

An aerial photograph of a vast forest during autumn. The trees display a mix of green, yellow, orange, and red. A large, calm lake is visible on the left side of the frame, reflecting the overcast sky. In the background, a series of islands and peninsulas are scattered across a larger body of water. The sky is filled with soft, grey clouds, creating a diffused light across the landscape. In the bottom left corner, there are some white, rectangular structures, possibly covered in plastic or snow.

Video from Swedish regional case

How can **national governments** work with missions?

How can **regions and municipalities** work with missions?

How can we **engage the private sector** in missions?

How can we **involve citizens** in missions?

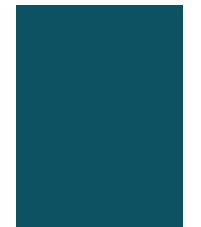


Funded by
the European Union

MISSIONS PLAYBOOK



Stories from practice



Mutual Learning Events

10 events

5 countries + online

~350 participants



A Mutual Learning Event taking place in Warsaw, Poland.

Use Cases

Blekinge, Sweden

Finland

Flander, Belgium

Netherlands



A citizen panel in the AMAI! Program in Flanders, Belgium.

How can **national governments** work with missions?

SYNOPSIS

Austria have managed to adopt the EU Missions for its national context and set up a governance structure to support the implementation. The Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Research have led the work of promoting a mission-oriented approach to innovation and involved a wide range of actors in the process.

Although Austria's innovation system was well-developed, it was not structured for directionality. The process began with a policy brief sent out to key actors to start a national debate. Over time, an increasing number of actors committed to both the mission-oriented approach and the five missions set by the European Commission. The governance structure took shape

and included ministries, sectoral agencies, academia, research institutes, industry as well as regional and local stakeholders. Funding sources were directed towards the missions by making changes to the legal mandate of various funders and agencies.

These achievements have not been without challenge. The attempt to make changes in the wider innovation system trigger resistance from a range of actors. Keeping a steady course required a confident and well-established team to push through the necessary changes. Because this type of initiative requires a leap of the imagination and doing things different, it is important to share lessons and learn together within the European community to achieve the ambitious EU Missions.



“The mission-oriented policy approach challenges the assumption that the state should have a very remote role and should leave all the key decisions to the researchers or innovators.”

– CHRISTIAN NACZINSKY

How can we engage the private sector in missions?

SYNOPSIS

Earlier budget cuts led Business Finland to prioritize SMEs over larger companies. As a result, large Finnish companies now invest more in RDI outside than in Finland. Feeling the need to respond and inspired by Mariana Mazzucato's thinking, civil servants at Business Finland designed a new program targeting large companies.

The Leading Companies initiative aims to increase RDI investments and direct innovation activities towards societal challenges. They achieve this by letting large companies define a mission and mobilize an ecosystem to help them reach it. Business Finland provides €20 in funding to the Leading Company and an additional €50 to ecosystem projects. In return, the Leading Company must double the public RDI investment.

Despite only running for four years, the initiative is already seeing results in RDI investments, progress toward the missions outlined by the companies, and additional spillover effects. The Leading Companies are investing €1.5 billion in RDI and creating hundreds of new research jobs. Although their existing strategy aligns with their mission, companies are working in new ways internally and externally. Both public and private actors consider the Leading Companies initiative a success story. Close dialogues between civil servants and large companies contributed to a smooth implementation without significant challenges.



“An analysis by the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment showed that our large companies were investing more in RDI outside rather than in Finland, and this worried us.”

— KARIN WIKMAN, CHIEF ADVISOR AT BUSINESS FINLAND



How can we involve **citizens** in missions?

SYNOPSIS

As a part of the Flemish AI Plan, the government wanted to engage with and educate citizens about this emerging technology. The AMAI! program aims to involve citizens in developing AI solutions.

AMAI! engages citizens in each of the four phases. The first phase encourages citizens to submit ideas for how AI can help solve societal issues. Civil society representatives and AI experts meet in co-creation workshops and together shape project proposals and build consortia. The third phase invites citizens to select the final projects through an online public vote or at an in-person citizen panel. Finally, each funded project is required to employ a citizen science approach in the implementation phase.

This program design not only engages citizens about the potential and risks of AI but also produces projects that solve real-world problems. Giving decision-making power to citizens led to multiple projects targeting children in schools or issues relating to social inclusion.

Since engaging citizens in innovation is still not commonly practiced, governments need room to experiment and build relevant capabilities. Word of AMAI!'s success is already spreading in Flanders. Other programs are already planning to engage more with citizens. In doing so, an important lesson is that meaningful citizen engagement requires significant effort, and the allocated budget must reflect that.



“In the feedback from our community, we learned that our two target groups, AI experts and civil society representatives, likely wouldn’t have met without this type of program.”

– ANNELIES DUERINCKX



