grade, medical-grade compliance).
- Clear terms of engagement with PDIs, including contracting processes and confidentiality agreements.
- Framework or policy guidelines on how PDIs operate and collaborate with innovators.
- Smart filtering and matchmaking tools to help innovators find the most suitable PDI.
- Quick selection process with an overview of available facilities and their capacities.
- Direct contact access to the right PDI representatives to expedite inquiries.
- Smart dashboard with automated tendering and quote requests from PDIs.
- Automated request form submission to PDIs that match specific project needs.
- Guidance on selecting PDIs based on project requirements and expected outcomes.
- Tailored networking opportunities to connect with relevant partners in the bioeconomy sector.
- Accelerated partnerships with tools to streamline contracting, quotes, timelines, and skill matching.
- A structured ecosystem where PDIs and innovators can refer and collaborate with each other.
- Connection to relevant project partners, funding agencies, and industry stakeholders.
- Cross-connection opportunities with other bio-innovators and complementary value chains.
- Access to EU regulatory bodies and policy makers for compliance and funding alignment.
- A network designed for further scaling and subcontracting.
- Clear guidance on process scaling to reduce risks and optimize efficiency.
- Technical advisory on process optimization and feedstock selection.
- Machine learning and AI-driven recommendations for project feasibility and optimization.
- Capacity for advanced analysis and product characterization within PDIs.
- Training programs on economic, technical, and regulatory aspects of scale-up.
- Expert insights on innovation challenges, regulatory hurdles, and market trends.
- Common protocols for selected CBB products to standardize processes.
- Diversification of biomass sources and valorisation of underutilized local EU biomass.
- Simplified contracting process management to reduce administrative burdens.
- Defined IP management framework to protect innovation and ensure fair agreements.
- De-risking strategies through advisory services on process validation and feedstock reliability.
- Assurance of due diligence coverage to mitigate risks during the scale-up journey.

- A seamless scale-up roadmap from laboratory testing to industrial production.
- A full-process chain approach, ensuring all steps of scale-up are covered.
- Monitoring and progress tracking tools for process development.
- Strategic connections to help innovators enter new markets efficiently.

Following the individual reflection exercise, where participants wrote down their key gains on their customer profile cards, they moved into small group discussions to further analyse and refine their responses. Each group engaged in a collaborative dialogue to:

- Compare their individual gain points and find common patterns.
- Discuss how these outcomes impact their ability to work efficiently and collaborate with other stakeholders.
- Prioritize the most critical issues that need to be addressed in the development of the COPILOT platform.

Each small group was then tasked with identifying the two most significant gain points affecting bio-innovators. Once they reached a consensus, they designated a spokesperson to present their findings to the full workshop audience. The speakers approached the Mural board, where the yellow post-its representing the main gains of bio-innovators were displayed. They then explained: the reasoning behind selecting these key gains and how these outcomes enhance efficiency, visibility, and innovation potential.

Main Gains Selected During the Group Discussion (Yellow Post-Its):

- Reviews / ratings transparency on services the PDI is offering.
- Confidentiality and terms of engagement.
- Collaboration format: subcontract, project partner, IP,....
- Success cases of previous EU/public projects.
- SCRUM development teams.
- Smart tendering + quotes dashboards.
- Automated requests and contracting procedure.
- Training opportunities.

After each designated speaker from the bio-innovator groups presented their selected main gains on the Mural board, the next step was to prioritize these benefits through a ranking exercise.

Each bio-innovator received two voting dots to indicate their perspective on which gains would provide the most value: a green dot to mark the gain they considered the most critical (2 points) and a red dot to indicate their second most important outcome (1 point).

Bioinnovators moved to the Mural board, carefully reviewing the gain points listed on yellow post-its and placing their dots based on their perceived impact on collaboration and innovation success. This

interactive voting process provided a clear visual representation of the most valuable benefits, highlighting the key priorities that needed to be addressed in the next phases of the co-creation workshop:

- 8 points to collaboration format.
- 7 points to reviews and ratings on services.
- 7 points to Smart tendering and quotes dashboard.

The results of the co-creation workshop's ranking exercise revealed a strong alignment in priorities between PDIs and Bio-Innovators, highlighting shared needs that the COPILOT platform must address. PDIs emphasized the importance of building new partnerships as their top priority, recognizing the need for stronger collaborations and expanded networks to maximize facility utilization and innovation potential. They also valued the creation of an ecosystem where they can recommend each other, fostering a trusted referral system that allows PDIs to direct clients to the most suitable facilities based on expertise and availability. Additionally, increasing visibility and attracting more clients was identified as a key factor in ensuring financial sustainability and maintaining a steady demand for their services.



Figure 7 Group Picture

Bioinnovators, on the other hand, prioritized the development of a structured collaboration format, which would facilitate long-term interactions with PDIs and create a more efficient and predictable engagement model. Transparency was also a major concern, with participants highlighting the need for reviews and ratings on services to enhance decision-making when selecting PDIs and to ensure trust in the collaboration process. Moreover, the implementation of a smart tendering and quotes dashboard was considered essential to streamline the contracting process, reduce administrative burdens, and accelerate access to the right facilities.

Overall, these results highlight a clear mutual need for a transparent, structured, and efficient matchmaking system that fosters long-term partnerships, improves service visibility, and simplifies collaboration processes. The new platform must integrate these functionalities to facilitate better accessibility, trust, and operational efficiency for both PDIs and bioinnovators, ultimately driving innovation and strengthening the bioeconomy ecosystem.



Figure 8 PDIs mural with Jobs, Pains and Gains



Figure 9 Bioinnovators mural with Jobs, Pains and Gains

3.2.2.1.2 Key Platform Features: Translating Needs into Functionalities

Understanding the pains and gains of both PDIs and Bioinnovators was a crucial step in the co-creation process, as it provided a clear foundation for the next phase of the workshop: identifying the key features that the COPILOT platform must include to effectively address these challenges and maximize benefits for its users.

To ensure a comprehensive and well-balanced approach, the next activity, facilitated by Cluster FOOD+i, involved mixing PDIs and Bioinnovators into joint working groups. This cross-stakeholder collaboration allowed participants to reflect collectively, exchange perspectives, and gain a deeper understanding of each other's needs. By working together, they were able to bridge the gaps between service providers and users, fostering a more holistic and solution-driven discussion.

Each mixed group was then tasked by Cluster FOOD+i, with identifying and defining one or two key features that the platform should incorporate. The goal was to translate the insights from the pains and gains analysis into practical, user-driven functionalities that would make the COPILOT platform more efficient, transparent, and impactful. This collaborative exercise ensured that the identified features were not only relevant to one group but beneficial for the entire ecosystem, creating a more integrated and functional platform for innovation in the bioeconomy sector.

The co-creation session provided valuable insights into the critical features required to enhance the COPILOT platform. Participants from both PDIs and bioinnovators engaged in discussions that highlighted the platform's role in fostering collaboration, streamlining processes, and providing essential support for scale-up innovation.

Networking and Collaboration emerged as a top priority, with participants emphasizing the need for robust tools that facilitate partnerships, matchmaking, and seamless information sharing. Given the complexity of scaling bio-based innovations, direct connections between innovators and pilot facilities must be intuitive and efficient, reducing friction in finding the right partners.

Transparency and Pricing was another key area of concern. Stakeholders expressed the necessity of having clear dashboards and automated workflows to simplify interactions and project management. A transparent pricing model was particularly highlighted as a means to build trust and ensure that both innovators and PDIs can engage in transactions with clear expectations.

In the realm of **Marketplaces and Resource Sharing**, participants showed strong interest in features that support the exchange of raw materials, tendering opportunities, and dedicated co-creation spaces. These functionalities are expected to facilitate a more integrated bioeconomy ecosystem, where materials, expertise, and infrastructure can be shared more effectively.

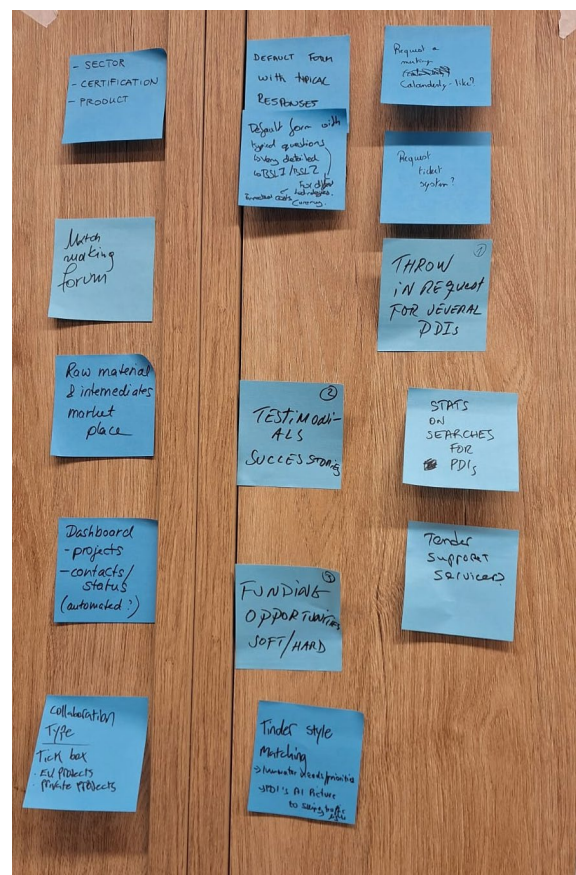


Figure 10 Features

Training and Advisory Services were also identified as a fundamental component. The demand for thematic webinars, advisory support, and funding guidance highlights the need for continuous learning and strategic mentoring. Participants recognized that the success of bioinnovations depends not only on access to infrastructure but also on the knowledge required to navigate technological and business challenges.

Finally, **Recognition and Feedback** mechanisms were deemed essential for fostering credibility and engagement within the community. The inclusion of testimonials, ratings, and success stories will help build confidence in the platform's offerings while creating a sense of shared progress and achievement.

Through these collaborative discussions, the session successfully outlined a clear roadmap for the COPILOT platform's development, ensuring that its features align with the real-world needs of its users. The next steps will involve refining these functionalities and integrating them into the platform's beta version, ensuring that COPILOT becomes a pivotal tool for accelerating bio-based innovations across Europe.

4 Trainings

As the final part of the co-creation session, PDIs were asked to select the trainings they would be interested in offering. The results indicate that only four topics were selected, with a strong preference for the "Scale-up" training, while other topics —particularly those related to legal aspects, financing, intellectual property, and business models— remained without assigned experts.

This imbalance highlights a gap in expertise coverage, which could hinder the comprehensiveness of the training programme. Additionally, four PDIs did not select any training topic, suggesting the need for further alignment.

To address this, one possible approach is to expand the most selected training to incorporate aspects of the unselected topics, ensuring broader coverage. Another potential solution is for mentors to guide the PDIs who have not yet selected a training, encouraging them to cover the underrepresented topics. These findings will serve as the foundation for further discussions and adjustments in the upcoming meeting.

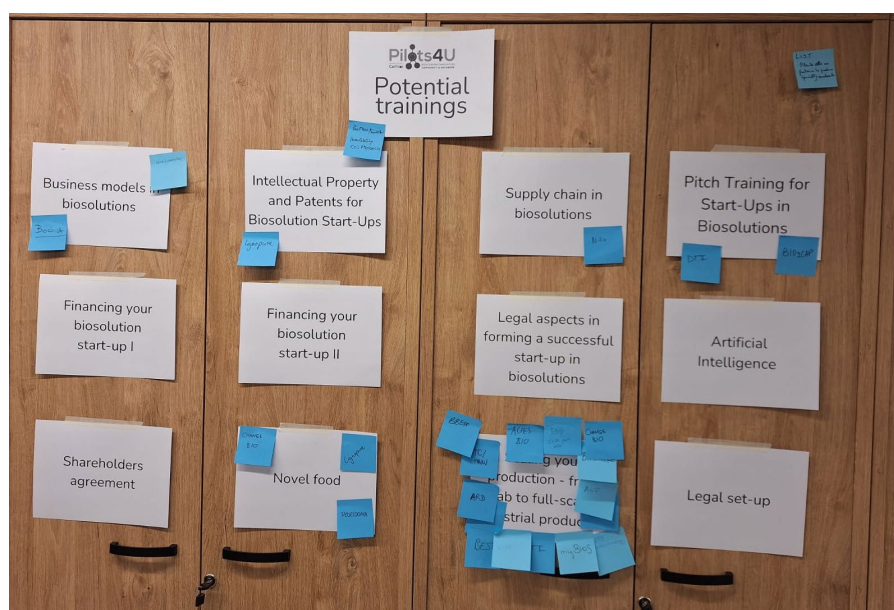


Figure 11 Training topics

5 Conclusion and Next Steps

The co-creation workshops conducted as part of Task 3.2 of the COPILOT, led by Cluster FOOD+i, project have provided invaluable insights into the challenges, expectations, and needs of PDIs and bioinnovators. Through a structured approach, including preparatory surveys, stakeholder-specific sessions, and joint discussions, participants actively contributed to shaping the functionalities of the COPILOT platform, ensuring that it meets real-world user demands.

A key takeaway from the workshops is the critical need for enhanced networking and collaboration tools. Both PDIs and bioinnovators emphasized the importance of an intuitive matchmaking system to facilitate partnerships and knowledge exchange, streamlining access to resources and expertise. Transparency and pricing also emerged as a major concern, with participants calling for clear dashboards, automated workflows, and standardized cost structures to improve trust and efficiency in service agreements. Furthermore, the development of a marketplace and resource-sharing system was identified as a priority. Participants highlighted the necessity of a centralized space for raw material exchanges, project tendering, and collaborative R&D opportunities. This aligns with the broader goal of creating an integrated and self-sustaining bioeconomy ecosystem. Another major outcome of the workshops was the demand for training and advisory services. The inclusion of webinars, mentorship programs, and funding guidance was seen as crucial in supporting both PDIs and bioinnovators in navigating technical and business challenges. This reflects a growing need for continuous learning and strategic planning within the sector. Additionally, recognition and feedback mechanisms were deemed essential for fostering trust and engagement within the COPILOT community. Participants expressed strong interest in incorporating user testimonials, ratings, and case studies to validate the platform's effectiveness and showcase successful collaborations. By integrating these findings, the new Pilots4U powered by COPILOT platform is positioned to become a transformative tool for the bioeconomy sector, bridging gaps in access to infrastructure, expertise, and funding.

The next steps will involve refining these functionalities in the beta version of the platform, ensuring seamless user adoption and long-term sustainability. With the insights from Task 3.2 now integrated into the beta version, the project will transition into Task 3.3, which focuses on testing, iteration, and final development of the fine-tuned Pilots4U powered by COPILOT platform. By integrating this iterative feedback process, the platform will ensure a seamless user experience, optimized functionalities, and a sustainable business model. This user-driven approach will be key to successfully scaling the platform across the European bioeconomy sector, accelerating innovation, and fostering stronger collaborations between PDIs and bioinnovators.



Figure 12 Group Picture

Annex I. Agenda

**Pilots4U powered by COPILOT co-creation session: OC1**

Date: 4 December 2024

Venue: [BBEPP: Bamboo](#)

14:00 – 14:05	Co-creation workshop presentation	Cluster food+i
14:05 – 14:45	Pilots4U powered by COPILOT beta version presentation	US Platform Developer
14:45 – 15:30	PDIs individual co-creation session	Cluster food+i

Pilots4U powered by COPILOT co-creation session: OC2

Date: 4 December 2024

Venue: [BBEPP: Showroom 1](#)

14:00 – 14:05	Co-creation workshop presentation	Cluster food+i
14:05 – 14:45	Pilots4U powered by COPILOT beta version presentation	US Platform Developer
14:45 – 15:30	Bio innovators individual co-creation session	Cluster food+i

Pilots4U powered by COPILOT joint co-creation session

Date: 4 December 2024

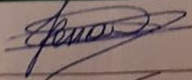
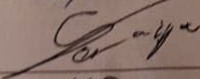
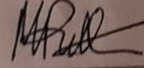
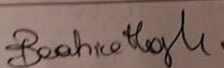
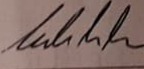
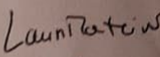
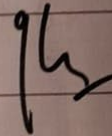

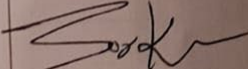
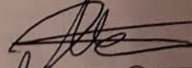
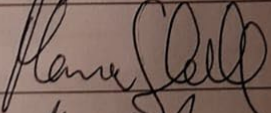
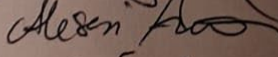
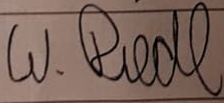
Venue: [BBEPP: Bamboo](#)


16:05 – 16:15	Presentation of mandatory tasks	F6S
16:15 – 16:30	Joint co-creation session	Cluster food+i
16:30 – 16:50	Trainings	Cluster food+i
16:50 – 17:00	Wrap up, final conclusions & post co-creation activities	Cluster food+i

Annex II. Participants Sheet

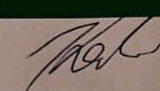

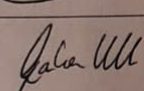
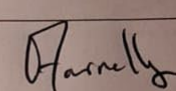
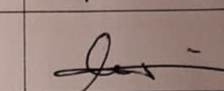
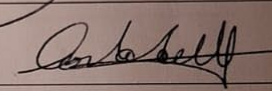
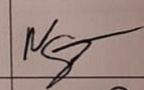
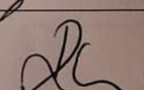
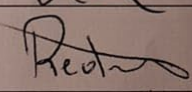
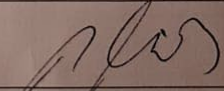
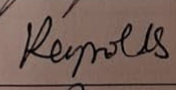
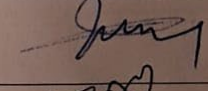
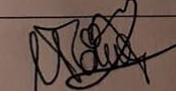
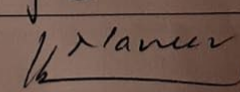
Pilots4U
powered by CoPilot
BIOSSECURITY INNOVATION
COMMUNITY & DATABASE


COPILOT CO-CREATION SESSION – OC1 – 4 December

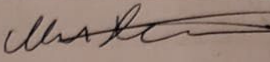
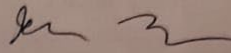
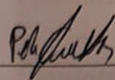
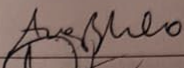
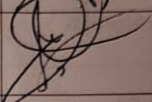
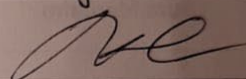
Name	Organization	Signature
Jenny Renaut	LIST	
Sébastien Lemaigre	LIST	
Marco Pistocchi	Biosphere	
Beatrice Mongili	Biosphere	
Carlos Silva	A4F	
Laura Monteiro	A4F	
Guillaume Lamy	ARD-CEBB	
Sheena Fraser	IBIOIC	
Eduards Krebs-Kleingezinds	DTI	
Bor Klančnik	Acies Bio d.o.o.	
Dimitris Mertzis	BIO2CHP	
Manuel Schwabl	BEST	
Anna Alessi	BDC	
Wolfgang Riedl	FHNW	
Karen Verstraete	FOOD PILOT	



COPILOT CO-CREATION SESSION – OC2 – 4 December

Name	Organization	Signature
Tugba KESKIN GUNDOGDU	HOPE Biotechnology	
Anne Reboux	RBX Créations	
Gala Morena	POSEIDONA	
Pedro Quelhas	ISS Inclita Seaweed Solutions	
Vincent Farrelly	Niskus Biotec	
Matteo Fabbri	Biochica Start Up Srl	
Carla Decarolis	Biochica Start Up Srl	
Noah Sprent	Change Bio	
Claudia Rinnofner	MyBIOS	
Emile Redant	N-Fix NV	
Joana Gil	Lignopure	
Wienke Reynolds	Lignopure	
David Daudé	Gene&GreenTK	
Tsinou Maria Eleni	BIOEAST HUB CR	
XIAVEEN KUMAR	IRISH BIOECONOMY FOUNDATION, IRL	

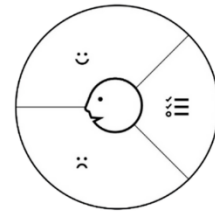


Name	Organization	Signature
Mika Härkönen	VTI	
PAULINA TUKIAWU	VTI	
Pablo Quetón	ISS Incl. <small>vs need solution</small>	
ANA RZO	FGS	
Reza Rajbar	Cpi	
NINA MEGLIĆ	SGZ	Meglič
MATEJUR KOWACK	FGS	

Annex III. Cards

CUSTOMER PROFILE **PDIs**

A **Customer Profile** is a strategic tool that helps organisations gain a deeper understanding of their target audience by identifying their key objectives (Jobs), the challenges they face (Pains), and the outcomes they desire (Gains). This process is essential because it enables the alignment of solutions with real needs, ensuring that services or products are tailored to meet expectations. By uncovering specific barriers and desired outcomes, organisations can optimise processes, reduce inefficiencies, and focus on areas with the greatest impact.



➔ **“You are business developers for your facilities, focused on attracting clients, understanding their needs, and ensuring your facilities operate sustainably”**



Functional Jobs:

- o Attract new clients (bio-innovators) to utilise the facility.
- o Provide high-quality testing and validation services.
- o Manage facility scheduling to maximise utilisation.



Social Jobs:

- o Build a reputation as a leading demonstration facility in a specific field (e.g., bioplastics, fermentation).
- o Enhance the visibility of the facility in regional or global networks.



Emotional Jobs:

- o Ensure clients are satisfied and likely to recommend the facility.
- o Reduce the stress of underutilisation and funding uncertainties.



CUSTOMER PROFILE **PDIs**

Pains:
A pain represents the specific challenges, frustrations, or risks that prevent you from achieving your goals effectively.

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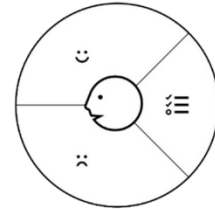
Gains:
A gain represents the positive outcomes, benefits, or improvements that make your work more effective, efficient, or satisfying.

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CUSTOMER PROFILE Bio innovators

A **Customer Profile** is a strategic tool that helps organisations gain a deeper understanding of their target audience by identifying their key objectives (Jobs), the challenges they face (Pains), and the outcomes they desire (Gains). This process is essential because it enables the alignment of solutions with real needs, ensuring that services or products are tailored to meet expectations. By uncovering specific barriers and desired outcomes, organisations can optimise processes, reduce inefficiencies, and focus on areas with the greatest impact.



➔ **“You are innovators focused on scaling your bio-based products effectively and efficiently, identifying the right facilities and resources”**



Functional Jobs:

- o Identify a facility that matches your technical and capacity requirements.
- o Validate your product or technology at pilot or industrial scale.
- o Optimise production processes for efficiency and cost-effectiveness.



Social Jobs:

- o Build a reputation as an innovator in a specific field (e.g., bioplastics, fermentation).
- o Build a network of trusted partners for long-term collaboration and gain visibility in the bio-based innovation ecosystem.



Emotional Jobs:

- o Ensure clients are satisfied and likely to recommend your product.
- o Minimise the risk of project delays or costly mistakes.



CUSTOMER PROFILE Bio innovators

Pains:

A pain represents the specific challenges, frustrations, or risks that prevent you from achieving your goals effectively.

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Gains:

A gain represents the positive outcomes, benefits, or improvements that make your work more effective, efficient, or satisfying.

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